



SUSSEX ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy

Our commitment

Sussex Ornithological Society (SOS) is committed to encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion among our membership.

We comply with the Equality Act 2010, and we do not discriminate against anyone because of the nine protected characteristics covered by the Act; age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity. We will challenge discrimination where it occurs.

Aims

Our aim is for SOS to be representative of all parts of society in Sussex, and to create a safe and welcoming space where everyone can feel included and be treated with dignity and respect.

We believe that welcoming people from diverse communities is the best way to support our work to engage, inspire, and educate about birds, and support the recording, study and conservation of wild birds in the county.

We endeavour to make our activities, services and decision-making processes inclusive and to design these to encourage participation from those who face disadvantage in society.

We recognise that there is a considerable range of birdwatching skills in society and amongst our membership, we encourage all to get involved.

This policy outlines the measures we are taking to increase accessibility, work towards our aims and what to do if you feel that you have been treated unfairly.

Indoor meetings

We aim to hold all meetings at accessible venues with;

- Level access or a lift.
- A PA system to allow hearing-impaired people to participate,
- On a public transport network. Where public transport is not available, we will try to facilitate attendance via a video link (Zoom or Teams) where possible.

For Officers attending official meetings, reimbursement of expenses is available where this is a barrier to attendance.

Field trips

Inevitably, accessibility varies by location. Clear information about each location is available on our website and from field trip leaders.

To facilitate attendance for women and those who may feel uncomfortable going on outings alone, or where accessibility may be a barrier, an option for members to arrange informal lift sharing with each other is available on our website.

Loans of optics equipment may be available for those who do not have their own equipment. Please talk to the field trip leader to find out more. The SOS will keep a limited inventory of optics for loan to members wishing to partake in survey work.

Society resources and bird records

Information on our website is presented in an accessible format, and our newsletter and publications are available both in electronic form, and on paper for those who do not have access to the internet.

We accept bird records in paper format and by mail from those without access to a computer or the internet.

Reporting discrimination or harassment

If any member feels that they have been harassed or discriminated against, they should report this to a member of SOS Council (see website or newsletter for details).

Council will investigate the complaint, listening to all members involved.

If the complaint is against a Council member, that member will not be part of conducting the investigation.

If the complaint is against a particular individual, this individual will have the opportunity to express their point of view, accompanied by a friend. The person making the complaint will have the same opportunity.

Any decision to exclude a person from the Society due to discriminatory or harassing behaviour will be made with reference to the Society's rules.

The Society will support people who feel they have been harassed or discriminated against, and will not victimise or treat them less well because they have raised a concern.

Policy review

This policy will be reviewed every two years by SOS Council.

Signed



Date 26 April 2023

Print name Clare Buckle

SOS Chair of Council

The Sussex Ornithological Society is a Registered Charity No. 256936