

ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE MIDDLE EAST, THE CAUCASUS AND CENTRAL ASIA

England & Wales · Charity number 282938

Details

Other names	ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE MIDDLE EAST, O S M E
Status	Registered
Legal form	Other
Registered	1981-08-25
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	1 Charnwood Avenue Sutton Bonington Loughborough LE12 5NA
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Email	treasurer@osme.org
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Website	www.osme.org
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Activities

Objects: TO PROMOTE THE STUDY OF MIDDLE EASTERN, CAUCASIAN AND CENTRAL ASIAN ORNITHOLOGY AND THE CONSERVATION OF THE REGION'S BIRDS.

Activities: An organisation to promote a greater public understanding of ornithology in the Middle East, the Caucasus and Central Asia and to facilitate conservation of the region's birds. Research grants are awarded and the results are published in a twice-yearly publication.

Classification

- **How:** Makes Grants To Individuals, Makes Grants To Organisations, Sponsors Or Undertakes Research
- **What:** Education/training, Animals, Environment/conservation/heritage
- **Who:** Children/young People, The General Public/mankind

Geography

- Azerbaijan
- Cyprus
- Egypt
- Georgia
- Jordan
- Kyrgyzstan
- Lebanon
- Russia
- Turkey
- Uzbekistan
- Rutland

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2024-12-31	£64,363	£77,723	-	-
2023-12-31	£197,658	£74,046	-	-
2022-12-31	£57,017	£77,768	-	-
2021-12-31	£64,447	£55,397	-	-
2020-12-31	£40,380	£54,502	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
ROBERT SHELDON	Chair	2013-10-27
CHRIS HUGHES		2015-07-01
Dr Simon John Tull		2023-11-18
IAN HARRISON		2021-06-19
Marko Kalevi Halonen		2022-11-26
Mike Blair		2017-07-01
Murray Brown		2020-11-27
Simon Ibrahim Jalil Awad		2023-11-18
Susan Jane Delve		2023-11-18
Tomas Haraldsson		2022-11-23

Accounts

**Ornithological Society of the Middle East, The Caucasus and Central
Asia**

(Registered charity, number 282938)

**Financial statements
for the year ended 31 December 2024**

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Ornithological Society of the Middle East, The Caucasus and Central Asia
Trustees' annual report
for the year ended 31 December 2024

Full name Ornithological Society of the Middle East, The Caucasus and Central Asia

Registered charity number 282938

Principal address

1 Charnwood Avenue, Sutton Bonington, Loughborough, LE12 5NA

Trustees

Robert Sheldon, Chair

Mike Blair

Ian Harrison

Murray Brown

Simon Tull

Paul Donald, until 31/10/2026

Chris Hughes, Treasurer

Tomas Haraldsson

Marko Halonen

Simon Awad

Susan Delve

Independent examiner

Eva Stevens, employee of Community Accounting Plus, Units 1 & 2 North West, 41 Talbot Street, Nottingham, NG1 5GL

Governance and management

The charity is operated under the rules of its constitution adopted 17/06/1981 and most recently amended 10/07/2010.

A Council of trustees elected by the members manages the affairs of the Society. There are no restrictions on membership of the Society subject to payment of the appropriate subscription.

New Council members are nominated by paid-up members and are elected to office at the Annual General Meeting which was held online this year on Saturday 26th of November. Council has the power to co-opt additional members at any time where a specific need is identified and where the appropriate commitment cannot be found from amongst its numbers.

The elected Council is supported by two specialist sub-committees, the Editorial Board and the Conservation Fund Committee. The Editorial Board assists the Editor of Sandgrouse in compiling the content of each issue and the content of any supplementary publications according to a budget set by Council at the start of the year. The Conservation Fund Committee receives and reviews all grant applications made through a formal application procedure and makes recommendations to Council. All decisions on the allocation of funds to conservation projects are made by, and are the responsibility of, the elected Council.

Ornithological Society of the Middle East, The Caucasus and Central Asia

The Society has no employees and owns no property or fixed assets; all the functions of an active and fully-compliant charity are performed by Council members working voluntarily with their own resources and from their own premises. This voluntary and low administrative cost approach enables the Charity to maximise the amounts expended on charitable activities and the Society recognises this very significant contribution with gratitude.

To assist them in understanding their responsibilities, all trustees are directed towards regular reference to the Charity Commission website. Council met formally three times during the year. Before each meeting, officers' reports were circulated to all Council members for information on the subjects under discussion and for the benefit of those not attending.

The Minutes of each formal meeting were circulated to all trustees and co-opted Council members soon after the meeting. Interaction between Council members in between formal meetings was by email through an email group. Most of these exchanges were seen by all trustee Council members and all co-opted Council members regardless of their involvement with the matter in hand.

A Risk Register is maintained so that Council members can identify the risks in their designated area of responsibility. No reportable incidents occurred during the year. However, Council remains aware of the need for continuous vigilance and review of all risk management procedures in place.

This year, Council has continued to address issues of governance and the provision of replacement in the event of incapacity of key trustees or co-opted Council members. Council recognises the general need to spread the administrative workload of the Society more evenly, and the need to reduce the concentration of key functions in a single incumbent working without deputy or understudy.

The Society acknowledges that it lacks the administrative and financial resources to embark on major projects and restricts itself to providing financial assistance to others, rather than organising and directing projects itself. It does not get involved with project details, except in an advisory role at the application stage, and is particularly careful to limit second-stage payments and commitments which carry forward to future years. In all its deliberations, the Society pays due regard to the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit in deciding the activities it should undertake.

Objectives and activities

To promote the study of Middle Eastern, Caucasian and Central Asian Ornithology and the conservation of the region's birds.

Ornithological Society of the Middle East, The Caucasus and Central Asia

Summary of the main activities undertaken for the public benefit

The object of the Charity is to promote a greater public understanding of Middle Eastern, Caucasian and Central Asian ornithology and thereby to encourage and facilitate conservation of the region's birds. This is achieved by the twice-yearly publication of a scientific journal, *Sandgrouse*, the holding of meetings, presence at events, the maintenance of a website, an active presence on social media, and the funding of fieldwork and other projects. Grants are awarded to approved projects from the funds of the Society and applicants are encouraged to submit their findings for publication in *Sandgrouse*.

Dr. Robert Sheldon, OSME Chair

Public benefit statement

The Trustees confirm that they have complied with the duty in section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit, 'Charities and Public Benefit'.

Summary of the main achievements during the period

It is pleasing to reflect on what has been another successful year for OSME despite ongoing and emerging challenges. Thanks to the amazing support of OSME members and donors we have continued to maintain our increased expenditure through our small grant's programmes, supporting a wide range of projects across the Middle East, the Caucasus and Central Asia.

Funding conservation

During 2024 we funded six projects through our Conservation Fund with a total expenditure of £32,810 which continues the run of record-breaking years since 2014. The Little Bustard project in Azerbaijan was partly funded by a Rufford Foundation grant to Zulfu Farajli, administered by OSME, plus further contributions from Birding Ecotours and British Birds.

In March 2024, in partnership with BirdLife Finland, we launched a call for proposals for projects that addressed illegal bird killing (including the taking and trade of wild birds where it contravenes national law and/or international agreements). We received many high-quality applications, and a single grant was awarded to the Lebanese Association for Migratory Birds (LAMB).

The six projects funded in 2024 were:

- Wintering Little Bustard survey at the main sites of Azerbaijan (co-funded with the Rufford Foundation).
- Tagging Egyptian vultures at important congregation sites along the Central Asian Flyway (follow up grant).
- Study of the Red-Footed Falcon (*Falco vespertinus*) breeding group's status in Ereimentau, Northern Kazakhstan.
- Sociable Lapwing surveys in central Asia (year two of a multi-year project) (Figure 1).
- Researching Oman's Endangered Vulture Population.
- Tackling Illegal Bird Killing, Night Poaching and Illegal Trades in Lebanon (co-funded with BirdLife Finland).

Ornithological Society of the Middle East, The Caucasus and Central Asia



**Figure 1 Central Asia is hugely important for the Critically Endangered Sociable Lapwing with large flocks at key stop-over sites such as Talimerzhan
© Oleg Kashkarov/UzSPB**

In 2024 we didn't award a Trevor Poyser Species Conservation Fund grant although we have sufficient funds for one more year's grant. OSME Council are looking at ways we can continue this fund in the future.

Applications to the Conservation Fund are thoroughly reviewed by an independent committee that makes recommendations to OSME Council. During 2024 the committee was chaired by Dr Maxim Koshkin with expert input from Dr Nabegh Ghazal Asswad, Dr Alyona Koshkina, Hana Raza, Maïa Sarrouf Willson and Ibrahim Al Hasani. On behalf of OSME Council, I thank the Committee for their hard work and expertise in reviewing applications and providing clear guidance on which projects should be supported.

Ornithological Society of the Middle East, The Caucasus and Central Asia

Supporting the conservationists of tomorrow

Our Youth Development Fund continues to go from strength to strength under the watchful eye of Tomas Haraldsson, OSME's Youth Development Officer. A key strength of our youth development work is that we look to provide continuity for projects so that they can develop over time. This may involve financial support over several years but also helping with awareness raising and promotion of projects, as well as offering advice. See Sandgrouse 46 (2) for an overview of the first five years of OSME's Youth Development Fund.

We continued our support of the Simurg Bird Sanctuary and their Avian Ecology School and the Eymir Ringing Camp. Both of these projects in Türkiye continue to provide high quality training to emerging birdwatchers and conservationists.

A follow up grant was made to Nature Conservation Egypt and their Galala Raptor Count training programme which has now provided training opportunities for 40 Egyptian participants to date. Importantly, the Galala Bird Observatory was chosen as the project to be supported by the UK Global Birdfair in 2024 and has subsequently received \$125,000 to develop a new observatory and continue the crucial monitoring programme. OSME will continue to support the youth development work of Galala in the future.

With our long-term partners, the Batumi Raptor Count, we launched the Flyways Monitoring Internship. The aim is to award two young trainees from the OSME region a four-week internship, with their costs covered by a bursary from the Youth Development Fund. The internship provides training in raptor identification, standardised monitoring protocols, data management and first-hand experience of working with like-minded conservationists and birdwatchers. In 2024, the first two participants in the Flyways Monitoring Internship were Alyona Kaptyonkina (Kazakhstan) and Mitra Daneshvar (Iran) (Figure 2).

Ornithological Society of the Middle East, The Caucasus and Central Asia



Figure 2. The first recipients of the BRC/OSME Flyways Monitoring Internship, Alyona Kapteronkina (left) and Mitra Daneshvar (right) © BRC

In 2024, we supported a youth project in Kyrgyzstan for the first time, that will focus on the establishment of a number of bird clubs to engage young people in birdwatching activities. The OSME Youth Development Fund has now supported projects in seven countries across the OSME region.

An OSME Youth Development Fund Travel Bursary was awarded to Zulfi Farajli (Azerbaijan) to support his participation in a 10-month internship with the BirdLife International partner in Croatia.

Overall, an amazing £22,550 supporting eight projects/initiatives was spent through our Youth Development Fund in 2024 and it is especially pleasing to see many donations being made specifically to support this area of our work.

A special mention to OSME supporter Ed Stubbings for running the Petra marathon in Jordan and raising more than £1300 for the Youth Development Fund (Figure 3). OSME Council remains committed to the Youth Development Fund and is keen to see the work expand to new countries and initiatives.

Whilst funding is always a major constraint another limiting factor is staff time. OSME's Youth Development Officer Tomas Haraldsson, works as a volunteer to develop, nurture and monitor projects, but if our work is to grow in the future, we need more people with the right skills to get involved. If you think you can help with funding, time or skills then please get in touch (youthdevelopment@osme.org, chairman@osme.org).

Ornithological Society of the Middle East, The Caucasus and Central Asia



Figure 3. Ed Stubbings finished third in the Petra Marathon raising more than £1300 for the Youth Development Fund © Ed Stubbings

When our small grants programmes are combined, during 2024 OSME funded projects across our region to the value of £55,360, another record-breaking year. Huge thanks to the March Conservation Fund for their ongoing financial support, which has enabled us to grow both our Conservation and Youth Development Funds in recent years. It will be a significant challenge to maintain this overall level of expenditure in the coming years, but OSME Council will continue to look for future funding opportunities.

Ornithological Society of the Middle East, The Caucasus and Central Asia

Working in partnership

OSME have been working with BirdLife International for many years. Back in August 2015 we signed our first Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to formalise our approach, and our joint work and mutual support has continued to grow. To strengthen our collaboration, we reviewed and updated the MoU in September 2023 and formally signed this at the Global Birdfair in July 2024 (Figure 4). Key areas of collaboration include supporting cross-border campaigns of mutual interest, such as the conservation of the East African-Eurasian and Central Asian Flyways; work together on emerging casework issues; exchange ideas to develop the next generation of birdwatchers and conservationists through our respective youth development activities; and specifically collaborate on developing conservation capacity in Azerbaijan.



Figure 4. Martin Harper, BirdLife International CEO, and Rob Sheldon, OSME Chairman, signing the updated MoU at the Global Birdfair in July 2024. © BirdLife International

Ornithological Society of the Middle East, The Caucasus and Central Asia

Sandgrouse – showcasing ornithology in the OSME region

Volume 46 of our well-respected journal Sandgrouse incorporated papers from all corners of the OSME region, including ones supported by OSME small grants (coprophagy in captive vultures and Great Bustards in Türkiye (Issue 1)). More members than ever are now opting to receive the journal in digital format which helps OSME make a significant savings on postage costs. This is greatly appreciated as the cost of postage is rising sharply. Members wishing to switch to digital format can email sandgrouse.digital@osme.org.

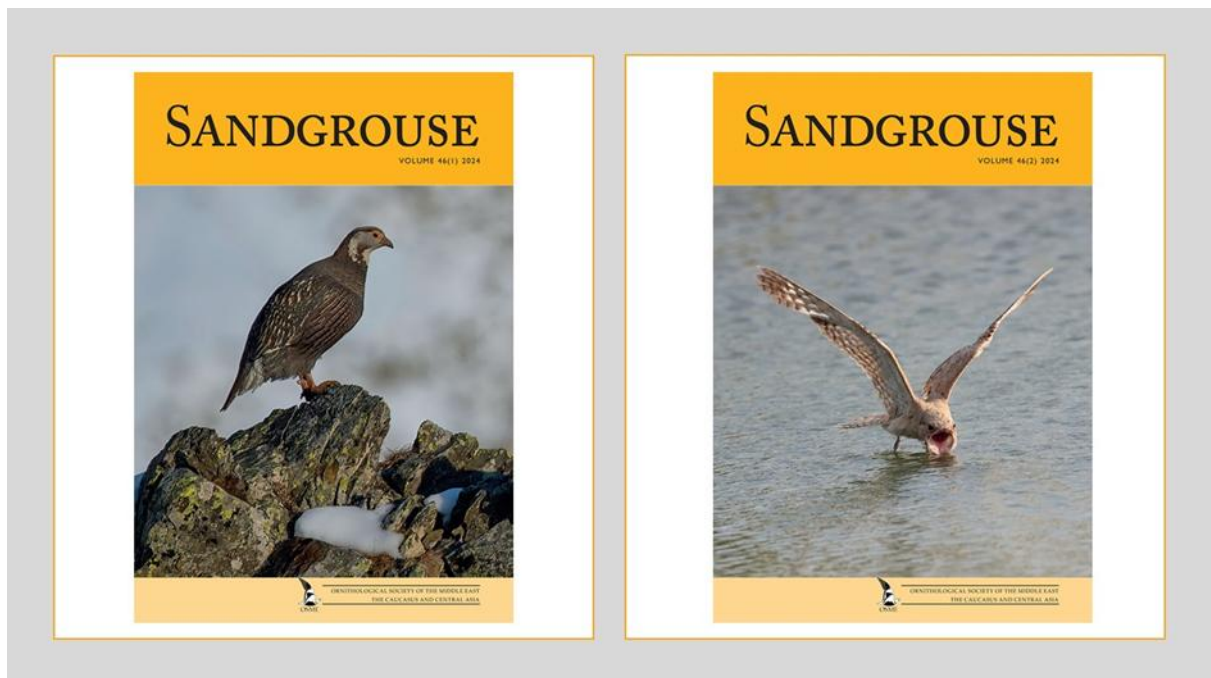


Figure 5. Stunning front covers of Sandgrouse Volume 46. Caucasian Snowcock © Nika Melikishvili & Egyptian Nightjar © Abdullah AlKaabi

Communicating with members and supporters

OSME were again present at the Global Birdfair at the Rutland Showground, Leicestershire, UK, and it is now one of the few events where we can meet many of our members and supporters face-to-face. The Birdfair is a significant investment in terms of both money and time, but Council remains committed to attend this annual event in the coming years.

In September, OSME participated in a new joint event at the prestigious Natural History Museum (NHM) in South Kensington. The Avian Odyssey event organised by the NHM and the British Ornithologist's Club (BOC) consisted of a series of inspiring talks by the regional bird clubs, RSPB, BTO and BirdLife International. It is hoped that this will become an annual series of talks that will be held at the NHM and also live-streamed so supporters of OSME and the other regional bird clubs can participate.

Ornithological Society of the Middle East, The Caucasus and Central Asia

Our main social media channel continues to be Facebook page which remains popular with visitors from across the OSME region. More content than ever is being published in local languages, Turkish, Azeri, Georgian and Arabic, thanks to in-country OSME members volunteering as guest editors. Engagement in other social media channels has been minimal due to a lack of capacity within OSME Council. Can you help with OSME's social media channels? If so, please contact me at chairman@osme.org.

Membership recruitment remains a concern for OSME, as it does for most similar-sized charities and organisations. Overall, we saw a continued slight decline in membership again during 2024, which has a significant impact on our unrestricted funds. Whilst OSME currently remains in good financial health and we are seeing record levels of income and expenditure, a significant proportion of this is restricted to our small grants programmes. The day-to-day running of OSME, including the publication and distribution of *Sandgrouse*, requires unrestricted funds for which membership subscriptions have been the main source. This is an issue that OSME Council will be looking at in detail in the coming year.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all OSME Council members for their hard work and dedication over the course of the last 12 months. Finally, thanks to all OSME members, supporters and donors for their help during 2024, we wouldn't have been able to achieve so much without your continued support.

Financial review

Chris Hughes, OSME Treasurer

I must start this report with a dedication to our long-standing and brilliant Treasurer John Warr who tragically died in 2024 after a long illness. His dedication to OSME and assiduous management of our accounts is the foundation on which we have so successfully grown our Society into the organisation having the impact it does today across the region. Finance was never dull to John whose attention to detail and unswerving accuracy gave us the confidence we needed in making our spending decisions.

He is still so sorely missed by many.

The Society's year ended once again well-funded, a reflection of the real and positive impact we are having across the region with our supporters, partners and members. Income was at our usual level of £64,363. Conservation expenditure of just over £32,811 was a new record. We carried forward nearly £162,582 in unrestricted funds and over £18,985 in restricted and committed funds into 2025, meaning we will have no problem in continuing and even enhancing our activity at the current pace.

Ornithological Society of the Middle East, The Caucasus and Central Asia

Income

We were delighted to once again receive \$25,000 from the March Conservation Fund, our activities clearly tying in with their aims and objectives.

We would like to acknowledge significant other donations this year from BirdLife Finland, Birding Ecotours, British Birds, Chris Spooner, Colin Johnson, Gary Brown, Michael McGrady and Edward Stubbins.

Many members also took the opportunity to make smaller donations with their subscription renewals.

We really appreciated the continued support of our Corporate Members: Birdfinders, Birdtour Asia, Greentours, Oriole Birding, Rockjumper, Bird Brain UK, Turnstone Ecology, Arabian Birds, Opticron, Bloomsbury/Helm and Skua Nature.

We ended the year with our membership falling very slightly over that in 2023 a reflection of a drop of memberships for organisations generally, a trend that seems to be accelerating.

The supported membership scheme, where a member pays an additional membership subscription on behalf of an OSME region national, saw a significant increase, with members backing this important opportunity for young birders and conservationists. We now have over 55 supported members and are looking to increase this number, especially with the availability of Sandgrouse digitally which has particular appeal to younger people.

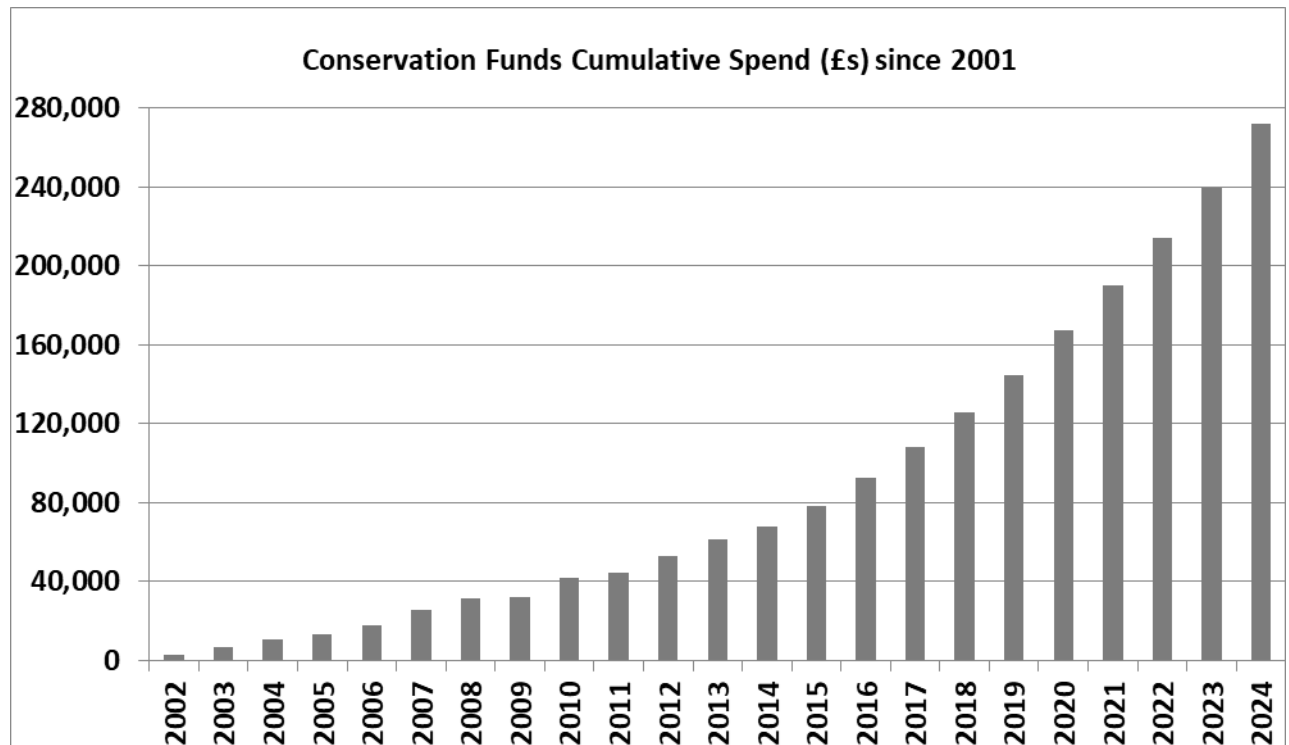
Some 22 institutions (universities, libraries, etc) subscribed to receive copies of Sandgrouse for which they paid an average of £40. A further 15 institutions, clubs and associates received complimentary copies. Our corporate members received copies as part of their membership and six copies were provided to the legal deposit libraries.

Our following on Facebook continues to rise with over 5,500 followers on this key Social Media site. Converting these to memberships is a priority for us going forward.

Ornithological Society of the Middle East, The Caucasus and Central Asia

Conservation Funds

The graph shows the cumulative growth in Conservation Fund spending since 2001 and illustrates the rapid growth in our conservation activity with our spend more than doubling over the past seven years!



Since the year 2000, OSME has made conservation and research grants £272,000 to projects across our region, and we are delighted that once again we have increased our year-on-year spend.

Grant distribution to date: Middle East 42%, Central Asia 34%, Caucasus 23%, Whole Region 2%.

Youth Development Funds

We exceeded our record spend in 2023 with over £22,000 in grants in this one of our key areas of activity'.

Since 2016 we have awarded £96,000 to projects involving young birders in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Cyprus, Egypt, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Northern Cyprus and Turkey . We certainly wish to build on in coming years as we expand the 'Youth' projects into further countries across the OSME Region which will include Kazakhstan in 2025.

The total spend from our Conservation and Youth funds exceeded £55,000 a record for all members to be proud of.

Ornithological Society of the Middle East, The Caucasus and Central Asia

Expenditure

Our increased investment in Sandgrouse continued to maintain its quality with significantly larger editions. This was somewhat compensated by the increasing take-up of the digital edition which has helped reduce spiralling postage costs. As ever, administration costs were well controlled and we will always strive to keep these to a minimum.

The charity's policy on reserves

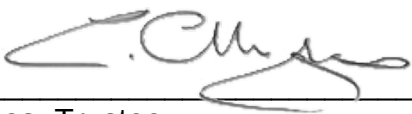
The trustees have a reserves policy which is to conduct the business of the Society to complete the year with unrestricted funds on the balance sheet of more than £12,000. The trustees consider this would enable an orderly closure of the Charity if, due to unforeseen circumstances, that unfortunately became necessary. At the end of 2024, with unrestricted funds on the balance sheet of £162,582, the reserves policy was considered fulfilled.

Future Financial Policy

The Society proposes to continue producing two new issues of Sandgrouse per year and maintain and enhance the digital edition and produce a quarterly newsletter to all members.

We will continue to enhance our presence at the UK Birdfair and other events and further develop our Corporate Sponsorships. We will aim to maintain our Conservation Fund grants at the 2020 level of at least £20,000 a year. We will also continue the development of the Youth Development Fund and the Trevor Poyser Species Conservation Fund. The reserve fund target will remain at £12,000.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees:

Signed  _____ Date 12/02/2026
Chris Hughes, Trustee

**Independent examiner's report to the trustees of
Ornithological Society of the Middle East, The Caucasus and Central
Asia
for the year ended 31 December 2024**

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Ornithological Society of the Middle East, The Caucasus and Central Asia (the charity) for the year ended 31 December 2024.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of the charity you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

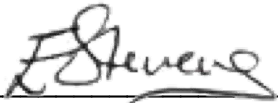
I report in respect of my examination of the charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed  Date 12/02/2026
Eva Stevens BSc, CPFA
Employee of Community Accounting Plus

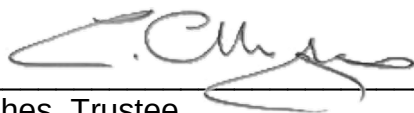
**Ornithological Society of the Middle East, The Caucasus and Central
Asia**
Receipts & payments account
for the year ended 31 December 2024

2023				2024	
Total			Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
Funds			Funds	Funds	Funds
£		Note	£	£	£
	Receipts				
652	Bank interest (net/gross)		7242	-	7242
185317	Grants & donations	2	7006	38770	45776
11690	Membership		11345	-	11345
197659	Total receipts		25593	38770	64363
	Payments				
16231	Production and Distribution of Sandgrouse		16377	-	16377
50380	Conservation Fund Grants		4011	28800	32811
-	Youth and Community Fund Grants		10400	12150	22550
-	Administration		4295	-	4295
-	Events and Publicity		1690	-	1690
2583	Fundraising costs		-	-	-
3466	Support costs		-	-	-
1386	Bank charges		-	-	-
74046	Total payments		36773	40950	77723
123613	Net receipts/(payments)		(11180)	(2180)	(13360)
71314	Cash funds at start of this period		174272	20655	194927
-	Transfers between funds		(510)	510	-
194927	Cash funds at end of this period		162582	18985	181567

**Ornithological Society of the Middle East, The Caucasus and Central
Asia
Statement of assets and liabilities
at 31 December 2024**

2023			2024
£		Note	£
<u>194927</u>	Cash assets		
<u>194927</u>	Bank accounts		<u>181567</u>
			<u>181567</u>
	Other monetary assets		
<u>-</u>	Prepayment	4	<u>229</u>
<u>-</u>			<u>229</u>
	Assets retained for the charity's own use		
	General equipment.		
	Liabilities		
<u>(22795)</u>	Creditors	5	<u>(1140)</u>
<u>(22795)</u>			<u>(1140)</u>

These financial statements are accepted on behalf of the charity by:

Signed  Date 12/02/2026
Chris Hughes, Trustee

Ornithological Society of the Middle East, The Caucasus and Central Asia
Notes to the accounts
for the year ended 31 December 2024

1. Receipts & payments accounts

Receipts and payments accounts contain a summary of money received and money spent during the period and a list of assets and liabilities at the end of the period. Usually, cash received and cash spent will include transactions through bank accounts and cash in hand.

2. Grants & donations

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total £
March Conservation Fund of America	-	19471	19471
Little Bustard research project in Azerbaijan	-	11000	11000
Birdlife Finland	-	8299	8299
General donations	7006	-	7006
	<u>7006</u>	<u>38770</u>	<u>45776</u>

3. Funds analysis

	Opening balance £	Receipts (Payments) £	£	Transfers £	Closing balance £
Restricted funds					
Conservation Fund	11248	19471	(18734)	-	11985
Little Bustard AZ Project	-	11000	(11000)	-	-
BirdLife Finland/OSME	-	8299	(8809)	510	-
OMAN Fund	2407	-	(2407)	-	-
Youth and Community Funds	7000	-	-	-	7000
	<u>20655</u>	<u>38770</u>	<u>(40950)</u>	<u>510</u>	<u>18985</u>
Unrestricted funds					
General Fund	160267	25593	(36773)	(130086)	19001
Birds of the Middle East Fund	2971	-	-	-	2971
Trevor Poyser Fund	11034	-	-	-	11034
Harry James Goodhart Legacy Fund	-	-	-	129576	129576
	<u>174272</u>	<u>25593</u>	<u>(36773)</u>	<u>(510)</u>	<u>162582</u>

The transfer from the General fund to the BirdLife Finland/OSME fund is to cover the deficit on this activity.

The transfer from the General fund to the Harry James Goodhart Legacy fund is to administer funds donated over several years by James Goodhart.

Ornithological Society of the Middle East, The Caucasus and Central Asia

Trevor Poyser Fund: Following a major legacy from Trevor Poyser, this fund was established in 2019 and specifically focusses on single-species conservation of birds on the Red and Amber lists of BirdLife International.

Birds of the Middle East (Arabic) Fund: This fund was set up to raise funds for the publication of an App version of the BotME Book, a sole venture of the Society funded by donations and fundraising activities. It is maintained to fund future updates and improvements.

Harry James Goodhart Legacy Fund: This fund was set up to administer funds received as a very generous legacy in 2023.

Conservation Fund: This fund was set up to provide awards to projects for conservation in the region. It is funded from the General Fund.

Youth and Community Fund: This fund was established to administer funds donated specifically for youth and community projects.

Little Bustard Azerbaijan Project Fund: This fund was set up to raise funds for a major project studying Little Bustards in Azerbaijan. It had contributions from the Rufford Foundation, British Birds and Birding Ecotours.

The Oman Fund: A fund set up to administer the remaining funds of the Oman Ornithological Society at their closure in 2017. The condition was that the money should be spent on projects in the country, a condition fulfilled in 2024.

Birdlife Finland/OSME Fund: A fund set up after a generous donation from BirdLife Finland to tackle Illegal Bird killing in Lebanon. Money also came from the OSME Conservation Funds and many small donors.

Ornithological Society of the Middle East, The Caucasus and Central Asia

4. Prepayment

	£
Insurance	37
Website	192
	<u>229</u>

5. Creditors

	£
Independent examination fee	1140
	<u>1140</u>

6. Trustees' remuneration

Trustees received no expenses, remuneration or benefits in this period.

7. Related party transactions

There were no related party transactions in this period.

8. Glossary of terms

Creditors: These are amounts owed by the charity, but not paid during the accounting period.

Prepayments: These are services that the charity has paid for in advance, but not used during the accounting period.

Restricted funds: These are funds given to the charity, subject to specific restrictions set by the donor, but still within the general objects of the charity.

Accounts

**ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE MIDDLE EAST
THE CAUCASUS & CENTRAL ASIA**



**TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT & ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023**



The globally threatened Sociable Lapwing *Vanellus gregarius* featured heavily in major conservation, education and research projects funded by OSME in 2023

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**ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE MIDDLE EAST
THE CAUCASUS & CENTRAL ASIA**

**TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023**

Reference and Administrative details

Name of Charity:	Ornithological Society of the Middle East, the Caucasus & Central Asia (OSME)
Charity Number:	282938
Principal Address:	The Society does not have a principal office address as all activities and Council meetings are undertaken at the private addresses of Council members or other equivalent locations. The mail forwarding address: OSME, c/o The Lodge, Sandy, Bedfordshire, SG19 2DL is used for general correspondence.
Email:	info@osme.org
Website:	www.osme.org
Bankers:	Lloyds Bank plc 35 High Street Biggleswade Bedfordshire SG18 0JD
Independent Examiner:	Michael C Jennings Warners Farm House Warners Drove Somersham Cambridgeshire PE28 3WD

The OSME Council Members in 2022:

Trustees:

Marko Halonen (Secretary)
Mike Blair (OSME Region List)
Murray Brown
Paul Donald (*Sandgrouse* Editor)
Tomas Haraldsson (Youth Officer)
Ian Harrison
Chris Hughes (Joint Treasurer)
Robert Sheldon (Chair)

Co-opted:

AbdulRahman Al-Sirhan (Webmaster)
Effie Warr (Membership and Sales)
John Warr (Joint Treasurer)
Philip Roberts (Newsletter)

ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE MIDDLE EAST THE CAUCASUS & CENTRAL ASIA

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

Structure, Governance and Management

The Ornithological Society of the Middle East, the Caucasus and Central Asia, also known as OSME, is registered with the English Charity Commission (No. 282938) and governed under a constitution adopted 17 June 1981 and amended 10 June 2010. A Council of trustees elected by the members manages the affairs of the Society. There are no restrictions on membership of the Society subject to payment of the appropriate subscription.

The elected Council members serve for a period of five years. New Council members are nominated by paid-up members and are elected to office at the Annual General Meeting which was held online this year on Saturday 26th of November. Council has the power to co-opt additional members at any time where a specific need is identified and where the appropriate commitment cannot be found from amongst its numbers.

The elected Council is supported by two specialist sub-committees, the Editorial Board and the Conservation Fund Committee. The Editorial Board assists the Editor of *Sandgrouse* in compiling the content of each issue and the content of any supplementary publications according to a budget set by Council at the start of the year. The Conservation Fund Committee receives and reviews all grant applications made through a formal application procedure and makes recommendations to Council. All decisions on the allocation of funds to conservation projects are made by, and are the responsibility of, the elected Council.

The Society has no employees and owns no property or fixed assets; all the functions of an active and fully-compliant charity are performed by Council members working voluntarily with their own resources and from their own premises. This voluntary and low administrative cost approach enables the Charity to maximise the amounts expended on charitable activities and the Society recognises this very significant contribution with gratitude.

To assist them in understanding their responsibilities, all trustees are directed towards regular reference to the Charity Commission website. Council met formally three times during the year. Before each meeting, officers' reports were circulated to all Council members for information on the subjects under discussion and for the benefit of those not attending.

The Minutes of each formal meeting were circulated to all trustees and co-opted Council members soon after the meeting. Interaction between Council members in between formal meetings was by email through an email group. Most of these exchanges were seen by all trustee Council members and all co-opted Council members regardless of their involvement with the matter in hand.

A Risk Register is maintained so that Council members can identify the risks in their designated area of responsibility. No reportable incidents occurred during the year. However, Council remains aware of the need for continuous vigilance and review of all risk management procedures in place.

This year, Council has continued to address issues of governance and the provision of replacement in the event of incapacity of key trustees or co-opted Council members. Council recognises the general need to spread the administrative workload of the Society more evenly, and the need to reduce the concentration of key functions in a single incumbent working without deputy or understudy.

The Society acknowledges that it lacks the administrative and financial resources to embark on major projects and restricts itself to providing financial assistance to others, rather than organising and directing projects itself. It does not get involved with project details, except in an advisory role at the application stage, and is particularly careful to limit second-stage payments and commitments which carry forward to future years. In all its deliberations, the Society pays due regard to the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit in deciding the activities it should undertake.

Objectives and Activities

**ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE MIDDLE EAST
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FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023**

The object of the Charity is to promote a greater public understanding of Middle Eastern, Caucasian and Central Asian ornithology and thereby to encourage and facilitate conservation of the region's birds. This is achieved by the twice-yearly publication of a scientific journal, *Sandgrouse*, the holding of meetings, presence at events, the maintenance of a website, an active presence on social media, and the funding of fieldwork and other projects. Grants are awarded to approved projects from the funds of the Society and applicants are encouraged to submit their findings for publication in *Sandgrouse*.

The Constitution recognises four main categories of charitable activity:

1. Collect, collate, publish and disseminate ornithological data on countries in the Middle East, the Caucasus and Central Asia.
2. Publish a biannual journal of research and conservation results – *Sandgrouse*.
3. Encourage interest in birds in the area.
4. Work with other individuals and organisations with similar objectives and pursuing charitable activities concerned with ornithology in the Middle East, the Caucasus and Central Asia.

Chairman's Review of the Year

It is pleasing to reflect on what has been another successful year for OSME despite ongoing and emerging challenges. For the second year running, this annual review is much longer than usual due to the staggering amount of work we've supported over the last twelve months. Thanks to the amazing support of OSME members and donors we have continued to increase our expenditure through our small grants programmes, supporting a wide-range of projects across the Middle East, the Caucasus and Central Asia.

Funding conservation

During 2023 we funded eight projects through our Conservation Fund, including a joint project with the Bird Conservation Fund (a US registered charity) that supported the work of the Uzbekistan Society for the Protection of Birds (UzSPB) on the critically endangered Sociable Lapwing. Our long-term support of Batumi Raptor Count continued in 2023. The long running annual autumn survey at the spectacular migration bottleneck of Batumi is one of the leading raptor migration monitoring programmes in the world, and OSME were delighted to help match fund a crowdfunding campaign to keep this programme going for another year. The Near Threatened Little Bustard featured again with projects supported in both Azerbaijan and Kyrgyzstan. OSME funding of a Little Bustard project in Azerbaijan helped leverage additional financial support from the Rufford Foundation. The eight projects funded in 2023 were:

- Wintering Little Bustard survey at the main sites of Azerbaijan
- Back to the steppes: Ensuring the Little bustard's sustainable return to the Chuy valley of Kyrgyzstan
- Tagging Egyptian vultures at important congregation sites along the Central Asian Flyway
- Supporting the Batumi Raptor Count, Georgia

- Protecting the Critically Endangered Sociable Lapwing's key migratory stop-over site in Uzbekistan
- Autumn migration counts at Besh Barmag, Azerbaijan
- Sociable Lapwing surveys in central Asia
- Assessment of the impact of power lines on birds in West and South Issyk-Kul, Kyrgyzstan

Our total expenditure through the Conservation Fund in 2023 was £25,236 which continues the run of record-breaking years since 2014. Huge thanks to the March Conservation Fund and to a long-standing anonymous donor for their ongoing financial support, which has enabled us to grow both our Conservation and Youth Development Funds in recent years.

In June, we awarded our fourth Trevor Poyser Species Conservation Fund grant of £4,900 to WWF Türkiye for their work on the Critically Endangered Northern Bald Ibis: "Back to the Migration for Northern Bald Ibis in Türkiye." The funding will enable three satellite transmitters to be attached to Northern Bald Ibis (Plate 1) to further understand the migration behaviour of previously semi-wild birds and the threats they face.

We have sufficient funds to continue this dedicated small grants programme for at least a further two years and are looking at ways we can continue this in the future. OSME Council have been really pleased with the level of interest that we have had in the Trevor Poyser Species Conservation Fund and the high quality of the applications we have received to date.



Plate 1. A Northern Bald Ibis fitted with a satellite transmitter as part of the project funded by the Trevor Poyser Species Conservation Fund (Photo credit: Can Yeniurt)

Applications to the Conservation Fund and Trevor Poyser Species Conservation Fund are thoroughly reviewed by an independent committee that makes recommendations to OSME Council. During 2023 the committee was chaired by Dr Maxim Koshkin with expert input from

Dr Nabegh Ghazal Asswad, Sharif Jbour, Dr Alyona Koshkina, Hana Raza and Maïa Sarrouf Willson. On behalf of OSME Council, I thank the Committee for their hard work and expertise in reviewing applications and providing clear guidance on which projects should be supported.

Youth Development Fund – supporting the conservationists of tomorrow

Our Youth Development Fund continues to go from strength to strength under the watchful eye of Tomas Haraldsson, OSME's Youth Development Officer. A key strength of our youth development work is that we look to provide continuity for projects so that they can develop over time. This may involve financial support over several years, but also helping with awareness raising and promotion of projects, as well as offering advice. This approach is exemplified by two projects we've been working with in Türkiye. In 2023 we provided the third round of funding to the Simurg Bird Sanctuary to support the running of their second Avian Ecology School (although the activities were postponed until Jan/Feb 2024). The six-day school hosted 25 students from across Türkiye, including nine participants from the earthquake-affected regions (that struck in February 2023), where many people are still living in temporary containers. The participants attended 15 lectures and workshops, delivered by instructors from seven different countries. Topics covered included an introduction to statistics, grant writing, coding, and geographical information systems (GIS), all essential skills for conservationists and academics. Our support for this programme is key to ensuring the organisers can continue to offer such an in-depth programme of activities for a wide range of students. Another project, the Eymir Ringing Camp was supported for a second autumn of bird ringing activities, again to help enthuse and train the next generation of birders and conservationists. The project always gets excellent coverage in local and national media, and our support enables participants from across Türkiye to attend the programme. Both the Avian School of Ecology and the Eymir Ringing Camp received binoculars provided by OSME Corporate Sponsors, Opticron (Plate 2) and were handed over by Stephen Menzie during the European Ornithologists' Union (EOU) conference in Lund, Sweden, in August.

The handing over of the binoculars at the EOU conference was made possible thanks to a new initiative that was launched by OSME during 2023. Council approved the establishment of a Youth Travel Bursary in late 2022 and the first recipient was Melisa Soyluer from Simurg Bird Sanctuary. You can read a guest blog from Melisa on the OSME website (published on the 1st March 2024) which highlights the value of this new bursary.



Plate 2. Stephen Menzie handing over Opticron binoculars to Melisa Soyluer for use by participants in the Avian School of Ecology and the Eymir Ringing Camp.

Overall, an amazing £20,244 supporting nine projects/initiatives was spent through our Youth Development Fund in 2023 and it is especially pleasing to see many donations being made specifically to support this area of our work.

When our three small grants are combined, during 2023 OSME funded projects across our region to the value of £50,380. It will be a significant challenge to maintain this overall level of expenditure in the coming years, but OSME Council will continue to look for future funding opportunities.

***Sandgrouse* – showcasing ornithology in the OSME region**

Volume 45 of our well-respected journal *Sandgrouse* incorporated papers from all corners of the OSME region, including ones supported by OSME small grants (Little Bustards in Azerbaijan (Issue 1) and Syrian Serin in Lebanon (Issue 2)). More members than ever are now opting to receive the journal in digital format which helps OSME make a significant savings on postage costs. This is greatly appreciated as the cost of postage is rising sharply. Members wishing to switch to digital format can email sandgrouse.digital@osme.org.



Plate 3. *Sandgrouse* Volume 45

Communicating with members and supporters

OSME were again present at the Global Birdfair at the Rutland Showground, Leicestershire, UK, and it is now one of the few events where we can meet many of our members and supporters face-to-face. The Birdfair is a significant investment in terms of both money and time, but Council remains committed to attend this annual event in the coming years. The e-newsletter that was launched in 2021 continued with two more issues in 2023 thanks to the sterling efforts of Phil Roberts and a host of contributors. The number of subscribers continues to grow, and the feedback so far has been wholly positive. It is easy to subscribe via

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**TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT
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the home page of our website and it is free to both members and non-members. Our Facebook page is increasingly popular with visitors from across the OSME region. More content than ever is being published in local languages, Turkish, Azeri, Georgian and Arabic, thanks to in-country OSME members volunteering as guest editors. Engagement on our other social media channels (X/Twitter and YouTube) has been sporadic due to a lack of capacity within OSME Council. Can you help with OSME's social media channels? If so, please contact me at chairman@osme.org.

Membership recruitment remains a concern for OSME, as it does for most similar-sized charities and organisations. Overall, we saw a slight decline in membership again during 2023, which has a significant impact on our unrestricted funds. Whilst OSME currently remains in good financial health and we are seeing record levels of income and expenditure, a significant proportion of this is restricted to our small grants programmes. The day-to-day running of OSME, including the publication and distribution of *Sandgrouse*, requires unrestricted funds for which membership subscriptions have been the main source. This is an issue that OSME Council will be looking at in detail in the coming year.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all OSME Council members for their hard work and dedication over the course of the last 12 months. Finally, thanks to all OSME members, supporters and donors for their help during 2023, we wouldn't have been able to achieve so much without your continued support.

Treasurer's Report

The Society's year ended once again with a strong balance sheet, a reflection we feel of the real and positive impact we are having across the region with our supporters, partners and members.

Income was up £140,000 on 2022, mostly due to a significant, surprising and very welcome legacy from the estate of long-time supporter Harry James Goodhart of £129,500. Conservation expenditure of just over £50,000 matched that of 2022. We carried forward just over £166,000 in unrestricted funds and nearly £29,000 in restricted and committed funds into 2024, meaning we will have no problem in continuing and even enhancing our activity at the current pace.

Income

We were delighted to once again receive \$25,000 from the March Conservation Fund, our activities clearly tying in with their aims and objectives.

We would like to acknowledge significant other donations this year from a major anonymous donor, Nautica, The Bird Conservation Fund of America, Wader Quest, Chris Spooner, Colin Johnson, Per Oystein Klunderud, Geoffrey Jenkins. Mohammed Shobrak and Shunji Usui.

Many members also took the opportunity to make smaller donations with their subscription renewals.

We really appreciated the continued support of our Corporate Members: Birdfinders, Birdtour Asia, Greentours, Oriole Birding, Rockjumper, Bird Brain UK, Turnstone Ecology, Arabian Birds, Opticron, Bloomsbury/Helm and Skua Nature.

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FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023**

A Gift Aid claim for £4,558 was successfully submitted.

We ended the year with our membership falling over that in 2023 a reflection of a drop of memberships for organisations generally.

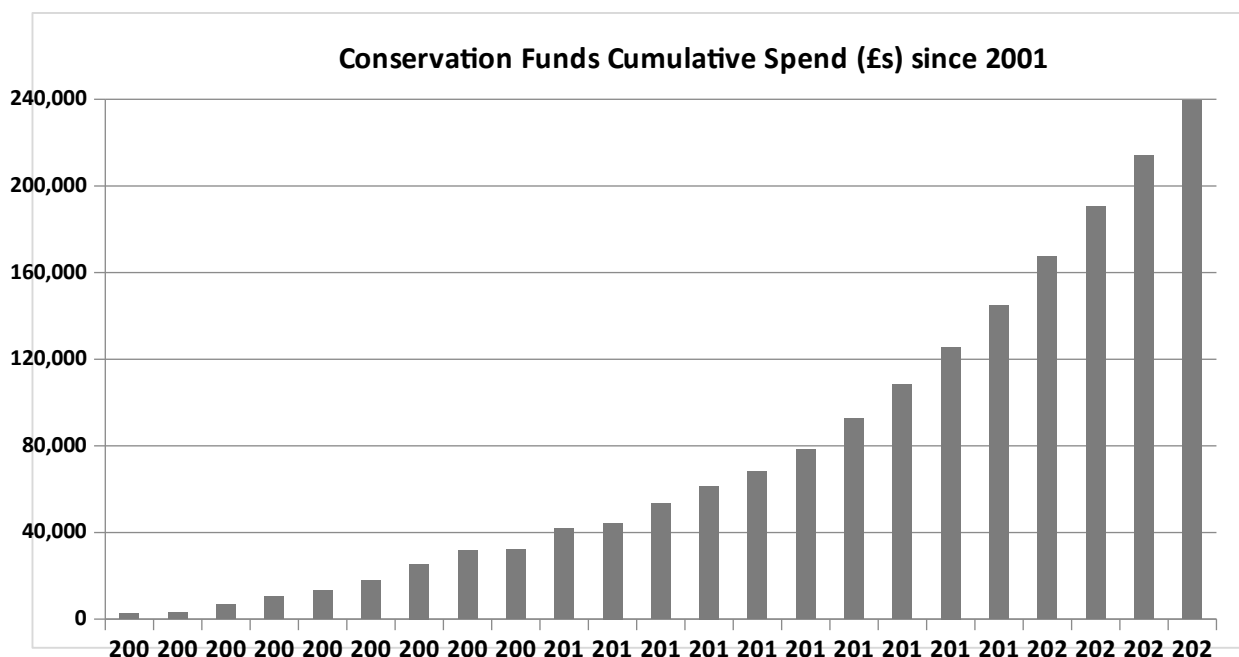
The supported membership scheme, where a member pays an additional membership subscription on behalf of an OSME region national, saw a significant increase, with members backing this important opportunity for young birders and conservationists. We now have over 53 supported members and are looking to increase this number, especially with the availability of *Sandgrouse* digitally which has particular appeal to younger people.

Some 22 institutions (universities, libraries etc) subscribed to receive copies of *Sandgrouse* for which they paid an average of £40. A further 15 institutions, clubs and associates received complimentary copies. Our corporate members received copies as part of their membership and six copies were provided to the legal deposit libraries.

Our following on both Facebook and Twitter continues to rise with over 5,000 followers on each of these key Social Media sites. Converting these to memberships is a priority for us going forward.

Conservation Funds

The graph shows the cumulative growth in Conservation Fund spending since 2001 and illustrates the rapid growth in our conservation activity with our spend more than doubling over the past seven years!



Since the year 2000, OSME has made conservation and research grants nearing £240,000 to projects across our region and we are delighted that once again we have increased our year-on-year spend.

Grant distribution to date: Middle East 40%, Central Asia 36%, Caucasus 21%, Whole Region 3%

Youth Development Funds

We matched our record spend in 2022 with over £20,000 in grants in this one of our key areas of activity'

**ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE MIDDLE EAST
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Since 2016 we have awarded £77,000 to projects involving young birders in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Cyprus, Egypt, Georgia, Lebanon and Turkey at an average of £8,000 per year, a sum we wish to build on in coming years as we expand the 'Youth' projects into further countries across the OSME Region.

As the Chairman's report confirmed once again our investment from the Conservation, Youth and Trevor Poyser Funds reached over £50,000 pounds in 2023.

Expenditure

Our increased investment in *Sandgrouse* continued to maintain its quality with significantly larger editions. This was somewhat compensated by the increasing take-up of the digital edition which has helped reduce spiralling postage costs.

As ever, administration costs were well controlled and we will always strive to keep these to a minimum.

Accounts Examiner

Mike Jennings, a former Treasurer and eminent stalwart of OSME, has again examined and reported on the accounts without charge. This has been done in full conformity with the requirements of the Charity Commission both for accounting standards and, considering his long and close association with the Society, his own eligibility for this work. We extend a special thank you to Mike for this valuable contribution.

Reserves Policy

The trustees have a reserves policy which is to conduct the business of the Society to complete the year with unrestricted funds on the balance sheet of more than £12,000. The trustees consider this would enable an orderly closure of the Charity if, due to unforeseen circumstances, that unfortunately became necessary. At the end of 2023, with unrestricted funds on the balance sheet of £165,923, the reserves policy was considered fulfilled.

Future Financial Policy

The Society proposes to continue producing two new issues of *Sandgrouse* per year and maintain and enhance the digital edition and produce a quarterly newsletter to all members.

We will continue to enhance our presence at the UK Birdfair and other events and further develop our Corporate Sponsorships. We will aim to maintain our Conservation Fund grants at the 2020 level of at least £20,000 a year. We will also continue the development of our two new funds, the Youth Development Fund and the Trevor Poyser Species Conservation Fund. The reserve fund target will remain at £12,000.

Trustees' Responsibilities

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**TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023**

Laws applicable to charities in England and Wales require Council, as trustees, to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the Charity's financial activities during the year, and of its financial position at the end of the year. In preparing those financial statements, the trustees should follow best practice and:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- state whether applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the statement of accounts
- prepare the financial accounts on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Charity will continue its operations

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy the financial position of the Charity, and which enable them to both ascertain the financial position of the Charity and to ensure that the financial statements comply with applicable law, accounting standards and the Charities SORP. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approved and signed on behalf of the trustees:



Rob Sheldon

Chairman

Chris Hughes

Treasurer

October 26th 2024

**ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE MIDDLE EAST
THE CAUCASUS & CENTRAL ASIA**

**TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023**
Independent Examiner's Report

Independent Report to the Trustees of the Ornithological Society of the Middle East, the Caucasus & Central Asia – Charity number 282938

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above-named charity for the year ended 31 December 2023.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and Fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Michael C. Jennings
27th June 2024

**ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE MIDDLE EAST
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**TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023
*Statement of Financial Activities***

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Income from:				
<u>Donations and legacies</u>				
Donations from members	3,876	-	3,876	4,103
Gift Aid tax refund	-	-	0	4,596
Fund donations	-	41,468	41,468	35,193
Other donations	3,038	-	3,038	577
			129,57	
Legacies	129,576	-	6	-
<u>Charitable activities</u>				
Subscriptions	11,690	-	11,690	11,235
Gift Aid tax refund	4,558	-	4,558	909
Sale of publications	-	-	0	-
Donations from Corporate Sponsors	2,800	-	2,800	350
<u>Other trading activities</u>				
Fundraising events	-	-	0	-
<u>Investments</u>				
Bank and other interest	652	-	652	55
Total	156,190	41,468	197,658	57,017
Expenditure on:				
<u>Raising funds</u>				
Cost of sales - goods bought in	-	-	0	-
Fundraising costs	-	2,583	2,583	5,492
<u>Charitable activities</u>				
Conservation Fund grants	-	50,380	50,380	50,435
Conservation projects	-	-	0	-
Production of journal <i>Sandgrouse</i>	10,091	-	10,091	13,649
<u>Support costs</u>				
Postage of journal <i>Sandgrouse</i>	6,140	-	6,140	4,153
Support costs	3,466	-	3,466	2,358
Bank charges	1,386	-	1,386	1,591
Total	21,084	52,962	74,046	77,678
Net Income/(Expenditure)	135,107	(11,495)	123,612	(20,661)
Transfer between funds	-	-	0	-
Net movement in funds	135,107	(11,495)	123,612	(20,661)

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TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023
Statement of Financial Activities

Total funds brought forward	30,816	40,498	71,314	91,975
Total funds carried forward	<u>165,923</u>	<u>29,003</u>	<u>194,927</u>	<u>71,314</u>

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**TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023
Balance Sheet**

		2023	2022
Fixed assets:	£	£	
Equipment	-	-	
Current assets:			
Stocks	-	-	
Debtors			201
Cash	- current account	747	-
	- deposit account	74,180	70,032
	- term deposit account	120,000	-
Total current assets		194,927	70,233
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year			
Deferred income - pre-paid subscriptions		11,095	13,120
Grants awarded but not yet paid		-	-
Other creditors			1,695
Sub total		11,095	14,815
Creditors: amounts falling due after one year			
Deferred income - pre-paid subscriptions		11,700	12,620
Provision for activities and liabilities		(22,795)	(28,516)
Net current assets		194,927	71,314
Funds:			
General Fund		165,923	30,816
Restricted Funds		29,003	40,498
		194,927	71,314

ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE MIDDLE EAST
THE CAUCASUS & CENTRAL ASIA

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023
Notes to the Financial Statements

1. Accounting Policies

- a. Basis of accounting. The accounts are prepared under the historic cost convention.
- b. Subscription income is credited to the income and expenditure account in the period to which it relates. Subscriptions received in advance are carried forward as deferred income in the balance sheet and result in a liability for the future provision of membership services.
- c. Stocks. No value is placed on the stocks of back copies of *Sandgrouse*, primary purpose goods and donated goods held for sale in the Society's accounts.

2. Conservation Grants

From Conservation Funds:	£
Wintering Little Bustard Survey, Azerbaijan	2,115
Little Bustard in Chuy Valley, Kyrgyzstan	2,500
Tagging Egyptian Vultures in Uzbekistan	3,500
Batumi Raptor Count match funding, Georgia	2,681
Sociable Lapwing stopover monitoring in Uzbekistan	4,996
Besh Barmag Migration monitoring, Azerbaijan	1,944
Surveys of migrating Sociable Lapwing in Central Asia	4,500
Impact of power lines on the Saker Falcon, Kyrgyzstan	3,000
Migration of the Northern Bald Ibis, Turkey	4,900
	<u>30,136</u>

From Youth and Community development Funds:	£
Eymir bird migration study, Turkey	3,400
Avian ecology school, Turkey	2,800
Galala observatory raptor count, Egypt	4,000
Travel bursary Melisa Soyluer, Turkey to EOC 2023 Sweden	300
Building management capacity at Besh Barmag, Azerbaijan.	1,944
Kuskor youth bird camp, Northern Cyprus	1,800
Scientific training in bird monitoring, Egypt	2,000
Young falconers bird camp, Poti, Georgia	2,000
Aswan bird camp, Egypt	2,000
	<u>20,244</u>

3. Trustees

No remuneration was paid or was payable out of OSME funds directly or indirectly to any Council member or to any person or persons known to be connected to them. Council members have been reimbursed at cost for purchases made on behalf of the Society.

4. Employees

The Charity has no paid employees.

5. Taxation

OSME is a registered charity and, under current legislation, has no liability to taxation.

**ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE MIDDLE EAST
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**TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023**
Notes to the Financial Statements

6. Movement in Funds

	Brought Forward	Income 2023	Expenditure 2023	Transfer s In	Transfers Out	Carried Forward
<u>Unrestricted Funds</u>	33,303	26,615	23,666	1,120	6,680	30,691
<u>Legacies</u>	0	129,576	0			129,576
<u>Restricted & Designated Funds</u>						
Birds of the Middle East Fund	2,887	84	0			2,971
Trevor Poyser Fund	15,934	0	4,900			11,034
Supported Membership Fund	0	1,120	0		1,120	0
Bird Conservation/UzSPB Fund	0	4,980	4,996	16		0
<u>Conservation Funds</u>						
Conservation Fund - General	0	0	1,081	1,081		0
Conservation Fund - March Conservation	14,916	12,234	10,559	4,000	9,344	11,248
Conservation Fund - Anonymous	0	7,000	7,000			0
James Goodhart Fund	1,600	0	1,600			0
OMAN Fund	2,407	0	0			2,407
<u>Youth and Community Funds</u>						
Youth and Community - General	0	50	1,632	1,582		0
Youth and Community - March	0	7,000	9,344	9,344		7,000

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Conservation						
Youth and Community - Nautica	0	4,000	4,000			0
Youth and Community - Anonymous	268	5,000	5,268			0
Restricted & Designated Funds Total	38,012	41,468	50,380			34,659
Total Funds	71,314	197,659	74,046	17,143	17,143	194,927

9. Description of Funds

We set up our funds to manage our donations correctly and ensure that the donor's funds are only used for the purposes they intended. This is a core principle of Charity Finance creating Unrestricted and Restricted Funds.

Unrestricted General Fund

The General Fund is the sole unrestricted cash fund of the society which receives all income and makes all payments. There are two bank accounts, a current account and an interest-earning deposit account. Transfers are made to and from other funds according to controls applying to those funds.

Birds of the Middle East (Arabic) Fund (Restricted)

This fund was set up to raise funds for the publication of an App version of the BotME Book, a sole venture of the Society funded by donations and fundraising activities. It is maintained to fund future updates and improvements.

Conservation Fund – General (Restricted)

This fund was set up to provide awards to projects for conservation in the region. It is funded from the General Fund.

Conservation Fund – Anonymous (Restricted)

This Conservation Fund was set up to provide awards to projects funded by a large donor who wishes to remain anonymous.

Conservation Fund – March Conservation Fund (Restricted)

This fund was set up to provide awards to projects funded by The March Conservation Fund.

James Goodhart Fund (Restricted)

This fund was set up to administer funds donated over several years by James Goodhart.

OMAN Fund (Restricted)

This Fund was set up to administer surplus funds from the dissolution of the Oman Bird Records Committee. It is to be used to fund ornithological projects in Oman. At the end of 2023, no such projects had been identified.

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Supported Membership Fund (Restricted)

The Supported Membership Fund was set up to provide honorary membership for nationals in the region who are not able to pay a full subscription. It is funded by subscriptions from Supporting Members.

Trevor Poyser Species Conservation Fund (Restricted)

Following a major legacy from Trevor Poyser, this fund was established in 2019 and specifically focusses on single-species conservation of birds on the Red and Amber lists of BirdLife International.

Youth and Community Fund – General (Restricted)

This fund was established to administer funds donated specifically for youth and community projects.

Youth and Community Fund – Anonymous (Restricted)

This Fund was set up to provide awards to youth and community projects funded by a large regular donor who wishes to remain anonymous.

Accounts

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The globally threatened Egyptian Vulture, *Neophron percnopterus* a bird found throughout the OSME Region which featured in many of our Conservation activities in 2022

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Reference and Administrative details

Name of Charity:	Ornithological Society of the Middle East, the Caucasus & Central Asia (OSME)
Charity Number:	282938
Principal Address:	The Society does not have a principal office address as all activities and Council meetings are undertaken at the private addresses of Council members or other equivalent locations. The mail forwarding address: OSME, c/o The Lodge, Sandy, Bedfordshire, SG19 2DL is used for general correspondence.
Email:	info@osme.org
Website:	www.osme.org
Bankers:	Lloyds Bank plc 35 High Street Biggleswade Bedfordshire SG18 0JD
Independent Examiner:	Michael C Jennings Warners Farm House Warners Drove Somersham Cambridgeshire PE28 3WD

The OSME Council Members in 2022:

Trustees:

Marko Halonen (Secretary)
Mike Blair (OSME Region List)
Murray Brown
Paul Donald (*Sandgrouse* Editor)
Tomas Haraldsson (Youth Officer)
Ian Harrison
Georgia Locock
Chris Hughes (Joint Treasurer)
Robert Sheldon (Chair)

Co-opted:

AbdulRahman Al-Sirhan (Webmaster)
Effie Warr (Membership and Sales)
John Warr (Joint Treasurer)
Philip Roberts (Newsletter)

ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE MIDDLE EAST
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Structure, Governance and Management

The Ornithological Society of the Middle East, the Caucasus and Central Asia, also known as OSME, is registered with the English Charity Commission (No. 282938) and governed under a constitution adopted 17 June 1981 and amended 10 June 2010. A Council of trustees elected by the members manages the affairs of the Society. There are no restrictions on membership of the Society subject to payment of the appropriate subscription.

The elected Council members serve for a period of five years. New Council members are nominated by paid-up members and are elected to office at the Annual General Meeting which was held online this year on Saturday 26th of November. Council has the power to co-opt additional members at any time where a specific need is identified and where the appropriate commitment cannot be found from amongst its numbers.

The elected Council is supported by two specialist sub-committees, the Editorial Board and the Conservation Fund Committee. The Editorial Board assists the Editor of *Sandgrouse* in compiling the content of each issue and the content of any supplementary publications according to a budget set by Council at the start of the year. The Conservation Fund Committee receives and reviews all grant applications made through a formal application procedure and makes recommendations to Council. All decisions on the allocation of funds to conservation projects are made by, and are the responsibility of, the elected Council.

The Society has no employees and owns no property or fixed assets; all the functions of an active and fully-compliant charity are performed by Council members working voluntarily with their own resources and from their own premises. This voluntary and low administrative cost approach enables the Charity to maximise the amounts expended on charitable activities and the Society recognises this very significant contribution with gratitude.

To assist them in understanding their responsibilities, all trustees are directed towards regular reference to the Charity Commission website. Council met formally three times during the year. Before each meeting, officers' reports were circulated to all Council members for information on the subjects under discussion and for the benefit of those not attending.

The Minutes of each formal meeting were circulated to all trustees and co-opted Council members soon after the meeting. Interaction between Council members in between formal meetings was by email through an email group. Most of these exchanges were seen by all trustee Council members and all co-opted Council members regardless of their involvement with the matter in hand.

A Risk Register is maintained so that Council members can identify the risks in their designated area of responsibility. No reportable incidents occurred during the year. However, Council remains aware of the need for continuous vigilance and review of all risk management procedures in place.

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This year, Council has continued to address issues of governance and the provision of replacement in the event of incapacity of key trustees or co-opted Council members. Council recognises the general need to spread the administrative workload of the Society more evenly, and the need to reduce the concentration of key functions in a single incumbent working without deputy or understudy.

The Society acknowledges that it lacks the administrative and financial resources to embark on major projects and restricts itself to providing financial assistance to others, rather than organising and directing projects itself. It does not get involved with project details, except in an advisory role at the application stage, and is particularly careful to limit second-stage payments and commitments which carry forward to future years. In all its deliberations, the Society pays due regard to the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit in deciding the activities it should undertake.

Objectives and Activities

The object of the Charity is to promote a greater public understanding of Middle Eastern, Caucasian and Central Asian ornithology and thereby to encourage and facilitate conservation of the region's birds. This is achieved by the twice-yearly publication of a scientific journal, *Sandgrouse*, the holding of meetings, presence at events, the maintenance of a website, an active presence on social media, and the funding of fieldwork and other projects. Grants are awarded to approved projects from the funds of the Society and applicants are encouraged to submit their findings for publication in *Sandgrouse*.

The Constitution recognises four main categories of charitable activity:

1. Collect, collate, publish and disseminate ornithological data on countries in the Middle East, the Caucasus and Central Asia.
2. Publish a biannual journal of research and conservation results – *Sandgrouse*.
3. Encourage interest in birds in the area.
4. Work with other individuals and organisations with similar objectives and pursuing charitable activities concerned with ornithology in the Middle East, the Caucasus and Central Asia.

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Chairman's Review of the Year

It is pleasing to reflect on what has been another successful year for OSME despite ongoing and emerging challenges. This annual review is much longer than usual due to the staggering amount of work we've supported over the last twelve months. Thanks to the amazing support of OSME members and donors we have continued to increase our expenditure through our three small grants programmes, supporting a wide-range of projects across the Middle East, the Caucasus and Central Asia.

Funding conservation

During 2022 we supported eight projects through our Conservation Fund, including our first ever project in Turkmenistan supporting the Menzbir Ornithological Society to undertake raptor surveys. Birds of Prey featured in a number of Conservation Fund projects during the previous 12 months, including supporting our friends at the Batumi Raptor Count. The long-running annual autumn survey at the spectacular migration bottleneck of Batumi is one of the leading raptor migration monitoring programmes in the world, and OSME were delighted to help match fund a crowdfunding campaign to secure the necessary funds to keep this programme going for another year. The nine projects were:

- Autumn raptor surveys by the Batumi Raptor Count (Georgia)
- Piloting spring surveys at Batumi (Georgia)
- Steppe Eagle investigation at Tuz Lake (Türkiye)
- Birds.kz and a family of central Asian websites (Kazakhstan)
- Raptor surveys in Turkmenistan (Turkmenistan)
- Satellite tracking Egyptian Vultures (Uzbekistan)
- Avifauna assessment of the Sanur Valley (Palestine)

Following on from the publication of a special issue of our journal *Sandgrouse* (see below), we joined forces with the Eurasian Bustard Alliance to offer a one-off bursary to support research and conservation of the globally vulnerable Great Bustard *Otis tarda*. Several strong applications were received but unfortunately, we were only able to support one. The successful application from Doğa Derneği and Ibrahim Kaan Özgencil focuses on identifying and mitigating threats the newly discovered Great Bustard *Otis tarda tarda* populations in Central Türkiye are facing.

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Our total expenditure through the Conservation Fund in 2022 was £23,680, which continues the run of record-breaking years since 2014. Huge thanks to the March Conservation Fund for their continued financial support, which I'm delighted to say has been increased for 2023. A long-standing anonymous donor has also continued to support our small grants programmes, enabling us to grow both our Conservation and Youth Development Funds.

In January, we awarded our third Trevor Poyser Species Conservation Fund grant to the Biodiversity Research and Conservation Center Community Trust (BRCC) in Kazakhstan for the 'Protection of Saker Falcon and Egyptian Vulture in the Karatau Mountains, South Kazakhstan' (Plate 1). The project aims to understand more about the distribution of the target species, assess the key threats and propose mitigation measures. Fieldwork is now complete and a report will be available via the OSME website during 2023. We have sufficient funds to continue this dedicated small grants programme for at least a further three years and are looking at ways we can continue this in the future. OSME Council have been really pleased with the level of interest that we have had in the Trevor Poyser Species Conservation Fund and the high quality of the applications we have received to date.

Applications to the Conservation Fund and Trevor Poyser Species Conservation Fund are thoroughly reviewed by an independent committee that makes recommendations to OSME Council. During 2022 the committee was chaired by Dr Maxim Koshkin with expert input from Dr Nabegh Ghazal Asswad, Sharif Jbour, Dr Alyona Koshkina, Hana Raza and Maïa Sarrouf Willson. On behalf of OSME Council, I thank the Committee for their hard work and expertise in reviewing applications and providing clear guidance on which projects should be supported.

Youth Development Fund – supporting the conservationists of tomorrow

After the challenges of the global pandemic, our Youth Development Fund had a fabulous 2022. The fund is overseen by Tomas Haraldsson, OSME's Youth Development Officer, and during the previous 12 months has supported more projects than ever before, including several new and exciting initiatives. In December 2021 we supported our first youth project in Aswan, south Egypt. Aswan is the main city in southern Egypt, adjacent to the river Nile and next to important bird areas such as Lake Nasser and the lagoons and wetlands of the Nile Valley. Local young birdwatchers, an ecotourism enterprise and the national BirdLife partner, Nature Conservation Egypt (NCE), joined forces and held an excellent weekend of training and awareness raising activities. A follow up project supported by the Harrison Zoological Museum Trust was initially planned for December 2022 but was rescheduled for January 2023. This is another exciting

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partnership that enables OSME to continue to develop medium and long-term support for our Youth Development projects.

Also in Egypt, throughout 2022 we've been in discussions with NCE to help support the Galala Raptor Count. Training young birdwatchers and researchers in raptor identification and monitoring techniques will be an integral part of the project going forward. For this project we welcomed Nautica Environmental Associates as a new OSME Corporate Sponsor who have agreed to fund this project with a significant donation.

Kuşkor and BirdLife Cyprus held a bird camp in November aimed at teenagers from the two communities in Cyprus (Plate 2). Seventeen participants joined the weekend long bird camp in November that included a tour of some of the local Important Bird Areas, as well as an introduction to birdwatching and conservation. At least 55 bird species were encountered over the course of the weekend, including two Little Owls which were caught during a ringing demonstration. This second Cyprus bird camp builds on the success of the inaugural event in 2021, and OSME look forward to continuing to work with Kuşkor and BirdLife Cyprus to support youth development activities in the future.

We expanded our work in Türkiye, including supporting the School of Avian Ecology organised by Ibrahim Kaan Özgencil and Melisa Soyluer. A total of 27 young conservationists, including one participant from each of Azerbaijan, Morocco and Russia, attended a week-long intensive programme of seminars, workshops and activities. Ringing activities run by the Eymir bird ringing station were also supported and we received excellent feedback from organisers and participants. Ibrahim Kaan Özgencil also hosted the first OSME supported webinar aimed at young Turkish conservationists as well as OSME Supported Members. This is a webinar series we hope to expand in 2023.

In Azerbaijan, the Besh Barmag autumn bird camp returned thanks to substantial funding from the Azerbaijan diaspora. The activities were organised and run by previous participants of the bird camp programme which is how OSME wants to see our work develop at the local level. Similarly, an exciting project collaboration with BirdLife Europe and Central Asia supported preliminary surveys of the globally near threatened Marbled Teal in Azerbaijan. The Azeri survey team was comprised of young birdwatchers and conservationists who had previously attended the Besh Barmag bird camps – Youth Development in action!

Overall, an amazing £21,755 was spent through our Youth Development Fund in 2022 and it is especially pleasing to see many donations being made specifically to support this area of our work.

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When our three small grants are combined, OSME funded projects across our region to the value of £50,319. This is an incredible achievement and is the first time our expenditure through our various grant programmes has exceeded £50,000. It will be a significant challenge to maintain this overall level of expenditure in the coming years but OSME Council will continue to look for future funding opportunities.

New partnership with Opticron

At the Global Birdfair in July 2022, leading optics supplier Opticron agreed to support our Youth Development Fund by providing quality telescopes and binoculars for our bird camps and other events. Many of the enthusiastic young birdwatchers who attend our camps for the first time don't have binoculars and this hinders their ability to get involved in all the activities. In the spring, two Opticron 20-60x Adventurer II WP telescopes were provided to the young Azeri team surveying Marbled Teal. In the future more of our Youth Development projects will be supplied with 8x42 Adventurer binoculars.

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***Sandgrouse* – showcasing ornithology in the OSME region**

Issue 44(1) of our well-respected journal *Sandgrouse* was dedicated to the globally threatened Great Bustard. The special issue included the Proceedings of the International Conference *Advancing the Conservation of the Great Bustard in Asia* as well as several papers specially commissioned to provide a comprehensive overview of the status of the species in the OSME region. The issue was very well received and will no doubt be the key scientific reference for this species across central Asia, the Caucasus and the Middle East for decades to come. Huge thanks to Dr Mimi Kessler (Eurasian Bustard Alliance & IUCN SSC Bustard Specialist Group) and Professor Nigel Collar (BirdLife International & IUCN SSC Bustard specialist Group) for their support of the *Sandgrouse* Editor Dr Paul Donald in the production of the special issue. The wonderful island of Socotra was the theme of the second issue of *Sandgrouse* 44(2), which was published in December, although postage to members was delayed until January 2023. More members than ever are now opting to receive the journal in digital format which helps OSME make a significant savings on postage costs. This is greatly appreciated as the cost of postage is rising sharply. Members wishing to switch to digital format can email sandgrousedigital@osme.org.

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The Global Birdfair and Falsterbo

In July 2022 the Global Birdfair returned at the Rutland Showground, Leicestershire, UK, and OSME continued a long-running presence at the event. It was the first time for more than two years that we were able to meet many of our members and supporters face-to-face. In September, for the first time, OSME also had a presence at the Falsterbo equivalent of the Birdfair thanks to Tomas Haraldsson and OSME members Stephen Menzie and Abdulhakim Abdi.

Communicating with members and supporters

The e-newsletter that was launched in 2021 continued with three more issues in 2022 thanks to the sterling efforts of Phil Roberts and a host of contributors. The number of subscribers continues to grow and the feedback so far has been wholly positive. It is easy to subscribe via the home page of our website and it is free to both members and non-members. Our Facebook page is increasingly popular with visitors from across the OSME region. More content than ever is being published in local languages, Turkish, Azeri, Georgian and Arabic, thanks to in-country OSME members volunteering as guest editors. Engagement on our other social media channels (Twitter and YouTube) has been sporadic due to a lack of capacity within OSME Council. Can you help with OSME's social media channels? If so, please contact me at chairman@osme.org.

We continued with online meetings during 2022 with two events held in January and November. Of the eight speakers across the two meetings, seven were from the OSME region. The Annual General Meeting was also held online in November and it has been agreed by OSME Council that all future AGMs will continue to be held remotely. The transition to online meetings has certainly enabled OSME to engage with many long-standing international members which was previously impossible with the focus on face-to-face meetings. OSME Council remain uncertain what role face-to-face meetings will have in the future and we are keeping this under review.

Membership recruitment remains a concern for OSME, as it does for most similar-sized charities and organisations. Overall, we saw a slight decline in membership again during 2022, which has a significant impact on our unrestricted funds. Whilst OSME currently remains in good financial health and we are seeing record levels of income and expenditure, a significant proportion of this is restricted to our small grants programmes. The day-to-day running of OSME, including the publication and distribution of *Sandgrouse*, requires unrestricted funds for which membership subscriptions have been the main source. This is an issue that OSME Council will be looking at in detail in the coming year.

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Changes to OSME Council during 2022

During 2022 there were a number of changes on OSME Council with Sajidah Ahmad standing down as Secretary and being succeeded by Marko Halonen at the 44th AGM. Tomas Haraldsson was also elected back on to Council as our Youth Development Officer, and Chris Hughes (co-treasurer) and Mike Blair (ORL manager) continue as co-opted members of Council as their official terms ended. Paul Stancliffe's term also came to an end at the 44th AGM in November. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all OSME Council members for their hard work and dedication over the course of the last 12 months.

Finally, thanks to all OSME members, supporters and donors for their help during 2022, we wouldn't have been able to achieve so much without your continued support.

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Treasurer's Report

The Society's year ended with a strong balance sheet, a reflection we feel of the real and positive impact we are having across the region with our supporters, partners and members.

Income was down £7,000 on 2021, mostly due to the ending of a significant sponsorship, which I'm delighted to report returned in 2023. Expenditure soared with a really significant increase in spending from our various conservation funds, meaning a deficit for the year of just over £20,000. We carried forward just over £30,000 in unrestricted funds and £40,000 in restricted and committed funds into 2023, meaning we will have no problem in continuing and even enhancing our activity at the current pace.

Income

We were delighted to receive an increase of \$5,000 to \$25,000 from the March Conservation Fund, our activities clearly tying in with their aims and objectives.

We would like to acknowledge significant other donations this year from Bird Life Europe, The Bustard Alliance, The Harrison Trust, The Azerbaijan Diaspora, Chris Spooner, Colin Johnson, Per Oystein Klunderud and Geoffrey Jenkins.

Many members also took the opportunity to make smaller donations with their subscription renewals.

We really appreciated the continued support of our Corporate Members: Birdfinders, Birdtour Asia, Greentours, Oriole Birding, Rockjumper, Bird Brain UK and Turnstone Ecology. We were delighted to welcome two new Corporate members during the year in Arabian Birds and Opticron.

A Gift Aid claim for £5,505 was successfully submitted.

We ended the year with our membership falling over that in 2021 a reflection of a drop of memberships for organisations generally.

The supported membership scheme, where a member pays an additional membership subscription on behalf of an OSME region national, saw a significant increase, with members backing this important opportunity for young birders and conservationists. We now have over 53 supported members and are looking to increase this number, especially with the availability of *Sandgrouse* digitally which has particular appeal to younger people.

Some 19 institutions (universities, libraries etc) subscribed to receive copies of *Sandgrouse* for which they paid an average of £40. A further 15 institutions, clubs and associates received complimentary copies. Our seven corporate members received copies as part of their membership and six copies were provided to the legal deposit libraries.

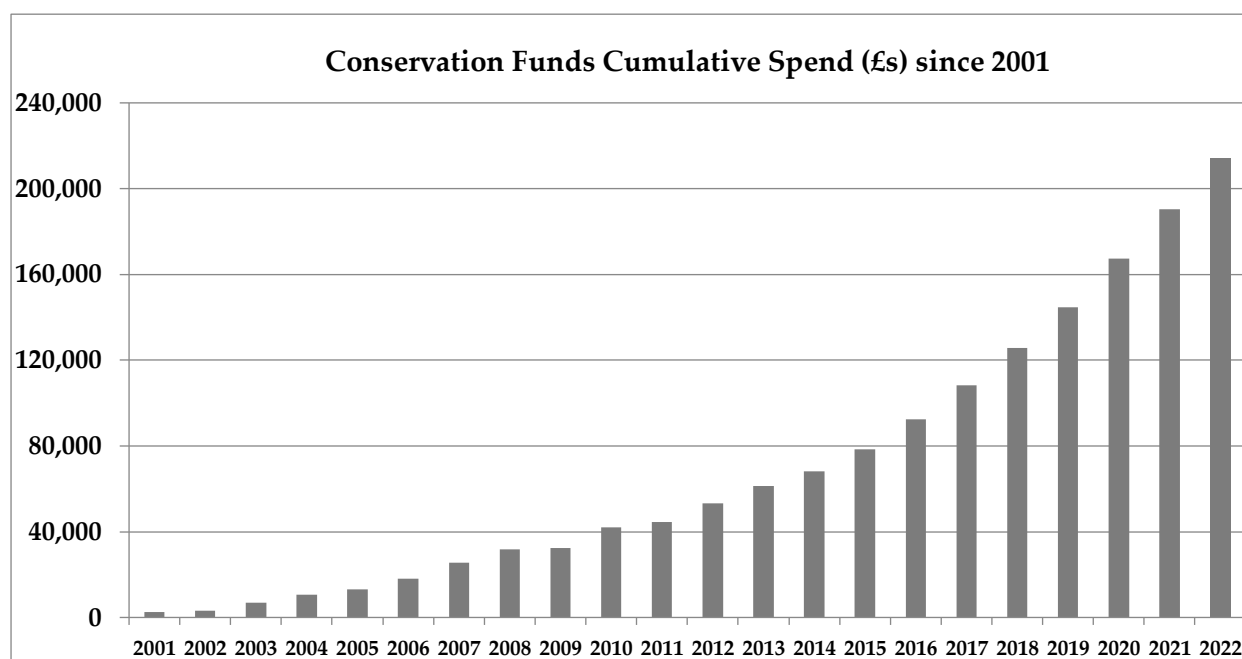
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Our following on both Facebook and Twitter continues to rise with over 5,000 followers on each of these key Social Media sites. Converting these to memberships is a priority for us going forward.

Conservation Funds

The graph shows the cumulative growth in Conservation Fund spending since 2001 and illustrates the rapid growth in our conservation activity with our spend more than doubling over the past six years!



Since the year 2000, OSME has made conservation and research grants of over £214,000 to projects across our region and we are delighted that once again we have increased our year-on-year spend with £23,680 going to a range of innovative and important initiatives outlined in the Chairman's report. This compares to £22,930 in 2022 and very pleasingly we maintained our goal of at least a £20,000 annual spend every year from 2020.

Grant distribution to date: Middle East 42%, Central Asia 34%, Caucasus 22%, Whole Region 2%

Youth Development Funds

A record spend in 2022 almost tripling that spent in 2021 to over £21,000 due to the support of many new funders highlighted in the Chair's report. This key activity for OSME goes from strength to strength.

Since 2016 we have awarded £55,000 to projects involving young birders in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Cyprus, Georgia, Lebanon and Turkey at an average of £8,000 per year, a sum we wish to build on in coming years as we expand the 'Youth' projects into further countries across the OSME Region.

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Overall our investment from the Conservation, Youth and Trevor Poyser Funds reached over £50,000 pounds in 2022, nearly 50% more than in any previous year and a figure we aim to exceed in 2023.

Expenditure

Our increased investment in *Sandgrouse* continued to maintain its quality with significantly larger editions. This was somewhat compensated by the increasing take-up of the digital edition which has helped reduce spiralling postage costs.

As ever, administration costs were well controlled and we will always strive to keep these to a minimum.

Accounts Examiner

Mike Jennings, a former Treasurer and eminent stalwart of OSME, has again examined and reported on the accounts without charge. This has been done in full conformity with the requirements of the Charity Commission both for accounting standards and, considering his long and close association with the Society, his own eligibility for this work. We extend a special thank you to Mike for this valuable contribution.

Reserves Policy

The trustees have a reserves policy which is to conduct the business of the Society to complete the year with unrestricted funds on the balance sheet of more than £12,000. The trustees consider this would enable an orderly closure of the Charity if, due to unforeseen circumstances, that unfortunately became necessary. At the end of 2021, with unrestricted funds on the balance sheet of £30,816, the reserves policy was considered fulfilled.

Future Financial Policy

The Society proposes to continue producing two new issues of *Sandgrouse* per year and maintain and enhance the digital edition and produce a quarterly newsletter to all members.

We will continue to enhance our presence at the UK Birdfair and other events and further develop our Corporate Sponsorships. We will aim to maintain our Conservation Fund grants at the 2020 level of at least £20,000 a year. We will also continue the development of our two new funds, the Youth Development Fund and the Trevor Poyser Species Conservation Fund. The reserve fund target will remain at £12,000.

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Trustees' Responsibilities

Laws applicable to charities in England and Wales require Council, as trustees, to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the Charity's financial activities during the year, and of its financial position at the end of the year. In preparing those financial statements, the trustees should follow best practice and:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- state whether applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the statement of accounts
- prepare the financial accounts on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Charity will continue its operations

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy the financial position of the Charity, and which enable them to both ascertain the financial position of the Charity and to ensure that the financial statements comply with applicable law, accounting standards and the Charities SORP. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approved and signed on behalf of the trustees:



Rob Sheldon

Chairman



Chris Hughes

Treasurer

November 18th 2023

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*Independent Examiner's Report***

Independent Report to the Trustees of the Ornithological Society of the Middle East, the Caucasus & Central Asia – Charity number 282938

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above-named charity for the year ended 31 December 2022.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and Fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Michael C. Jennings
11th July 2023

**ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE MIDDLE EAST
THE CAUCASUS & CENTRAL ASIA**

**TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022
*Statement of Financial Activities***

		Un-restricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2022 £	Total 2021 £
Income from:					
<u>Donations and legacies</u>					
Donations from members		4,103	-	4,103	3,185
Gift Aid tax refund		4,596	-	4,596	1,209
Fund donations		-	35,193	35,193	45,072
Other donations		577	-	577	741
Legacies		-	-	-	-
<u>Charitable activities</u>					
Subscriptions	1b	11,235	-	11,235	12,605
Gift Aid tax refund		909	-	909	920
Sale of publications		-	-	-	-
Donations from Corporate Sponsors		350	-	350	700
<u>Other trading activities</u>					
Fundraising events		-	-	-	-
<u>Investments</u>					
Bank and other interest		55	-	55	14
Total		<u>21,825</u>	<u>35,193</u>	<u>57,017</u>	<u>64,447</u>
Expenditure on:					
<u>Raising funds</u>					
Cost of sales – goods bought in		-	-	-	-
Fundraising costs		-	-	-	-
<u>Charitable activities</u>					
Conservation Fund grants	2	-	45,435	45,435	29,434
Conservation projects	3	-	5,000	5,000	6,400
Production of journal <i>Sandgrouse</i>		13,649	-	13,649	10,346
<u>Support costs</u>					
Postage of journal <i>Sandgrouse</i>	4	4,153	-	4,153	4,194
Support costs		7,850	-	7,850	3,859
Bank charges		1,591	-	1,591	1,165
Independent Examiner's Fee		-	-	-	-
Total		<u>27,243</u>	<u>50,435</u>	<u>77,678</u>	<u>55,397</u>
Net Income /(Expenditure)		(5,418)	(15,242)	(20,661)	9,049
Transfer between funds		1,666	(1,666)	-	-
Net movement in funds		(3,752)	(16,908)	(20,661)	9,049
Fund balances B/F @ 01 January		36,255	55,720	91,975	82,926
Fund balances C/F @31 December		<u>32,503</u>	<u>38,812</u>	<u>71,314</u>	<u>91,975</u>

**ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE MIDDLE EAST
THE CAUCASUS & CENTRAL ASIA**

**TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022
*Balance Sheet***

	2022	2021
	£	£
Fixed assets:		
Equipment	-	-
Current assets:		
Stocks	-	-
6 Cash - current account	216	201
- deposit account	1,283	975
	<u>70,032</u>	<u>91,000</u>
Total current assets	<u>71,531</u>	<u>92,176</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year:		
Deferred income – pre-paid subscriptions	310	3,925
Grants awarded but not yet paid	2 220	6,163
Other creditors	8 80	<u>1,695</u>
Sub total	<u>610</u>	<u>11,783</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due after one year:		
Deferred income – pre-paid	165	475
Provision for activities and	<u>(539)</u>	<u>(12,075)</u>
Net current assets	<u>71,314</u>	<u>91,975</u>
Funds:		
General Fund	30,816	36,255
Restricted Funds	<u>40,498</u>	<u>55,720</u>
	<u>71,314</u>	<u>91,975</u>

ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE MIDDLE EAST
THE CAUCASUS & CENTRAL ASIA

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

Notes to the Financial Statements

1. Accounting Policies

- a. Basis of accounting. The accounts are prepared under the historic cost convention.
- b. Subscription income is credited to the income and expenditure account in the period to which it relates. Subscriptions received in advance are carried forward as deferred income in the balance sheet and result in a liability for the future provision of membership services.
- c. Stocks. No value is placed on the stocks of back copies of *Sandgrouse*, primary purpose goods and donated goods held for sale in the Society's accounts.

2. Conservation Grants

<u>From Conservation Funds:</u>	£
Continuation of BRC activities in the Batumi bottleneck	2,424
Matching funds to Batumi Raptor Count activities	1,768
Raptors in the mountains and deserts of Turkmenistan	4,500
Family of websites for birdwatching in Central Asia & the Caucasus	2,000
Protection of Saker Falcon & Egyptian Vulture, Karatau, Kazakhstan	5,000
Migration routes of Egyptian Vultures, Kyzylkum desert, Uzbekistan	4,000
Investigation of Steppe Eagle around Lakes Tuz and Seyfe, Turkiye	2,000
Threats to populations in Great Bustard populations, Turkiye	4,935
Avifaunal diversity assessment of the Sanur Valley, Palestine	1,800

<u>From Youth Development Funds:</u>	
Besh Barmag Bird Camp 2022, Azerbaijan	2,000
Besh Barmag Bird Migration Camp, Azerbaijan	4,321
Marbled Teal Project, Azerbaijan	4,789
Avian Ecology School 2022, Simurg, Turkiye	2,232
Young Falconers Bird Camp 2022, Georgia	1,000
Eymir Bird Camp 2022, (METU), Turkiye	1,500
Breeding Bird Survey & Training, Manzala Lake, Egypt	2,000
Raptor count Lebanon 2022 (Hammana)	550
Bi-communal Bird Camp, Akanthou, Cyprus	1,500
Aswan Bird Camp, Egypt	2,000
	50,319

3. Trustees

No remuneration was paid or was payable out of OSME funds directly or indirectly to any Council member or to any person or persons known to be connected to them.

Council members have been reimbursed at cost for purchases made on behalf of the Society.

**ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE MIDDLE EAST
THE CAUCASUS & CENTRAL ASIA**

**TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022**

Notes to the Financial Statements

4. Employees

The Charity has no paid employees.

5. Taxation

OSME is a registered charity and, under current legislation, has no liability to taxation.

6. Debtors

	2022	2021
	£	£
Public Liability Insurance	30	26
10Web Premium Plan web hosting	179	168
YMLP Licence fee	7	7
	<u>216</u>	<u>201</u>

7. Other Creditors

	2022	2021
	£	£
Public Liability Insurance	135	110
10Web Annual Fee	700	600
YMLP Licence Fee	90	85
Page Suite Annual Fee	960	900
	<u>1,885</u>	<u>1,695</u>

**ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE MIDDLE EAST
THE CAUCASUS & CENTRAL ASIA**

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

Notes to the Financial Statements

8. Movement in Funds

	Brought Forward £	Income £	Expen- diture £	IN	OUT	Carried Forward £
<u>Unrestricted Funds</u>	37,055	21,825	27,243	4,365	2,699	33,303
<u>Restricted & Designated Funds</u>						
Birds of the Middle East	5,875	12	0		3,000	2,887
Supported Membership	525	840	0		1,365	0
<u>Conservation Funds</u>						
General	2,732	1,774	4,955	449		0
March/Tides	5,262	20,578	8,924		2,000	14,916
Anonymous	9,800	0	9,800			0
James Goodhart	1,600	0	0			1,600
Oman BR Committee	2,407	0	0			2,407
<u>Youth & Community Funds</u>						
Avifauna	300	0	300			0
Azerbaijan Diaspora	0	3,970	3,970			0
General	485	6,019	8,754	2,250		0
Harrison	0	2,000	2,000			0
March	0	0	2,000	2,000		0
Nautica	0	0	0			0
Anonymous	5,000	0	4,732			268
<u>Total</u>	33,986	35,193	45,435			22,078
Trevor Poyser Fund	20,934	0	5,000			15,934
Total Funds	91,975	57,017	77,678	9,064	9,064	71,314

**ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE MIDDLE EAST
THE CAUCASUS & CENTRAL ASIA**

**TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022
*Notes to the Financial Statements***

9. Description of Funds

We set up our funds to manage our donations correctly and ensure that the donor's funds are only used for the purposes they intended. This is a core principle of Charity Finance creating Unrestricted and Restricted Funds.

Unrestricted General Fund

The General Fund is the sole unrestricted cash fund of the society which receives all income and makes all payments. There are two bank accounts, a current account and an interest-earning deposit account. Transfers are made to and from other funds according to controls applying to those funds.

Avifauna Fund (Restricted)

This Fund was set up to provide awards to projects funded by, and with the agreement of, Avifauna.

Birds of the Middle East (Arabic) Fund (Restricted)

This fund was set up to raise funds for the publication of an App version of the BotME Book, a sole venture of the Society funded by donations and fundraising activities.

Conservation Fund – General (Restricted)

This fund was set up to provide awards to projects for conservation in the region. It is funded from the General Fund.

Conservation Fund – Anonymous (Restricted)

This Conservation Fund was set up to provide awards to projects funded by a large donor who wishes to remain anonymous.

Conservation Fund – March Conservation Fund (Restricted)

This fund was set up to provide awards to projects funded by The March Conservation Fund.

James Goodhart Fund (Restricted)

This fund was set up to administer funds donated over several years by James Goodhart.

OMAN Fund (Restricted)

This Fund was set up to administer surplus funds from the dissolution of the Oman Bird Records Committee. It is to be used to fund ornithological projects in Oman. At the end of 2022, no such projects had been identified.

**ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE MIDDLE EAST
THE CAUCASUS & CENTRAL ASIA**

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

Notes to the Financial Statements

Supported Membership Fund (Restricted)

The Supported Membership Fund was set up to provide honorary membership for nationals in the region who are not able to pay a full subscription. It is funded by subscriptions from Supporting Members.

Trevor Poyser Species Conservation Fund (Restricted)

Following a major legacy from Trevor Poyser, this fund was established in 2019 and specifically focusses on single-species conservation of birds on the Red and Amber lists of BirdLife International.

Youth and Community Fund – General (Restricted)

This fund was established to administer funds donated specifically for youth and community projects.

Youth and Community Fund – Anonymous (Restricted)

This Fund was set up to provide awards to youth and community projects funded by a large regular donor who wishes to remain anonymous.

Accounts

**ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE MIDDLE EAST
THE CAUCASUS & CENTRAL ASIA**



**TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT & ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021**



The globally threatened Egyptian Vulture, *Neophron percnopterus* a bird found throughout the OSME Region which featured in many of our Conservation activities in 2021

**ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE MIDDLE EAST
THE CAUCASUS & CENTRAL ASIA
TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021**

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ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE MIDDLE EAST
THE CAUCASUS & CENTRAL ASIA

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

Reference and Administrative details

Name of Charity:	Ornithological Society of the Middle East, the Caucasus & Central Asia (OSME)
Charity Number:	282938
Principal Address:	The Society does not have a principal office address as all activities and Council meetings are undertaken at the private addresses of Council members or other equivalent locations. The mail forwarding address: OSME, c/o The Lodge, Sandy, Bedfordshire, SG19 2DL is used for general correspondence.
Email:	info@osme.org
Website:	www.osme.org
Bankers:	Lloyds Bank plc 35 High Street Biggleswade Bedfordshire SG18 0JD
Independent Examiner:	Michael C Jennings Warners Farm House Warners Drove Somersham Cambridgeshire PE28 3WD

The OSME Council in 2021:

Trustees:

Sajidah Ahmad (Secretary)
Mike Blair (OSME Region List)
Murray Brown
Paul Donald (*Sandgrouse* Editor)
Tomas Haraldsson (Youth Officer)
Ian Harrison
Chris Hughes (Joint Treasurer)
Georgia Locock
Robert Sheldon (Chair)
Paul Stancliffe

Co-opted:

AbdulRahman Al-Sirhan (Webmaster)
Effie Warr (Membership and Sales)
John Warr (Joint Treasurer)

ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE MIDDLE EAST
THE CAUCASUS & CENTRAL ASIA

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

Structure, Governance and Management

The Ornithological Society of the Middle East, the Caucasus and Central Asia, also known as OSME, is registered with the English Charity Commission (No. 282938) and governed under a constitution adopted 17 June 1981 and amended 10 June 2010. A Council of trustees elected by the members manages the affairs of the Society. There are no restrictions on membership of the Society subject to payment of the appropriate subscription.

The elected Council members serve for a period of five years. New Council members are nominated by paid-up members and are elected to office at the Annual General Meeting which was held online this year on Saturday 19th of June. Council has the power to co-opt additional members at any time where a specific need is identified and where the appropriate commitment cannot be found from amongst its numbers.

The elected Council is supported by two specialist sub-committees, the Editorial Board and the Conservation Fund Committee. The Editorial Board assists the Editor of *Sandgrouse* in compiling the content of each issue and the content of any supplementary publications according to a budget set by Council at the start of the year. The Conservation Fund Committee receives and reviews all grant applications made through a formal application procedure and makes recommendations to Council. All decisions on the allocation of funds to conservation projects are made by, and are the responsibility of, the elected Council.

The Society has no employees and owns no property or fixed assets; all the functions of an active and fully-compliant charity are performed by Council members working voluntarily with their own resources and from their own premises. This voluntary and low administrative cost approach enables the Charity to maximise the amounts expended on charitable activities and the Society recognises this very significant contribution with gratitude.

To assist them in understanding their responsibilities, all trustees are directed towards regular reference to the Charity Commission website. Council met formally three times during the year. Before each meeting, officers' reports were circulated to all Council members for information on the subjects under discussion and for the benefit of those not attending.

The Minutes of each formal meeting were circulated to all trustees and co-opted Council members soon after the meeting. Interaction between Council members in between formal meetings was by email through an email group. Most of these exchanges were seen by all trustee Council members and all co-opted Council members regardless of their involvement with the matter in hand.

A Risk Register is maintained so that Council members can identify the risks in their designated area of responsibility. No reportable incidents occurred during the year. However, Council remains aware of the need for continuous vigilance and review of all risk management procedures in place.

**ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE MIDDLE EAST
THE CAUCASUS & CENTRAL ASIA**

**TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021**

This year, Council has continued to address issues of governance and the provision of replacement in the event of incapacity of key trustees or co-opted Council members. Council recognises the general need to spread the administrative workload of the Society more evenly, and the need to reduce the concentration of key functions in a single incumbent working without deputy or understudy.

The Society acknowledges that it lacks the administrative and financial resources to embark on major projects and restricts itself to providing financial assistance to others, rather than organising and directing projects itself. It does not get involved with project details, except in an advisory role at the application stage, and is particularly careful to limit second-stage payments and commitments which carry forward to future years. In all its deliberations, the Society pays due regard to the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit in deciding the activities it should undertake.

Objectives and Activities

The object of the Charity is to promote a greater public understanding of Middle Eastern, Caucasian and Central Asian ornithology and thereby to encourage and facilitate conservation of the region's birds. This is achieved by the twice-yearly publication of a scientific journal, *Sandgrouse*, the holding of meetings, presence at events, the maintenance of a website, an active presence on social media, and the funding of fieldwork and other projects. Grants are awarded to approved projects from the funds of the Society and applicants are encouraged to submit their findings for publication in *Sandgrouse*.

The Constitution recognises four main categories of charitable activity:

1. Collect, collate, publish and disseminate ornithological data on countries in the Middle East, the Caucasus and Central Asia.
2. Publish a biannual journal of research and conservation results – *Sandgrouse*.
3. Encourage interest in birds in the area.
4. Work with other individuals and organisations with similar objectives and pursuing charitable activities concerned with ornithology in the Middle East, the Caucasus and Central Asia.

Chairman's Review of the Year

The year 2021 will undoubtedly be remembered for the continuation of the global Covid pandemic which continues to affect so many people all over the world. As with many small charities, the unprecedented situation threw up many challenges that impacted the work of OSME, both negatively and positively. However, due to the continued diligent management of our finances and the ongoing support of OSME members, we had another very successful year with continued growth in our conservation work across the region.

**ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE MIDDLE EAST
THE CAUCASUS & CENTRAL ASIA**

**TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021**

The Conservation Fund

Our flagship Conservation Fund had yet another record breaking year with £22,925 awarded to nine projects during 2021:

- Batumi Raptor monitoring (Georgia £2,950)
- Determining and updating the status of Owls in Jordan (Jordan £2,900)
- Decreasing mortality rate of Egyptian Vultures during migration in Turkey (Turkey £3,500)
- Identifying migration routes and wintering sites of Egyptian Vultures breeding in Uzbekistan (Uzbekistan £3,000)
- Local stewardship of Eastern Imperial Eagles of Thrace (Turkey £2,500)
- Conservation of the western population of the Great Bustard in Turkey (£2,000)
- Monitoring and advocating for key steppe birds in Kyrgyzstan's Tulek Valley IBA (Kyrgyzstan £2,575)
- Annual monitoring of Sociable Lapwing migration through Kumo-Manych depression (Russian Federation £1,000)
- A study of Snowfinches for mountain conservation in the Greater Caucasus (Georgia £2,500)

This continued growth in our expenditure is partly due to the ongoing financial support we receive from the March Conservation Fund as well as increasing donations from our members and supporters. We were pleased that in 2021 we were able to collaborate with Birds on the Brink to co-fund the Egyptian Vulture project in Turkey. We are keen to develop similar joint funding initiatives in future.

There are now just three countries within our region yet to receive a grant through the OSME Conservation Fund: Kuwait, Qatar and Turkmenistan. We are actively looking to support projects in these countries and would welcome discussions with potential applicants. Huge thanks go to our independent committee for reviewing all project applications and making recommendations to OSME Council. Throughout 2021 the committee was chaired by Dr Maxim Koshkin with expert input from Dr Nabegh Ghazal Aswad, Sharif Jbour, Richard Porter, Hana Raza and Maia Sarrouf Willson. After many years of advice and support Richard Porter stepped down at the end of 2021 and we welcome Dr Alyona Koshkina to the Conservation Fund committee.

Trevor Poyser Species Conservation Fund

The 2022 Trevor Poyser Species Conservation Fund grant has been awarded to the Biodiversity Research and Conservation Centre Community Trust (BRCC) in Kazakhstan for the 'protection of Saker Falcon and Egyptian Vulture in the Karatau Mountains, South Kazakhstan.' The award was announced at the OSME Winter Meeting where the project leader, Nurlan Ongarbayev, outlined the project. The focus will be in the Karatau Mountains where both species are known to breed although there is little data on numbers, distribution and nesting behaviour. The key threats to the population are not well understood although there is some information that electrocution could be a key issue. In September 2020 Nurlan surveyed a 60-km length of overhead powerlines and located the remains of six Saker Falcons, nine Long-legged Buzzards,

**ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE MIDDLE EAST
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**TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021**

eleven Steppe Eagles and one Golden Eagle. The project aims to understand more about the distribution of the target species, assess the key threats and propose mitigation measures. OSME is delighted to support this project which focuses on two globally endangered species that are found throughout the OSME Region. This is the third Trevor Poyser Species Conservation Fund grant that has been awarded following on from projects in Turkey (Egyptian Vulture) and Lebanon (Syrian Serin). Trevor was a giant of ornithological publishing, joint founder of the renowned publishers T&AD Poyser famous for their ground-breaking books particularly the Species Monograph series. Very sadly Trevor died in 2018 but he kindly left us a significant legacy to spend on research and conservation within the OSME region so the fund was established in his memory.

The Youth Development Fund

Our Youth Development Fund launched in 2019 continued to develop existing projects and well as initiate new ones. This work is co-ordinated by Tomas Haraldsson, OSME's Youth Development Officer. Many of the projects rely on getting people together at 'bird camps' often with the support of international experts but this approach has had to adapt since the start of the pandemic. We had another record-breaking year with expenditure exceeding £7,500 and it is pleasing to see a number of donations being specifically made to support this area of OSME's work:

- Batumi Young Falconers (Georgia £2,000)
- Lebanon Autumn migration camp (Lebanon £500)
- Besh Barmag Global Big Day (Azerbaijan £809)
- Aswan Bird Camp (Egypt £2,000)
- Cyprus Bird Camp (Cyprus 2,200)

It is impressive to see several projects continuing under local leadership which is a key aim of our youth development work. Fauna & Flora International (FFI) in Georgia received a follow up grant to fund their important work with young falconers to help shift the local interest away from unsustainable (and illegal) trapping and hunting to conservation of raptors in Georgia. Co-leader of the project is OSME supported member Aslan Bolkvadze. The group visited raptor sites, wetlands and villages and learnt about raptor identification, conservation and what local practices might be harmful to nature. A long-planned bird camp in Cyprus, hosted by Kuskor and supported by three young birdwatchers from BirdLife Sweden took place in October 2021. The weekend saw the group participate in bird ringing (including handling the endemic Cyprus Scops Owl!), learn about monitoring seabirds on islands by boat and exchange ideas and views about important conservation issues.

ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE MIDDLE EAST
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TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

Another bird camp that has taken years to get off the ground was held in Aswan, Egypt in December. Aswan is the main city in southern Egypt, adjacent to the river Nile and next to important bird areas such as Lake Nasser and the lagoons and wetlands of the Nile Valley. Local young birdwatchers, and ecotourism enterprise and national BirdLife partner Nature Conservation Egypt (NCE) teamed up and held an excellent weekend of training and awareness raising activities.

Sandgrouse

Two bumper issues of our highly respected journal *Sandgrouse* were published totalling 340 pages.



Sandgrouse 43 (1)



Sandgrouse 43 (2)

The spring issue was themed around bird migration in the OSME region and included a review of migratory soaring bird monitoring in the East African-Eurasian flyway. The paper highlighted the excellent long-term monitoring at the Batumi bottleneck in Georgia, a hugely important project that needs ongoing support, and which OSME are proud to have helped over the years. It was also pleasing to see several projects funded by OSME's Conservation Fund publishing their papers in *Sandgrouse*, including the status of Golden Eagles in Oman, White-headed Ducks in Turkey and Sociable Lapwings in south-west Russia.

Online meetings

In 2020 we moved all of our meetings to an online format and this approach continued throughout 2021 with our summer meeting and AGM both held using Zoom. Due to the popularity of the online meetings, enabling members and supporters from across the OSME region to participate, we also held our first online winter meeting. One of the key benefits of moving meetings online is the ability to attract speakers from across the region, to share their

**ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE MIDDLE EAST
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research and conservation work and to reach an international audience. The two online meetings in 2021 included speakers from Egypt, Iraq, Oman, Syria, Turkey and Uzbekistan; such a diversity of contributors (and participants) would not be possible if the meetings were held face to face. All presentations from the online meetings are available on our YouTube channel. A massive thankyou to the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) for allowing OSME to use their Zoom conferencing facilities. All Council meetings throughout 2021 were also held using Zoom and it is likely that this will remain the dominant format in the future.

The OSME e-newsletter

A key development in 2021 was the launch of the new quarterly OSME e-newsletter with the first issue distributed to subscribers in February. The newsletter is free to both members and non-members alike and aims to provide project updates and news from across the OSME region. The newsletter is produced and edited by newly co-opted Council member (and long-standing OSME member) Phil Roberts and by Council member Georgia Locock. By the end of the year there were over 400 subscribers.

OSME Digital

The OSME Facebook page went from strength to strength and passed 4,000 followers in December and our Twitter feed now has in excess of 5,000 followers.

During 2021 a significant amount of effort was put into developing more multi language content on Facebook to reach a wider audience from across the region and we now have guest co-editors sharing posts and updates in Arabic, Georgian, Turkish and Russian. We are also invested in upgrading and updating our free Birds of the Middle East App which continues to be downloaded across the region.

Digital Sandgrouse: We now have over 200 subscribers to the digital version of Sandgrouse over fifty of whom ask to receive *Sandgrouse* only in its digital form. The digital edition has been particularly successful in reaching those areas of our region with compromised postal services and for many members the green credentials have been the most important issue. Postal costs across the world are rocketing and each digital edition requested saves us on average around £15 per year money that could be focussed on our conservation and education activity. Any member is free to sample by emailing sandgrousedigital@osme.org

OSME Region List

The Society publishes the OSME Region List (ORL) of birds that considers the latest taxonomy and new information on species distribution. This is based on the worldwide IOC (International Ornithological Community) list to which OSME Council member Mike Blair is an adviser. The ORL is freely available from the OSME website and is updated regularly. This very significant undertaking is well regarded by researchers, organisations and individual birdwatchers across and beyond the region.

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The ORL seeks to provide a consistent and up-to-date taxonomy of all bird species and subspecies for the OSME region to support a common approach for those working in ornithology and those studying birds collected or observed. (Relevant bird collections exist worldwide.) This underpins the aim of the first category of our charitable activities which is to collect, collate, publish and disseminate ornithological data on countries in the Middle East, the Caucasus and Central Asia. Taxonomic understanding through avian molecular research techniques is developing at a fast rate and the ORL reflects recent research, mostly as analysed by IOC and similar authorities, but also has access to original scientific papers published worldwide.

The ORL taxonomy is used in *Sandgrouse* but is also freely available on the OSME website to researchers and amateurs who are interested in birds. The ORL has been downloaded in well over 100 countries.

And finally

Despite the upheaval created by the global pandemic, OSME's finances remain robust and this is a reflection of the excellent stewardship of our accounts by John Warr and Chris Hughes (Co-Treasurers). All OSME Council members continue to devote significant time and energy to the work of our small but effective charity. There is lots more that we can do to promote the joy of birds, birdwatching and conservation across the Middle East, the Caucasus and Central Asia and we are always looking for more members of Council – if you'd like to discuss how you can help us, then please contact me via email: chairman@osme.org.

Finally, a huge thank you goes to all OSME members, corporate sponsors and donors who have continued to support our activities during a turbulent 2021. We couldn't have achieved so much for the birds of the OSME region without you.

Treasurer's Report

The Society's year ended with a strong balance sheet, a reflection we feel of the real and positive impact we are having across the region with our supporters, partners and members.

Income was up nearly £25,000 on 2020, due to the return of a significant sponsor and a further legacy from the Trevor Poyser estate. Expenditure remained much the same, meaning an overall surplus for the year of just over £9,000. We carried forward just over £36,000 in unrestricted funds and £55,000 in restricted and committed funds into 2022, meaning we will have no problem in continuing and even enhancing our activity at the current pace.

Income

We were once again delighted to receive \$20,000 from the March Conservation Fund, our activities clearly tying in with their aims and objectives.

We welcomed the return of a long-standing funder, who wishes to remain anonymous, who gave £10,000 to our Conservation Fund and £5,000 to our Youth Development Funds.

ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE MIDDLE EAST
THE CAUCASUS & CENTRAL ASIA

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

We would like to acknowledge significant other donations this year from Ann Browning, Chris Spooner, Ross Mackenzie, Colin Johnson, Alan Vittery, John Warr and Andrew Ward.

Many members also took the opportunity to make smaller donations with their subscription renewals.

We really appreciated the continued support of our Corporate Members: Birdfinders, Birdtour Asia, Greentours, NHBS (Natural History Book Service), Oriole Birding, Rockjumper and Sunbird. We were delighted to welcome two new Corporate members during the year in Bird Brain UK and Turnstone Ecology.

A Gift Aid claim for £2,129 was successfully submitted.

We ended the year with our membership growing over that in 2020, a significant achievement in the era of falling memberships for organisations generally.

The supported membership scheme, where a member pays an additional membership subscription on behalf of an OSME region national, saw a significant increase, with members backing this important opportunity for young birders and conservationists. We now have over 50 supported members and are looking to increase this number, especially with the availability of *Sandgrouse* digitally which has particular appeal to younger people.

Some 22 institutions (universities, libraries etc) subscribed to receive copies of *Sandgrouse* for which they paid an average of £40. A further 15 institutions, clubs and associates received complimentary copies. Our seven corporate members received copies as part of their membership and six copies were provided to the legal deposit libraries.

As we read in the Chairman's report, our following on both Facebook and Twitter continues to rise with over 4,000 and 5,000 followers respectively. Converting these to memberships is a priority for us going forward.

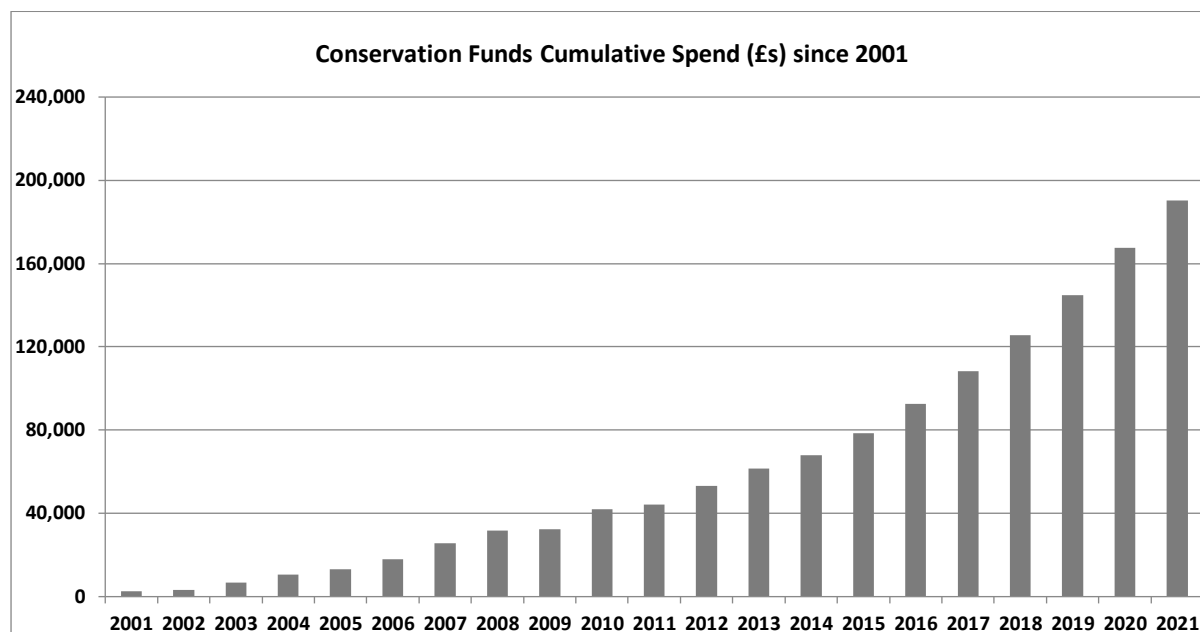
Conservation Funds

The graph shows the cumulative growth in Conservation Fund spending since 2001 and illustrates the rapid growth in our conservation activity with our spend more than doubling over the past six years!

Since the year 2000, OSME has made conservation and research grants of over £190,000 to projects across our region and we are delighted that once again we have increased our year-on-year spend with £22,925 going to a range of innovative and important initiatives outlined in the Chairman's report. This compares to £20,723 in 2020 and very pleasingly we reached our goal of at least a £20,000 annual spend every year from 2020.

ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE MIDDLE EAST
THE CAUCASUS & CENTRAL ASIA

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021



Grant distribution to date: Middle East 47%, Central Asia 30%, Caucasus 20%, Whole Region 3%

Youth Development Funds

Since 2016 we have awarded £35,000 to projects involving young birders in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Cyprus, Georgia, Lebanon and Turkey at an average of £5,900 per year, a sum we wish to build on in coming years as we expand the 'Youth' projects into further countries across the OSME Region.

Overall our investment from the Conservation, Youth and Trevor Poyser Funds reached over £34,000 pounds in 2021, some 10% more than in any previous year and a figure we will significantly exceed in 2022.

Expenditure

Our increased investment in *Sandgrouse* continued to maintain its quality with significantly larger editions. This was somewhat compensated by the increasing take-up of the digital edition which has helped reduce spiralling postage costs.

As ever, administration costs were well controlled and will reduce significantly in coming years as we close our rented storage facility.

Accounts Examiner

Mike Jennings, a former Treasurer and eminent stalwart of OSME, has again examined and reported on the accounts without charge. This has been done in full conformity with the requirements of the Charity Commission both for accounting standards and, considering his long and close association with the Society, his own eligibility for this work. We extend a special thank you to Mike for this valuable contribution.

ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE MIDDLE EAST
THE CAUCASUS & CENTRAL ASIA

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

Reserves Policy

The trustees have a reserves policy which is to conduct the business of the Society to complete the year with unrestricted funds on the balance sheet of more than £12,000. The trustees consider this would enable an orderly closure of the Charity if, due to unforeseen circumstances, that unfortunately became necessary. At the end of 2021, with unrestricted funds on the balance sheet of £36,255, the reserves policy was considered fulfilled.

Future Financial Policy

The Society proposes to continue producing two new issues of *Sandgrouse* per year and maintain and enhance the digital edition and produce a quarterly newsletter to all members.

We will continue to enhance our presence at the UK Birdfair and other events and further develop our Corporate Sponsorships. We will aim to maintain our Conservation Fund grants at the 2020 level of at least £20,000 a year. We will also continue the development of our two new funds, the Youth Development Fund and the Trevor Poyser Species Conservation Fund. The reserve fund target will remain at £12,000.

Trustees' Responsibilities

Laws applicable to charities in England and Wales require Council, as trustees, to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the Charity's financial activities during the year, and of its financial position at the end of the year. In preparing those financial statements, the trustees should follow best practice and:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- state whether applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the statement of accounts
- prepare the financial accounts on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Charity will continue its operations

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy the financial position of the Charity, and which enable them to both ascertain the financial position of the Charity and to ensure that the financial statements comply with applicable law, accounting standards and the Charities SORP. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approved and signed on behalf of the trustees:



Rob Sheldon
Chairman
November 26th 2022



Chris Hughes
Treasurer

**ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE MIDDLE EAST
THE CAUCASUS & CENTRAL ASIA**

**TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021
*Independent Examiner's Report***

**Independent Report to the Trustees of the Ornithological Society of the Middle East, the
Caucasus & Central Asia – Charity number 282938**

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above-named charity for the year ended 31 December 2021.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and Fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Michael C. Jennings
4th June 2022

**ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE MIDDLE EAST
THE CAUCASUS & CENTRAL ASIA**

**TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021
*Statement of Financial Activities***

Statement of Financial Activities for the period 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2021

		Un-restricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2021 £	Total 2020 £
Income from:					
<u>Donations and legacies</u>					
Donations from members		3,185	-	3,185	2,635
Gift Aid tax refund		1,209	-	1,209	687
Fund donations		-	45,072	45,072	22,261
Other donations		741	-	741	427
Legacies		-	-	-	-
<u>Charitable activities</u>					
Subscriptions	1	12,605	-	12,605	13,299
Gift Aid tax refund		920	-	920	1,040
Sale of publications		-	-	-	-
Donations from Corporate Sponsors		700	-	700	-
<u>Other trading activities</u>					
Fundraising events		-	-	-	-
<u>Investments</u>					
Bank and other interest		14	-	14	32
Total		<u>19,374</u>	<u>45,072</u>	<u>64,447</u>	<u>40,380</u>
Expenditure on:					
<u>Raising funds</u>					
Cost of sales – goods bought in		-	-	-	-
Fundraising costs		-	-	-	-
<u>Charitable activities</u>					
Conservation Fund grants	2	-	29,434	29,434	26,173
Conservation projects	2	-	6,400	6,400	5,366
Production of journal <i>Sandgrouse</i>		10,346	-	10,346	10,960
<u>Support costs</u>					
Postage of journal <i>Sandgrouse</i>	3	4,194	-	4,194	4,658
Support costs		3,859	-	3,859	6,337
Bank charges		1,165	-	1,165	1,008
Total		<u>19,563</u>	<u>35,834</u>	<u>55,397</u>	<u>54,502</u>
Net Income /(Expenditure)		(189)	9,238	9,049	(14,122)
Transfer between funds		-	-	-	-
Net movement in funds		(189)	9,238	9,049	(14,122)
Fund balances B/F @ 01 January 2021		<u>36,443</u>	<u>46,482</u>	<u>82,926</u>	<u>97,047</u>
Fund balances C/F @ 31 December 2021		<u>36,255</u>	<u>55,720</u>	<u>91,975</u>	<u>82,926</u>

**ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE MIDDLE EAST
THE CAUCASUS & CENTRAL ASIA**

**TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021
*Balance Sheet***

Balance Sheet

		2021	2020
		£	£
Fixed assets:			
Equipment		-	-
Current assets:			
Stocks		-	-
	7	201	872
Cash - current account		975	926
- deposit account		91,000	82,000
Total current assets		<u>92,176</u>	<u>83,798</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year:			
Deferred income – pre-paid subscriptions		3,925	3,820
Grants awarded but not yet paid	2	6,163	5,850
Other creditors	8	1,695	-
Sub total		<u>11,783</u>	<u>9,670</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due after one year:			
Deferred income – pre-paid		475	1,000
Provision for activities and		<u>(12,075)</u>	<u>(9,798)</u>
Net current assets		<u>91,975</u>	<u>82,926</u>
Funds:			
General Fund		36,255	35,543
Restricted Funds		55,720	47,382
		<u>91,975</u>	<u>82,926</u>

ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE MIDDLE EAST
THE CAUCASUS & CENTRAL ASIA

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

Notes to the Financial Statements

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

1. Accounting Policies

- a. Basis of accounting. The accounts are prepared under the historic cost convention.
- b. Subscription income is credited to the income and expenditure account in the period to which it relates. Subscriptions received in advance are carried forward as deferred income in the balance sheet and result in a liability for the future provision of membership services.
- c. Stocks. No value is placed on the stocks of back copies of *Sandgrouse*, primary purpose goods and donated goods held for sale in the Society's accounts.

2. Conservation Grants

	2021	2020
	£	£
Raptor monitoring (Batumi Raptor Count), Batumi, Georgia	2,950	
Determining the status of Owls in Jordan	2,900	
Syrian Serin population count, Lebanon	4,200	
Migration etc. of Egyptian Vultures breeding in Uzbekistan	3,000	
Egyptian Vultures in Turkey (with Birds on the Brink)	3,500	
Steppe birds in Tulek Valley IBA, Kyrgyzstan	2,575	
Conservation of western population, Great Bustard, Turkey	2,000	
Eastern Imperial Eagles of Thrace, Turkey	2,500	
Bird Camp during Global Birding Big Day, Azerbaijan	809	
Study of Snowfinches in Greater Caucasus, Georgia	2,500	
Monitoring Social Lapwing in Kumo-Manych depression, SW	1,000	
Transportation of counters to and from counter site, Batumi,	500	
North Cyprus Bird Camp 2021	2,200	
Young falconers Bird Camp 2021, Georgia	2,000	
Aswan Bird Camp 2022, Egypt	2,000	
	<u>34,634</u>	<u>31,541</u>
<i>Awarded for payment in 2022:</i>		
Batumi Raptor Count	2,424	
Avifaunal diversity assessment of Samur Valley, Palestine	1,800	
Investigation of Steppe Eagle around Lakes Tuz and Seyfe,	1,939	
Turkey		
	<u>6,163</u>	<u>5,850</u>
Conservation projects		
	2020	2019
	£	£
Birds of the Middle East (Arabic)	-	2,926
	<u>-</u>	<u>2,926</u>

**ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE MIDDLE EAST
THE CAUCASUS & CENTRAL ASIA**

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

Notes to the Financial Statements

3. Support costs

Support costs have not been allocated to activity categories within the Statement of Financial Activities. The table below provides an allocation. Values are estimated in all cases other than the mailing of *Sandgrouse* to members and in the stationery and printing involved, where actual are used.

	Fundraising activities £	Charitable activities £	Governance £	Total 2020 £	Total 2019 £
Mailing of Sandgrouse	419	3,775	-	4,194	4,658
Sales & general postage	-	57	133	190	558
Data storage	371	743	124	1,238	2,942
Stationery etc.	25	99	123	246	942
Bad debt written off	-	-	-	-	389
Website	269	358	269	896	504
Meetings and events	27	54	54	134	421
Council travel expenses	-	76	76	152	468
Insurance	41	31	31	102	113
Bank charges	350	350	466	1,165	1,008
Independent Examiner's	-	-	-	-	-
Totals	<u>1,501</u>	<u>5,541</u>	<u>1,275</u>	<u>8,318</u>	<u>12,003</u>

4. Trustees

No remuneration was paid or was payable out of OSME funds directly or indirectly to any Council member or to any person or persons known to be connected to them. Council members have been reimbursed at cost for purchases made on behalf of the Society.

5. Employees

The Charity has no paid employees.

6. Taxation

OSME is a registered charity and, under current legislation, has no liability to taxation.

7. Debtors

	2021 £	2020 £
Public Liability Insurance	26	-
Ready Steady Store self-storage	-	727
10Web Annual Fee (7.75m)	168	145
YMLP Licence Fee (1m)	7	-
	<u>201</u>	<u>872</u>

**ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE MIDDLE EAST
THE CAUCASUS & CENTRAL ASIA**

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

Notes to the Financial Statements

8. Other Creditors

	2021	2020
	£	£
Public Liability Insurance	110	113
Ready Steady Store self-storage	-	625
Web hosting	600	225
YMLP Licence Fee	85	-
PageSuite Annual Fee	900	-
	<u>1,695</u>	<u>963</u>

9. Movement in Funds

	Brought Forward	Income	Expenditure	Transfers		Carried Forward
	£	£		IN	OUT	£
Unrestricted Funds	35,543	19,374	19,563	1,720	-	37,075
Restricted Funds						
Avifauna Fund	3,000	-	2,700	-	-	300
Birds of the Middle East	6,895	180	1,200	-	-	5,875
Cons Fund - General	1,171	2,781	1,010	-	-	2,732
Cons Fund - Anonymous	928	9,800	928	-	-	9,800
March Conservation Fund	12,116	14,072	20,925	-	-	5,262
James Goodhart Fund	2,100	500	1,100	-	-	1,600
OMAN Fund	2,407	-	-	-	-	2,407
Supported Membership	860	1,365	-	-	1,720	505
Trevor Poyser Fund	15,134	10,000	4,200	-	-	20,934
Youth & Community	900	1,375	-	-	-	485
Y & C Fund – Anonymous	1,872	5,000	-	-	-	5,000
Restricted Funds Total	<u>47,382</u>	<u>45,072</u>	<u>35,834</u>	<u>1,720</u>	<u>1,720</u>	<u>54,900</u>
Total Funds	<u>82,926</u>	<u>64,447</u>	<u>55,397</u>	<u>1,720</u>	<u>1,720</u>	<u>91,975</u>

**ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE MIDDLE EAST
THE CAUCASUS & CENTRAL ASIA**

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

Notes to the Financial Statements

10. Description of Funds

We set up our funds to manage our donations correctly and ensure that the donor's funds are only used for the purposes they intended. This is a core principle of Charity Finance creating Unrestricted and Restricted Funds.

Unrestricted General Fund

The General Fund is the sole unrestricted cash fund of the society which receives all income and makes all payments. There are two bank accounts, a current account and an interest-earning deposit account. Transfers are made to and from other funds according to controls applying to those funds.

Avifauna Fund (Restricted)

This Fund was set up to provide awards to projects funded by, and with the agreement of, Avifauna.

Birds of the Middle East (Arabic) Fund (Restricted)

This fund was set up to raise funds for the publication of an App version of the BotME Book, a sole venture of the Society funded by donations and fundraising activities.

Conservation Fund – General (Restricted)

This fund was set up to provide awards to projects for conservation in the region. It is funded from the General Fund.

Conservation Fund – Anonymous (Restricted)

This Conservation Fund was set up to provide awards to projects funded by a large donor who wishes to remain anonymous.

Conservation Fund – March Conservation Fund (Restricted)

This fund was set up to provide awards to projects funded by The March Conservation

James Goodhart Fund (Restricted)

This fund was set up to administer funds donated over several years by James Goodhart.

OMAN Fund (Restricted)

This Fund was set up to administer surplus funds from the dissolution of the Oman Bird Records Committee. It is to be used to fund ornithological projects in Oman. At the end of 2021, no such projects had been identified.

Supported Membership Fund (Restricted)

The Supported Membership Fund was set up to provide honorary membership for nationals in the region who are not able to pay a full subscription. It is funded by subscriptions from Supporting Members.

**ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE MIDDLE EAST
THE CAUCASUS & CENTRAL ASIA**

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

Notes to the Financial Statements

Trevor Poyser Species Conservation Fund (Restricted)

Following a major legacy from Trevor Poyser, this fund was established in 2019 and specifically focusses on single-species conservation of birds on the Red and Amber lists of BirdLife International.

Youth and Community Fund – General (Restricted)

This fund was established to administer funds donated specifically for youth and community projects.

Youth and Community Fund – Anonymous (Restricted)

This Fund was set up to provide awards to youth and community projects funded by a large regular donor who wishes to remain anonymous.



**OSME continues to fund projects across our region in support of the globally-threatened
Sociable Lapwing *Vanellus gregarius***

Accounts

**ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE MIDDLE EAST
THE CAUCASUS & CENTRAL ASIA**



**TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT & ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020**



**Determination of crop-friendly production practices for Great Bustards in the Acıgöl Basin,
Turkey - a project supported by the OSME Conservation Fund in 2020**

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ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE MIDDLE EAST
THE CAUCASUS & CENTRAL ASIA

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020

Name of Charity:	Ornithological Society of the Middle East, the Caucasus & Central Asia (OSME)
Charity Number:	282938
Principal Address:	The Society does not have a principal office address as all activities and Council meetings are undertaken at the private addresses of Council members or other equivalent locations. The mail forwarding address: OSME, c/o The Lodge, Sandy, Bedfordshire, SG19 2DL is used for general correspondence.
Email:	info@osme.org
Website:	www.osme.org
Bankers:	Lloyds Bank plc 35 High Street Biggleswade Bedfordshire SG18 0JD
Independent Examiner:	Michael C Jennings Warners Farm House Warners Grove Somersham Cambridgeshire PE28 3WD

The OSME Council in 2020

Trustees:

Sajidah Ahmad (Secretary)
Mike Blair (OSME Region List)
Murray Brown
Paul Donald (*Sandgrouse* Editor)
Tomas Haraldsson (Youth Officer)
Ian Harrison
Chris Hughes (Joint Treasurer)
Georgia Locock
Nick Moran
Robert Sheldon (Chair)
Paul Stancliffe

Co-opted:

AbdulRahman Al-Sirhan (Webmaster)
Effie Warr (Membership and Sales)
John Warr (Joint Treasurer)

Structure, Governance and Management

The Ornithological Society of the Middle East, the Caucasus and Central Asia, also known as OSME, is registered with the English Charity Commission (No. 282938) and governed under a constitution adopted 17 June 1981 and amended 10 June 2010. A Council of trustees elected by the members manages the affairs of the Society. There are no restrictions on membership of the Society subject to payment of the appropriate subscription.

The elected Council members serve for a period of five years. New Council members are nominated by paid-up members and are elected to office at the Annual General Meeting which was held online this year on Saturday 20 November. Council has the power to co-opt additional members at any time where a specific need is identified and where the appropriate commitment cannot be found from amongst its numbers.

The elected Council is supported by two specialist sub-committees, the Editorial Board and the Conservation Fund Committee. The Editorial Board assists the Editor of *Sandgrouse* in compiling the content of each issue and the content of any supplementary publications according to a budget set by Council at the start of the year. The Conservation Fund Committee receives and reviews all grant applications made through a formal application procedure and makes recommendations to Council. All decisions on the allocation of funds to conservation projects are made by, and are the responsibility of, the elected Council.

The Society has no employees and owns no property or fixed assets; all the functions of an active and fully-compliant charity are performed by Council members working voluntarily with their own resources and from their own premises. This voluntary and low administrative cost approach enables the Charity to maximise the amounts expended on charitable activities and the Society recognises this very significant contribution with gratitude.

To assist them in understanding their responsibilities, all trustees are directed towards regular reference to the Charity Commission website. Council met formally three times during the year. Before each meeting, officers' reports were circulated to all Council members for information on the subjects under discussion and for the benefit of those not attending.

The Minutes of each formal meeting were circulated to all trustees and co-opted Council members soon after the meeting. Interaction between Council members in between formal meetings was by email through an email group. Most of these exchanges were seen by all trustee Council members and all co-opted Council members regardless of their involvement with the matter in hand.

**ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE MIDDLE EAST
THE CAUCASUS & CENTRAL ASIA**

**TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020**

A Risk Register is maintained so that Council members can identify the risks in their designated area of responsibility. No reportable incidents occurred during the year. However, Council remains aware of the need for continuous vigilance and review of all risk management procedures in place.

This year, Council has continued to address issues of governance and the provision of replacement in the event of incapacity of key trustees or co-opted Council members. Council recognises the general need to spread the administrative workload of the Society more evenly, and the need to reduce the concentration of key functions in a single incumbent working without deputy or understudy.

The Society acknowledges that it lacks the administrative and financial resources to embark on major projects and restricts itself to providing financial assistance to others, rather than organising and directing projects itself. It does not get involved with project details, except in an advisory role at the application stage, and is particularly careful to limit second-stage payments and commitments which carry forward to future years. In all its deliberations, the Society pays due regard to the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit in deciding the activities it should undertake.

Objectives and Activities

The object of the Charity is to promote a greater public understanding of Middle Eastern, Caucasian and Central Asian ornithology and thereby to encourage and facilitate conservation of the region's birds. This is achieved by the twice-yearly publication of a scientific journal, *Sandgrouse*, the holding of meetings, presence at events, the maintenance of a website, an active presence on social media, and the funding of fieldwork and other projects. Grants are awarded to approved projects from the funds of the Society and applicants are encouraged to submit their findings for publication in *Sandgrouse*.

The Constitution recognises four main categories of charitable activity:

1. Collect, collate, publish and disseminate ornithological data on countries in the Middle East, the Caucasus and Central Asia.
2. Publish a biannual journal of research and conservation results – *Sandgrouse*.
3. Encourage interest in birds in the area.
4. Work with other individuals and organisations with similar objectives and pursuing charitable activities concerned with ornithology in the Middle East, the Caucasus and Central Asia.

Chairman's Review of the Year

The year 2020 will undoubtedly be remembered for the start of the global Covid pandemic which continues to affect so many people all over the world. As with many small charities, the unprecedented situation threw up many challenges that impacted the work of OSME, both negatively and positively. However, due to the continued diligent management of our finances and the ongoing support of OSME members, we were able to continue expanding our work across the region.

The Conservation Fund

It was an exceptional year for our Conservation Fund with 11 projects supported and a combined total of £22,723 disbursed – our highest ever level of expenditure and meeting our Council's target of a £20,000 spend by the year 2020. The projects covered the whole region and were very varied:

- Educational programme for 'Phasianus' student club – building capacity for IBA monitoring, Uzbekistan: £1,900
- Determining the breeding status of Scopoli's *Calonectris diomedea* and Yelkouan Shearwater *Puffinus yelkouan* in Cyprus: £4,528
- The use of bioacoustic monitors to measure shooting rates at migratory bottlenecks, Lebanon: £2,000
- Spring is in the air: growing Georgian leadership in monitoring and conservation at Batumi Raptor Count, Georgia: £2,000
- Quantifying the risk of exposure to harmful agricultural veterinary pharmaceuticals via coprophagy for globally-endangered Egyptian Vultures *Neophron percnopterus*, United Arab Emirates: £1,900
- Determination of Great Bustard *Otis tarda* - friendly crop production practices in the wider Acıgöl Basin, Turkey: £2,000
- Continued monitoring of Sociable Lapwing *Vanellus gregarius* migration through the Kumo-Manych Depression, Russian Federation: £1,100
- Gap-filling survey in the mid reaches of the Araks River Valley, Armenia: £2,000
- Tackling illegal hunting in Northern Cyprus: £2,000
- Supporting International Vulture Awareness Day activities on Socotra, Yemen: £400
- Monitoring the globally-vulnerable Sooty Falcon *Falco concolor* breeding population, Israel: £2,895



Celebrating International Vulture Awareness Day at Sirhan Lagoon, Socotra, September 2020

By providing our largest ever Conservation Fund grant to BirdLife Cyprus for their survey of Yelkouan and Scopoli Shearwaters, we filled an important gap in the countries where we have funded projects. Within the OSME region, only Kuwait, Qatar and Turkmenistan are yet to receive funding from the Conservation Fund. We would welcome applications from these countries so we can achieve our target of all OSME countries receiving at least one grant by the end of 2023. The continued growth in Conservation Fund expenditure would not have been possible without the direct support of the March Conservation Fund of the Tides Foundation, and the ever-increasing generosity of members and supporters who make individual donations. All donations really make a difference to the work that we can fund. A crucial aspect of the Conservation Fund is how we decide which projects to support. We receive many more applications than we are able to fund and the task of advising OSME Council on project funding is overseen by an independent review committee chaired by Dr Maxim Koshkin with expert input from Dr Nabegh Ghazal Asswad, Sharif Jbour, Richard Porter, Hana Raza and Maïa Sarrouf Willson.

The Covid pandemic in some cases restricted the essential fieldwork activities of some of our Conservation Awards in 2020, meaning that work has had to be rolled forward into 2021 with our agreement. A full report will appear in *Sandgrouse* in due course.

Trevor Poyser Species Conservation Fund

In January 2020, we provided our first ever Trevor Poyser Species Conservation Fund grant to Doğa, the BirdLife partner in Turkey, for a project on the globally-endangered Egyptian Vulture *Neophron percnopterus*. The project entitled “Improving the conservation status of the largest Egyptian Vulture population in Turkey” was successfully completed and confirmed that the Beypazarı region holds the largest population of the species not only in Turkey, but also in the Balkans. The project also identified that electrocution from high-voltage powerlines is a key threat to the population and mitigation measures are urgently required. Further work has been identified and OSME is planning to support this work further in 2021.



The Youth Development Fund



Young falconers in Georgia learning about bird identification and conservation © FFI

As our planned projects through the Youth Development Fund were dependent on physically getting together at bird camps, major changes clearly had to be made to the programme during 2020. Plans for bird camps in Azerbaijan, North Cyprus and Egypt had to be postponed due to Covid but we are hopeful that some of these might proceed during 2021. We were able to adapt our programme and we were delighted to support two new important initiatives in Georgia and Turkey. Fauna & Flora International (FFI) has been supporting work to tackle the illegal falcon trade in Georgia, including working with young falconers to educate them about bird conservation and sustainable use. OSME provided a grant through the Youth Development Fund to allow education work to continue in autumn 2020, and a short project video is available on our YouTube channel. We were also approached by the Simurg Bird Sanctuary (Simurg Kuş Yuvası Derneği), Turkey who were looking to incorporate a range of youth development activities into a research project on White-headed Ducks. The research component of their work had been supported through a grant by the French Embassy, but they were lacking funds to cover the expenses of local students to enable them to attend training sessions. In addition to financial support, OSME had a Zoom call with the project team and students to identify a package of online training that could be delivered during 2021.

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Tomas Haraldsson, OSME's Youth Development Officer, continues to develop this crucial aspect of our work, and during 2020 he has been laying the foundations for new projects in Jordan, Georgia and Afghanistan.

Our education work has received lots of positive feedback from members and supporters, and we are grateful to all those who have made donations specifically for the Youth Development Fund. Given the ongoing declines in global biodiversity, it has never been more important to develop the next generation of bird conservationists.

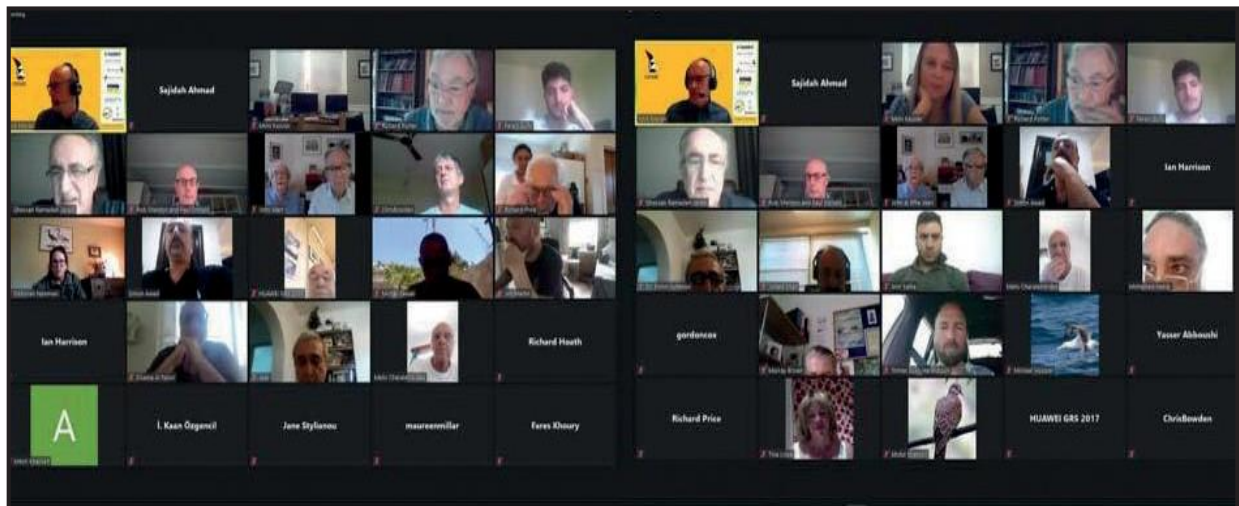
Linked to our Youth Development work, we have been looking at how we can improve our Supported Member scheme and we will be consulting on proposals in early 2021. Buoyed by the success of holding various online meetings via Zoom, we are keen to expand this to offer a range of discussion and training sessions targeted at our Supported Members.



Young birders - education is one of the key aims of our Youth Development Programme

Online Meetings

A positive outcome of the travel restrictions put in place to combat the global Covid pandemic has been the 'forced' adoption of video conferencing facilities to hold various OSME meetings. Our first and only face-to-face Council meeting of 2020 was held at the British Trust for Ornithology offices in Thetford in February. Subsequent meetings were then held regularly on Zoom to discuss our work and included two official Council meetings and several shorter meetings specifically for planning certain projects. Zoom meetings were just as effective as the usual physical get-togethers and it is likely that this approach will become the norm, even when travel restrictions have eased. In August, we also held our first ever Summer Meeting using Zoom and it was a great success, hosting speakers and enabling OSME members to attend from across the region. More than 140 people attended (from 190 registrations) from 19 OSME countries (42 countries in total) to listen to four speakers, three of whom were women based in the region – it was a truly OSME-wide event! Our website has a comprehensive summary of the Summer Meeting.



Some of the 140+ attendees at our first online Summer Meeting

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Our Annual General Meeting (AGM), with the formalities of presenting and approving our annual accounts, also took place online. Importantly, members from across the OSME region were able to join the meeting, many for the very first time, with over 10 countries represented. The number of attendees matched our usual face-to-face meeting. A summary, including a video link to the meeting is available on our website.

Usually, our Summer Meeting and AGM are combined into a single event that is based at the BTO's headquarters at the Nunnery, Thetford, and that important connection was maintained as we were able to utilise their Zoom conferencing facilities – a massive thank you to the BTO for their continued support. I think it is fair to say that we approached the use of Zoom with some trepidation but, thanks to the expertise of OSME Council member Nick Moran, all the meetings ran smoothly and we received many positive comments about how professional they were. OSME Council will certainly be looking at the continued use of Zoom meetings in coming years, even when travel restrictions have eased.



Illegal bird killing - a continuing focus for OSME in 2020

Sandgrouse



Volume 42 of our highly-respected journal *Sandgrouse* saw the production of two bumper issues totalling 376 pages, our largest ever volume by some distance. Editor Paul Donald has been strengthening the Editorial Board and seeking views from across our membership on how we can further develop this journal. Our digital version of *Sandgrouse* continued to be well received and an increasing number of members are choosing this format instead of a hard copy. A total of 127 members have requested the digital version, 56 of whom receive *Sandgrouse* in the digital format only. This results in savings on printing and particularly postage costs which are increasing at a dramatic rate. Importantly it enables members from countries with unreliable postal services to continue receiving *Sandgrouse*.

The digital version gives high-quality access to all issues of *Sandgrouse* since 2018, is fully searchable, and enables printing of individual articles or the whole issue. Back issues of *Sandgrouse*, subject to a three-year embargo on the most recent issues, are freely available in a variety of electronic formats on the Biodiversity Heritage Library website.

OSME Region List

The Society publishes the OSME Regional List (ORL) of birds that considers the latest taxonomy and new information on species distribution. This is based on the worldwide IOC (International Ornithological Community) list to which OSME Council member Mike Blair is an adviser. The ORL is freely available from the OSME website and is updated regularly. This very significant undertaking is well regarded by researchers, organisations and individual birdwatchers across and beyond the region.

The ORL seeks to provide a consistent and up-to-date taxonomy of all bird species and subspecies for the OSME region to support a common approach for those working in ornithology and those studying birds collected or observed. (Relevant bird collections exist worldwide.) This underpins the aim of the first category of our charitable activities which is to collect, collate, publish and disseminate ornithological data on countries in the Middle East, the Caucasus and Central Asia. Taxonomic understanding through avian molecular research techniques is developing at a fast rate and the ORL reflects recent research, mostly as analysed by IOC and similar authorities, but also has access to original scientific papers published worldwide.

The ORL taxonomy is used in *Sandgrouse* but is also freely available on the OSME website to researchers and amateurs who are interested in birds. The ORL has been downloaded in well over 100 countries.

OSME on Social Media

Our social media presence continues to grow, with Facebook and Twitter both increasing their number of shares/follows, and lots of people engagement across the region. We also set up an OSME YouTube channel for posting video footage. Our first video was from the 1985 OSME expedition to Yemen and the channel also features recordings of all the talks from our online Summer Meeting.

The OSME Yahoo discussion group OSMEBirdnet was successfully migrated to Google and offers an excellent platform for sharing information and exchanging ideas.

A substantial amount of work was undertaken behind the scenes to update our website and we extend sincere thanks to AbdulRahman Al-Sirhan for undertaking this mammoth task. All of OSME Council's day-to-day correspondence also moved from Yahoo to Google, including the establishment of new email addresses to enable a more professional look to our communications. A new OSME members' email list has also been set up to improve communication about key events and activities.

And finally

Despite the upheaval created by the global pandemic, OSME's finances remain robust and this is a reflection of the excellent stewardship of our accounts by John Warr and Chris Hughes (Co-Treasurers). All OSME Council members continue to devote significant time and energy to the work of our small but effective charity. There is lots more that we can do to promote the joy of birds, birdwatching and conservation across the Middle East, the Caucasus and Central Asia and we are always looking for more members of Council – if you'd like to discuss how you can help us, then please contact me via email: chairman@osme.org.

Finally, a huge thank you goes to all OSME members, corporate sponsors and donors who have continued to support our activities during a turbulent 2020. We couldn't have achieved so much for the birds of the OSME region without you.



The globally-vulnerable Sooty Falcon *Falco concolor* - a project to study the breeding population in Israel was funded by a major Conservation Fund grant in 2020

Treasurer's Report

The Society's year ended with a strong balance sheet, a reflection we feel, of the real and positive impact we are having across the region with our supporters, partners and members.

Income was down nearly £22,000 on 2019, almost entirely due to some significant sponsors being understandably cautious in the year of the Covid pandemic. Expenditure was slightly less, meaning an overall deficit of £14,000 which was more than covered by our free reserves. We carried forward just over £35,000 in unrestricted funds and £47,000 in restricted and committed funds into 2021, meaning we will have no problem in continuing and even enhancing our activity at the current pace.

Income

We were once again delighted to receive \$20,000 from the March Conservation Fund of the Tides Foundation, our activities clearly tying in with their aims and objectives.

We welcomed an individual donation of over a thousand pounds from Chris Spooner, a long-term supporter of OSME, for which we are extremely grateful. We received over £1,000 in memory of noted wildlife artist Martin Woodcock including £650 from his widow Barbara from the sale of his library, the proceeds of which were distributed to many bird and conservation organisations close to his heart.

Many members also took the opportunity to make smaller donations with their subscription renewals.

We really appreciated the continued support of our Corporate Members: Birdfinders, Birdtour Asia, Greentours, NHBS (Natural History Book Service), Oriole Birding, Rockjumper, and Sunbird. All gave their unswerving support.

A Gift Aid claim for £1,727 was successfully submitted.

We ended the year with our membership growing over that in 2019, a significant achievement in the era of falling memberships for organisations generally.

The supported membership scheme, where a member pays an additional membership subscription on behalf of an OSME region national, saw a significant increase, with members backing this important opportunity for young birders and conservationists. We now have over 40 supported members and are looking to increase this number, especially with the availability of *Sandgrouse* digitally which has particular appeal to younger people.

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Some 21 institutions (universities, libraries etc) subscribed to receive copies of *Sandgrouse* for which they paid an average of £40. A further 13 institutions, clubs and associates received complimentary copies. Our seven corporate members received copies as part of their membership and six copies were provided to the legal deposit libraries.

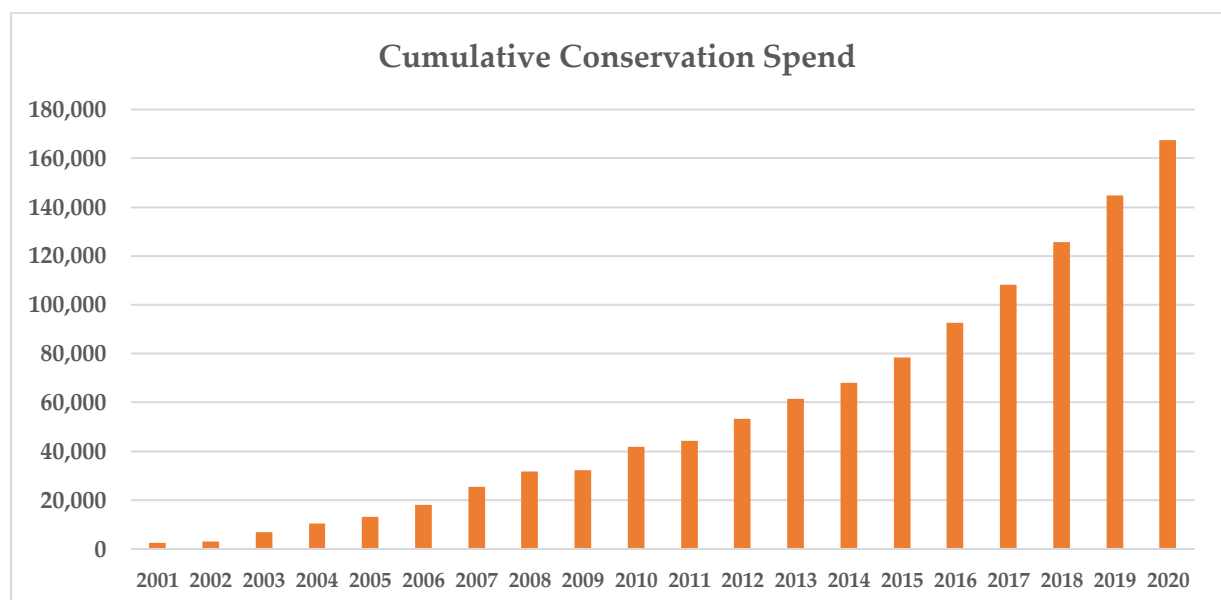
As we read in the Chairman's report, our following on both Facebook and Twitter continues to rise with over 3,500 and 5,000 followers respectively. Converting these to memberships is a priority for us going forward.

Conservation Funds

Since the year 2000, OSME has made conservation and research grants of over £167,000 to projects across our region and we are delighted that once again we have increased our year-on-year spend with £22,723 going to a range of innovative and important initiatives outlined in the Chairman's report. This compares to £19,124 in 2019 and very pleasingly we reached our aim of at least a £20,000 annual spend every year from 2020.

Grant distribution to date: Middle East 47%, Central Asia 30%, Caucasus 20%, Whole Region 3%

The following graph shows the cumulative growth in Conservation Fund spending since 2001 and illustrates the rapid growth in our conservation activity with our spend more than doubling over the past six years!



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Youth Development Funds

As detailed in the Chairman's report, we provided funds for the first time this year to projects in Turkey and Georgia with grants of £2,000 to each of these important initiatives.

This now means that since 2016 we have awarded £28,000 to projects involving young birders in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Lebanon and Turkey at an average of £5,500 per year, a sum we wish to build on in coming years as we expand the 'Youth' projects into further countries across the OSME Region.

Overall our investment from the Conservation, Youth and Trevor Poyser Funds reached over £31,000 pounds in 2020, some 30% more than in any previous year and this is a figure we are planning to replicate in 2021.

Expenditure

Our increased investment in *Sandgrouse* continued to maintain its quality with significantly larger editions. This was somewhat compensated by the increasing take-up of the digital edition which has helped reduce spiralling postage costs .

The unfortunate cancellation of the UK Birdfair due to the Covid pandemic saved us approximately £4,000 but we would have much rather been there!

As ever, administration costs were well controlled and will reduce significantly in coming years as we close our rented storage facility.

Accounts Examiner

Mike Jennings, a former Treasurer and eminent stalwart of OSME, has again examined and reported on the accounts without charge. This has been done in full conformity with the requirements of the Charity Commission both for accounting standards and, considering his long and close association with the Society, his own eligibility for this work. We extend a special thank you to Mike for this valuable contribution.

Reserves Policy

The trustees have a reserves policy which is to conduct the business of the Society to complete the year with unrestricted funds on the balance sheet of more than £12,000. The trustees consider this would enable an orderly closure of the Charity if, due to unforeseen circumstances, that unfortunately became necessary. At the end of 2020, with unrestricted funds on the balance sheet of £35,543, the reserves policy was considered fulfilled.

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Future Financial Policy

The Society proposes to continue producing two new issues of *Sandgrouse* per year and maintain and enhance the digital edition and produce a quarterly newsletter to all members. We will continue to enhance our presence at the UK Birdfair and other events and further develop our Corporate Sponsorships. We will aim to maintain our Conservation Fund grants at the 2020 level of at least £20,000 a year. We will also continue the development of our two new funds, the Youth Development Fund and the Trevor Poyser Species Conservation Fund. The reserve fund target will remain at £12,000.

Trustees' Responsibilities

Laws applicable to charities in England and Wales require Council, as trustees, to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the Charity's financial activities during the year, and of its financial position at the end of the year. In preparing those financial statements, the trustees should follow best practice and:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- state whether applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the statement of accounts
- prepare the financial accounts on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Charity will continue its operations

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy the financial position of the Charity, and which enable them to both ascertain the financial position of the Charity and to ensure that the financial statements comply with applicable law, accounting standards and the Charities SORP. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approved and signed on behalf of the trustees:



Rob Sheldon
Chairman

19 June 2021



Chris Hughes
Treasurer

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Independent Examiner's Report

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of the Ornithological Society of the Middle East, the Caucasus & Central Asia

I report on the accounts of the Society for the year ended 31 December 2020 which are set out below.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The Charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The Charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act,
- to follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission [under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act], and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of examiner's statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the Charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the requirements:

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act;
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act have not been met; or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Michael C Jennings
5 March 2021

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Statement of Financial Activities

Statement of Financial Activities for the period 1 January 2020 to 31 December 2020

		Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2020 £	Total 2019 £
Income from:					
<u>Donations and legacies</u>					
Donations from members		2,635	-	2,635	4,201
Gift Aid tax refund		687	-	687	1,036
Fund donations		-	22,261	22,261	36,338
Other donations		427	-	427	1,409
Legacies		-	-	-	-
<u>Charitable activities</u>					
Subscriptions	1	13,299	-	13,299	11,856
Gift Aid tax refund		1,040	-	1,040	5,459
Sale of publications		-	-	-	-
Donations from Corporate Sponsors		-	-	-	1,750
<u>Other trading activities</u>					
Fundraising events		-	-	-	278
<u>Investments</u>					
Bank and other interest		32	-	32	41
Total		18,120	22,261	40,380	62,368
Expenditure on:					
<u>Raising funds</u>					
Cost of sales – goods bought in		-	-	-	-
Fundraising costs		-	-	-	119
<u>Charitable activities</u>					
Conservation Fund grants	2	-	26,173	26,173	23,551
Conservation projects	3	-	5,366	5,366	5,122
Production of journal <i>Sandgrouse</i>		10,960	-	10,960	10,239
<u>Support costs</u>					
Postage of journal <i>Sandgrouse</i>	4	4,658	-	4,658	4,859
Support costs		6,337	-	6,337	10,222
Bank charges		1,008	-	1,008	1,228
Total		22,963	31,539	54,502	55,340
Net Income /(Expenditure)		(4,843)	(9,279)	(14,122)	7,028
Transfer between funds		8,310	(8,310)	-	-
Net movement in funds		1,157	(15,279)	(14,122)	7,028
Fund balances B/F @ 01 January 2020		34,386	62,661	97,047	90,019
Fund balances C/F @ 31 December 2020		37,853	45,072	82,926	97,047

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Balance Sheet

<u>Balance Sheet</u>		2020	2019
		£	£
Fixed assets:			
Equipment		-	-
Current assets:			
Stocks		-	-
Debtors	8	872	1,756
Cash - current account		926	519
- deposit account		82,000	96,529
Total current assets		<u>83,798</u>	<u>98,803</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year:			
Deferred income – pre-paid subscriptions		3,820	3,711
Grants awarded but not yet paid	2	5,850	1,900
Other creditors	9	-	2,926
Sub total		<u>9,670</u>	<u>8,537</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due after one year:			
Deferred income – pre-paid subscriptions		1,000	825
Provision for activities and liabilities		(9,798)	(7,606)
Net current assets		<u>82,926</u>	<u>97,047</u>
Funds:			
General Fund		35,543	45,936
Restricted Funds		47,382	51,111
		<u>82,926</u>	<u>97,047</u>

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Notes to the Financial Statements

Notes to the Financial Statements

1. Accounting policies

- a. Basis of accounting - the accounts are prepared under the historic cost convention.
- b. Subscription income is credited to the income and expenditure account in the period to which it relates. Subscriptions received in advance are carried forward as deferred income in the balance sheet and result in a liability for the future provision of membership services.
- c. Stocks - no value is placed on the stocks of back copies of *Sandgrouse*, primary purpose goods and donated goods held for sale in the Society's accounts.

2. Conservation grants

	2020	2019
	£	£
Educational program for 'Phasianus' student club, Uzbekistan	1,900	
Improving the conservation of Egyptian Vulture population in Turkey	4,866	
Breeding status of Scopoli's and Yelkouan Shearwaters in Cyprus	4,528	
Great Bustards in the Agicol Basin, Turkey	2,000	
Egyptian Vultures in Kalba, Sharjah, UAE	1,900	
Measuring shooting rates at migratory bottlenecks, Lebanon	2,000	
Growing Georgian leadership at Batumi Raptor Count, Georgia	2,000	
Continuing monitoring of Sociable Lapwing, Kumo-Manych Depression	1,100	
Survey gap-filling in the mid-reaches of the Araks Valley, Armenia	2,000	
Addressing autumn trapping in Cyprus	2,000	
Vulture Awareness Day on Socotra, Yemen	401	
Support for Young Falconer activities, Batumi, Georgia	2,000	
Monitoring Sooty Falcon breeding in Israel	2,895	
White-Headed duck activities at Lake Mogun, Ankara, Turkey	1,951	
	31,541	23,551
Awarded for payment in 2021:		
Raptor monitoring (Batumi Raptor Count), Batumi, Georgia	2,950	
Determining the status of owls in Jordan	2,900	
	5,850	

3. Conservation projects

	2020	2019
	£	£
Birds of the Middle East (Arabic)	-	2,926
	-	2,926

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Notes to the Financial Statements

4. Support costs

Support costs have not been allocated to activity categories within the Statement of Financial Activities. The table below provides an allocation. Values are estimated in all cases other than the mailing of *Sandgrouse* to members and the stationery and printing involved where actuals are used.

	Fundraising activities	Charitable activities	Governance	Total 2020	Total 2019
	£	£	£	£	£
Mailing of <i>Sandgrouse</i>	466	4,192	-	4,658	4,859
Sales and general postage	167	223	167	558	382
Data storage	883	1,177	883	2,942	2,275
Stationery etc	283	377	283	942	2,742
Bad debt written off (Socotra)	-	389	-	389	-
Website	151	202	151	504	39
Meetings and events	126	168	126	421	343
Council travel expenses	140	187	140	468	1,817
Insurance	45	11	57	113	113
Bank charges	302	403	302	1,008	-
Independent Examiner's fee	-	-	-	-	-
Totals	<u>2,564</u>	<u>7,330</u>	<u>2,109</u>	<u>12,003</u>	<u>12,580</u>

5. Trustees

No remuneration was paid or was payable out of OSME funds, directly or indirectly, to any Council member or to any person or persons known to be connected to them. Council members have been reimbursed at cost for purchases made on behalf of the Society.

6. Employees

The Charity has no paid employees.

7. Taxation

OSME is a registered charity and, under current legislation, has no liability to taxation.

8. Debtors

	2020	2019
	£	£
Public liability insurance	-	104
Ready Steady Store self-storage (3.5m)	727	1,612
Hypercom terminal rental	-	10
10Web annual fee (7.75m)	145	-
Just Host SiteLock Security	-	30
	<u>872</u>	<u>1,756</u>

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Notes to the Financial Statements

9. Other creditors

	2020	2019
	£	£
Public liability insurance	113	-
Ready Steady Store self-storage (3m)	625	2,500
Hypercom terminal rental (12m)	-	226
Web hosting	225	200
	<u>850</u>	<u>2,926</u>

10. Movement in funds

	Brought Forward	Income	Expend- iture	Transfers IN	OUT	Carried Forward
Unrestricted General Fund	34,386	18,120	22,963	6,000	-	35,543
Restricted Funds						
Avifauna Fund	-	3,000	-	-	-	3,000
Birds of the Middle East Fund	12,883	12	-	-	6,000	6,895
Conservation Fund - General	3,550	111	600	210	2,100	1,171
Cons. Fund – Anonymous	11,228	-	10,300	-	-	928
Cons. Fund – March/Tides	6,791	16,648	11,323	-	-	12,116
James Goodhart Fund	-	500	500	2,100	-	2,100
Oman Fund	2,407	-	-	-	-	2,407
Supported Membership Fund	(20)	880	-	-	-	860
Trevor Poyser Fund	20,000	-	4,866	-	-	15,134
Youth & Community General	-	1,110	-	-	210	900
Y and C Fund – Anonymous	5,823	-	3,951	-	-	1,872
Restricted Funds Total	62,661	22,261	31,539	2,310	8,310	47,382
Total Funds	97,047	40,380	54,502	8,310	8,310	82,926

11. Description of Funds

We set up our funds to manage our donations correctly and ensure that the donor's funds are only used for the purposes they intended. This is a core principle of charity finance creating unrestricted and restricted Funds.

Unrestricted General Fund

The General Fund is the sole unrestricted cash fund of the Society which receives all income and makes all payments. There are two bank accounts, a current account and an interest-earning deposit account. Transfers are made to and from other funds according to controls applying to those funds.

Avifauna Fund (Restricted)

This fund was set up to provide awards to projects funded by, and with the agreement of, Avifauna.

Birds of the Middle East (Arabic) Fund (Restricted)

This fund was set up to raise funds for the publication of an App version of the BotME book, a sole venture of the Society funded by donations and fundraising activities.

Conservation Fund – General (Restricted)

This fund was set up to provide awards to projects for conservation in the region. It is funded from the General Fund.

Conservation Fund – Anonymous (Restricted)

This Conservation Fund was set up to provide awards to projects funded by a large donor who wishes to remain anonymous.

Conservation Fund – March Fund of the Tides Foundation (Restricted)

This fund was set up to provide awards to projects funded by the March Fund of the Tides Foundation.

James Goodhart Fund (Restricted)

This fund was set up to administer funds donated over several years by James Goodhart.

Oman Fund (Restricted)

This Fund was set up to administer surplus funds from the dissolution of the Oman Bird Records Committee. It is to be used to fund ornithological projects in Oman. At the end of 2020, no such projects had been identified.

Supported Membership Fund (Restricted)

The Supported Membership Fund was set up to provide honorary membership for nationals in the region who are not able to pay a full subscription. It is funded by subscriptions from Supporting Members.

**ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE MIDDLE EAST
THE CAUCASUS & CENTRAL ASIA**

**TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020**

Notes to the Financial Statements

Trevor Poyser Species Conservation Fund (Restricted)

Following a major legacy from Trevor Poyser, this fund was established in 2019 and specifically focusses on single-species conservation of birds on the Red and Amber lists of BirdLife International.

Youth and Community Fund – General (Restricted)

This fund was established to administer funds donated specifically for youth and community projects.

Youth and Community Fund – Anonymous (Restricted)

This fund was set up to provide awards to youth and community projects - funded by a large regular donor who wishes to remain anonymous.



**OSME continues to fund projects across our region in support of the globally-threatened
Sociable Lapwing *Vanellus gregarius***