

Registered Charity Number: 282938

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

**TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT
&
ACCOUNTS**

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED
31 DECEMBER 2016**



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

**TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2016**

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

**TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2016**

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.

E-mail: 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

Trustees:

The trustees who served during 2016 were as follows:

Up to July 2016

Phillip Cannings
Sal Cooke
Helen Demopoulos
Chris Hughes
Nick Moran
Dora Querido
Tristan Reid
Robert Sheldon

From July 2016

Phillip Cannings
Sal Cooke
Ian Harrison
Chris Hughes
Nick Moran
Dora Querido
Irene Sabiniarz
Robert Sheldon

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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 Charity Commission (No. 282938) and governed under a constitution adopted 17th June 1981 and amended 10th 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 this year on Saturday 4th July. 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 Committee and the Conservation Committee. The Editorial Committee 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 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 and before each meeting departmental reports were circulated to all Council members for information on the subjects under discussion and for the benefit of those not attending or attending online.

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 but 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 particular 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

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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, the presence at fairs, the maintenance of a website, an active presence in social media and the funding of field work 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 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 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.

The trustees can report that in 2016 there was activity in all these categories as follows:

1. Collect, collate, publish and disseminate ornithological data on countries in the Middle East, the Caucasus and Central Asia

As much as possible the Charity awards grants towards fieldwork in the area and invites applications through advertisements in *Sandgrouse* and on the website. Grant applications are received by the Conservation Committee which selects suitable projects and makes technical recommendations to Council. Further considerations are based on local involvement, public benefit, available budget and financial sanctions that may restrict or prohibit the transfer of funds. Desk and laboratory studies are encouraged where a need is identified and where fieldwork is inappropriate or is not proposed due to the many political and operational problems in the area.

OSME in combination with local education groups and tour companies, has continued to support educational projects and youth camps dedicated to raising awareness of conservation matters among young people.

The following awards were made towards projects during the year:

‘Eco-club for Wildlife and Forests’ in Dsegh Visitor Centre, Dsegh, ARMENIA.

Brecht Verhelst, Armenian Society for the Protection of Birds (ASPB). £2,150

Mid-Winter Waterfowl Surveys in four locations in TURKEY.

Ibrahim Kaan Özgencil, Dept. of Biology, Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey. £400

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Distribution and abundance of Eurasian steppe birds at the Western border of their range in KAZAKHSTAN.

Johannes Kamp, ACBK. £1,950

Monitoring of IBA 'Oygaing valley' and the adjoining territories, UZBEKISTAN.

Anna Ten, Ecocenter 'Djeýran'. £2,000

Second year of Monitoring of Illegal Shooting of Raptors in the Batumi Bottleneck, GEORGIA.

Anna Sandor, Batumi Raptor Count. £1,000

International Youth Bird Migration Project, Besh Barmag, AZERBAIJAN.

Tomas Haraldsson, BirdLife Sweden Youth Committee. £1,500

SunChild Eco-Clubs, ARMENIA

Eva Martirosyan, Foundation for the Preservation of Wildlife and Cultural Assets (FPWC). £5,000

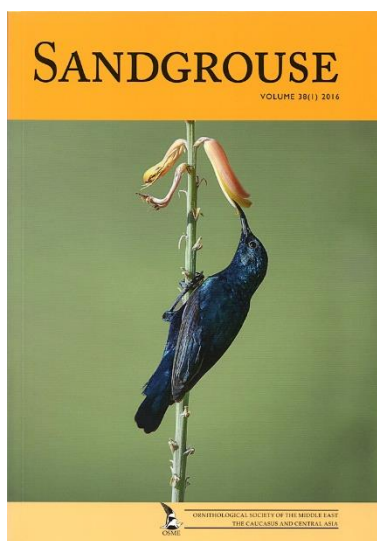
In addition to the funding of projects, ornithological data are collected from correspondents in the area throughout the year and summaries are published on the website and in the 'Around the Region' pages in each issue of *Sandgrouse*. We also encourage birdwatchers to post trip reports to the OSME website to act as an archive for ornithological sightings.

OSMEBirdNet is a Yahoo group discussion forum that both OSME members and non-members can join. The forum acts as a source of information and discussion for those with an interest in the birds and conservation of the region.

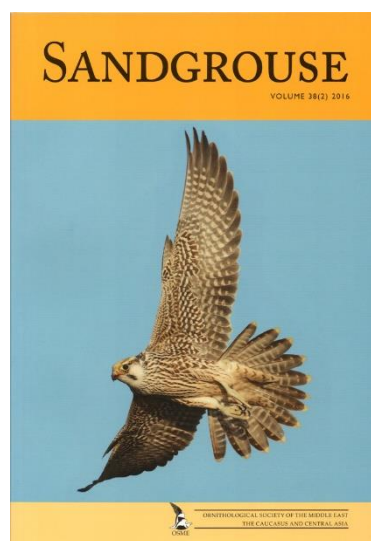
The Society publishes the OSME Region List (ORL) of birds for the region that takes into account the latest taxonomy and new information on species' distribution. The ORL is freely available from the OSME website and is updated regularly. This very significant undertaking is well regarded by researchers, organisations and individual birdwatchers across and beyond the region.

2. Publish a journal of research and conservation results – *Sandgrouse*

The journal *Sandgrouse* is the journal for members published twice a year.



Sandgrouse 38(1)



Sandgrouse 38(2)

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It focuses on publishing papers which are submitted independently and are peer-reviewed. There are sections that highlight bird records from around the region, as well as general information of interest to OSME members. Two issues of *Sandgrouse*, Volumes 38(1) and 38(2) were produced during the year.

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.

In addition to the distribution of *Sandgrouse* to members and institutional subscribers, each issue of *Sandgrouse* was freely exchanged with some thirty other groups.

3. Encourage interest in birds in the area

Field Guide to the Birds of the Middle East (in Arabic)

Birdlife Middle East, Bloomsbury Press, Richard Porter and OSME have continued to collaborate on an updated Arabic translation of the field guide to the Birds of the Middle East (Porter & Aspinall). Fundraising has again been the focus of the work during 2016 and we have largely achieved our target to produce the book which is expected for publication in time for the Dubai book fair in March 2017. OSME will continue with fundraising efforts to enable the development of a smart-phone App which is expected to be available later in 2017.



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.

One of the biggest threats to many migratory birds in the OSME region is illegal bird killing and we have been working closely with BirdLife International on an assessment of the number of birds killed across the Arabian Peninsula, Iran and Iraq. These baseline data will provide a valuable source of information to help target conservation efforts in the future.



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A feature of this years' grants program were the grants awarded to youth camp projects in Armenia and Azerbaijan where the aim is increasing the awareness of conservation issues in younger generations. We are expecting to make further progress in this area in future years.

In addition to the distribution of *Sandgrouse* to members and institutional subscribers, each issue of *Sandgrouse* was freely exchanged with some thirty other groups.

Achievements and Performance

Budgetary targets were based on the results from 2015 and were to produce two issues of *Sandgrouse* and to contain other expenditures to end the year with the balance sheet more than the reserve fund target of £12,000.

Income from Donations was increased significantly by the donation of £3,000 from Peter Cowan and Yoav Perlman is to be congratulated on his winning of £750 for OSME in the Bird Brain of Britain quiz at the 2016 Birdfair. A Gift Aid claim for £4,339 was successfully submitted. This was the third Gift Aid claim to include the Council Expenses/Matching Donation scheme where council members claim travel expenses which they return voluntarily as a gift-aided donation. A total of £1,582 was claimed balanced by £1,582 donated resulting in £395.50 Gift Aid.

This year both issues of *Sandgrouse* were edited by Peter Cowan, designed by Eng-Li Green and printed by Swallowtail. They were distributed in spring and autumn by the RSPB mailing facility at St. Martins, Bedford using provided address labels generated from the membership database. The high standards set in recent years, in all areas of content, production and distribution were maintained. The Society is grateful for the cooperation and generosity of all concerned in maintaining standards, meeting production and mailing schedules, and controlling costs.

At the end of the year there were some 640 individual members worldwide paying an average annual subscription of £22 for which they received two issues of the journal *Sandgrouse*, Vol. 38(1) & Vol. 38(2). In addition, they were entitled to free entry to the combined Summer Meeting and Annual General Meeting held in Thetford at the headquarters of the British Trust for Ornithology.

The supported membership scheme, where a member pays an additional membership subscription on behalf of an OSME region national, was out of balance at the end of the year with 38 supporting members but only 31 supported members. The register of supported members is reviewed throughout the year and specifically at each Council meeting to try to establish an approximate balance.

Some twenty-two institutions (Universities, Libraries etc.) subscribed to receive copies of *Sandgrouse* for which they paid an average of £40 and a further sixteen institutions, clubs and associates received

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complimentary copies. Five corporate members received copies as part of their membership and five copies were provided to the legal deposit libraries.

The honorarium paid to the editor of *Sandgrouse* is intended to cover all the costs associated with editorship, both of the main issues and of any supplements that are produced. Peter Cowan has worked unstintingly on this, producing highly respected journals always on time and within the agreed budgets. This year as in previous years he has returned the honorarium in full and in advance by way of a donation. Council acknowledges, with thanks, the very significant contribution that Peter continues to make in so many ways.

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 about accounting standards and, considering his long and close association with the Society, his own eligibility for this work. Council extends a special thank you to Mike for this valuable contribution.

All Council members give of their time, travel costs and private resources entirely without remuneration and again this year there have been only minimal costs associated with Council meetings. Rooms at the Natural History Museum, Tring, The University of Derby and the British Trust for Ornithology have been provided freely and light refreshments have been sponsored by individual Council members. The Society is grateful for this assistance in controlling administrative costs. In all cases where Council members are reimbursed for costs incurred or purchases made on behalf of OSME, reimbursement is made based on the actual cost.

Reserves Policy

The Trustees have a reserves policy which is to conduct the business of the Society to complete the year with a 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 became necessary. At the end of 2015 with a balance sheet of £31,202 the reserves policy was considered fulfilled.

Future Financial Policy

The Society proposes to produce two new issues of *Sandgrouse*, to complete its contribution to the publication of *Birds of the Middle East (in Arabic)* and to publish the app version as a sole venture. As in previous years, grants will be awarded to conservation projects only if funds can be identified, secured and can be legitimately transferred. The Reserve Fund target will remain at £12,000.

Trustees' Responsibilities

Under the Charities Act 1993, the trustees are required to prepare a statement of accounts for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity at the end of the year and of the incoming resources and application of resources in the year. In preparing the statement the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent

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- 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 at any time the financial position of the Charity and to enable them to ensure that any statement of account prepared by them complies with the regulations under the Charities Act. 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.

This report has been prepared in accordance with "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice" (revised 2005).

Approved and signed on behalf of the trustees:



Rob Sheldon
Chairman

2nd July 2016



Chris Hughes
Treasurer

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**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2016**

**Independent 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 2016 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
7th May 2017

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**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2016**

Statement of Financial Activities

Statement of Financial Activities for the period 01 January 2016 to 31 December 2016

	Notes	General Fund	Restricted Fund	Designated Fund	Total Year 2016	Total Year 2015
		£	£	£	£	£
Income and Expenditure						
A Incoming Resources						
<i>from generated funds</i>						
Voluntary income	2	27,017	2,143	11,743	40,903	29,168
Activities for generating funds	3	304	0	0	304	746
Investment income		12	0	0	12	11
Total Incoming Resources		27,333	2,143	11,743	41,219	29,925
B Resources Expended						
<i>Costs of generating funds</i>						
Costs of generating voluntary income	4	1,400	0	216	1,616	3,321
Fundraising trading: costs of goods so	5	50	0	0	50	99
Charitable activities	6	29,503	2,143	0	31,646	27,686.
Governance costs	7	287	0	0	287	582
Total Resources Expended		31,240	2,143	216	33,599	31,688
Net Incoming Resources before transfers		(3,907)	0	11,527	7,620	(1,764)
C Transfers between funds		0	0	0	0	0
Net Movement in Funds		(3,907)	0	11,527	7,620	(1,764)
D Reconciliation of funds						
Fund Balances brought forward @ 01 January		17,321	1,000	5,260	23,581	25,345
Fund Balances carried forward @ 31 December		13,415	1,000	16,787	31,202	23,581

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BALANCE SHEET

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2016

Balance Sheet

Balance Sheet at 31 December 2016		2016	2015
		£	£
Fixed assets:			
Equipment		-	-
Current assets:			
Stocks		0	0
Debtors		888	888
Cash - current account		779	770
- deposit account		30,423	22,811
Total current assets		32,090	24,470
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year			
Deferred income - pre-paid subscriptions		(14,178)	(5,021)
Grants awarded but not yet paid		3,000	0
Other creditors		2,748	2,748
Net current assets		40,520	26,743
Total assets less current liabilities		40,520	26,743
Creditors: amounts falling due after one year			
Deferred income - pre-paid subscriptions		5,853	(935)
Provision for liabilities and charges		3,465	2,226
Net assets		31,202	23,581
Funds:			
General Fund		13,415	17,321
Restricted Fund		1,000	1,000
Designated Fund		16,787	5,260
		31,202	23,581

These financial statements were approved by the trustees 2nd July 2017 and signed on their behalf by:



Rob Sheldon
Chairman



Chris Hughes
Treasurer

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NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2016

Notes to the Accounts

1. Accounting Policies

a. Accounting Convention

- i. The accounts are prepared under the historic cost convention and in accordance with applicable accounting standards and “*Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice*” (rev 2005).
- ii. 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.
- iii. Stocks. No value is placed on the stocks of back copies of *Sandgrouse*, remaining stocks of primary purpose goods, and some donated goods in the Society’s accounts.

b. Taxation

The Society is a registered charity (282938) and is not subject to taxation on its income.

c. Funds

The General Fund is unrestricted in its use. The Restricted Fund receives donated funds for distribution at the discretion of the donor and the Designated Fund receives and distributes funds at the discretion of Council.

2. Voluntary Income	General Fund	Restricted Funds	Designated Funds	Total Year 2016	Total Year 2015
Membership subscriptions	13,169	0	0	13,169	13,390
Institutional subscriptions	1,036	0	0	1,036	899
Donations & sponsorship	6,891	2,143	11,743	20,777	12,031
Council expenses donations	1,582	0	0	1,582	1,126
Gift aid	4,339	0	0	4,339	1,723
	<u>27,017</u>	<u>2,143</u>	<u>11,743</u>	<u>40,903</u>	<u>29,168</u>
3. Activities for generating funds					
Sale of goods, mail order & events	58	0	0	58	203
Sale of advertising space	0	0	0	0	0
Raffles at SM and BBWF	247	0	0	247	543
	<u>304</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>304</u>	<u>746</u>
4. Costs of generating voluntary income					
Administrative overhead 10% allocation	568	0	0	568	518
Publicity costs at SM & BBWF	832	0	216	1,048	2,803
	<u>1,400</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>216</u>	<u>1,616</u>	<u>3,321</u>

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NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2016

5. Fundraising trading: costs of goods sold etc.

Mail order sales postage	11	0	0	11	99
Printing of sales list	0	0	0	0	0
Cost of goods and services (bought ins)	38	0	0	38	0
	50	0	0	50	99

6. Charitable activities

CRF1601 Armenia	7	2,143	0	2,150	
CRF1602 Turkey	400	0	0	400	
CRF1603 Kazakhstan	1,950	0	0	1,950	
CRF1604 Uzbekistan	2,000	0	0	2,000	
CRF1605 Batumi, Georgia	1,000	0	0	1,000	
CRF1606 Azerbaijan	1,500	0	0	1,500	
CRF1607 Armenia	5,000	0	0	5,000	
				14,000	10,450
Support costs - bank transfer fees	97	0	0	97	0
Design & printing of Sandgrouse	6,610	0	0	6,610	6,754
Editorial honorarium	3,000	0	0	3,000	3,000
Sandgrouse postage & packing	2,826	0	0	2,826	2,818
Administrative overhead 90% allocation	5,113	0	0	5,113	4,664
	29,503	2,143	0	31,646	27,686

7. Governance costs

Meetings and events	287	0	0	287	582
	287	0	0	287	582

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SUMMARISED ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2016

Summarised Accounts

The statutory accounts prepared under the Accounting Standards Board's *Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice (Revised 2005)* have been independently examined and the report of the examiner is on page 10 of this report. Summarised accounts are also prepared for use at Council meetings and for purposes of presentation to the members at the Annual General Meeting. These are derived from the same accounting data as the statutory accounts but are presented in categories more relevant to the immediate operational needs of the Society.

Statement of Financial Activities for the period 01 January 2016 to 31 December 2016

	General Fund	Restricted Funds	Designated Funds	Total 2016	Total 2015
Income and Expenditure	£	£	£	£	£
Incoming Resources					
Donations:					
Membership Subscriptions	14,205	0	0	14,205	14,289
Donations & Sponsorship	6,891	2,143	11,743	20,777	12,434
Council expenses donations	1,582	0	0	1,582	1,126
Gift Aid	4,339	0	0	4,339	1,723
Investment Income	12	0	0	12	11
Sale of Goods	58	0	0	58	166
Sale of Advertising	0	0	0	0	0
Fund Raising	247	0	0	247	176
Total Incoming Resources	27,333	2,143	11,743	41,219	29,925
Resources Expended					
Direct charitable expenditure:					
Production etc of <i>SANDGROUSE</i>	12,436	0	0	12,436	12,572
Sponsorship	11,857	2,143	0	14,000	10,450
Council expenses	1,582	0	0	1,582	1,122
Goods & Services	50	0	0	50	99
Management & Administration	4,483	0	0	4,483	4,642
Fund Raising costs	99	0	216	315	2,196
Publicity & Promotion	733	0	0	733	607
Total Resources Expended	31,240	2,143	216	33,599	31,688
Net Incoming Resources for the Period	(3,907)	0	11,527	7,620	(1,764)
Transfers between funds	0	0	0	0	0
Net Movement in Funds	(3,907)	0	11,527	7,620	(1,764)
Fund Balances brought forward @ 01 Jan	17,321	1,000	5,260	23,581	25,345
Fund Balances carried forward @ 31 Dec	13,415	1,000	16,787	31,202	23,581