



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

Minutes of the 47th Annual General Meeting, held online via Zoom on Sunday 23rd November 2025

OSME Chairman Dr. Rob Sheldon opened the meeting at 10:01

24 people (at least 9 members) were present.

1. Apologies for absence

- The following members had sent their apologies in advance of the meeting: Effie Warr, Murray Brown and Richard Porter (Richard asked OSME Chairman to vote on all motions on his behalf).

2. Minutes of the 46th Annual General Meeting (26th October 2024)

- Were posted on the OSME website soon after the meeting.

3. Matters arising

- No comments received, and the attendees voted unanimously to approve the minutes.

4. Chairman's report for 2024

- Conservation fund: 6 grants awarded, worth £32,810
 - Projects included conservation projects on Little Bustard (supported by Rufford Small Grants programme and OSME Corporate Sponsor, Birding EcoTours), Egyptian vultures in Central Asia and Sociable Lapwing; and tackling Illegal Killing of Birds (IKB) in Lebanon (jointly with BirdLife Finland).
- Youth Development Fund
 - The fund overseen by OSME's dedicated Youth Development Officer, Tomas Haraldsson awarded £22,550 to eight projects/initiatives in 2024.
 - Supported projects included Simurg Bird Sanctuary and their Avian Ecology School and the Eymir Ringing Camp, both continuing projects in Türkiye.
 - A follow up grant was made to Nature Conservation Egypt (NCE) and their Galala Raptor Count training programme: provided training opportunities for 40 Egyptian participants to date. This project also received significant new funding from the Global Birdfair.
 - A new project was supported in Kyrgyzstan.
 - In partnership with the Batumi Raptor Count (BRC) a new Flyways Monitoring Internship was launched and awarded to Alyona Kaptyonkina and Mitra Daneshvar.
- *Sandgrouse*
 - Dr. Paul Donald continued to serve as editor of the journal, but will be standing down after the production of Volume 47.
 - OSME thanks Dr. Donald for his 6 years of outstanding service during which he oversaw the publication of a number of *Sandgrouse* special issues.
 - Two high quality issues were published in 2024: 46(1) and 46(2).
- Communication
 - The OSME Facebook page is our main social media platform and continues to grow steadily, now at 5200+ followers. Multilingual posts continue to be very popular across the OSME region.

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- One issue of the OSME e-newsletter was produced in June but due to a lack of capacity no further issues were published. OSME would welcome volunteer(s) to help produce future e-newsletters
- Twelve guest blogs were posted on the OSME webpage during 2024, and thanks to Richard Porter and Tomas Haraldsson for sourcing and editing the blogs.
- OSME once again had a stand at Global Birdfair in Rutland.
- The inaugural Avian Odyssey event was held at the Natural History Museum, South Kensington, jointly with the British Ornithologists' Club (BOC), the other Regional Bird Clubs, BirdLife International, BTO and RSPB. The Chairman represented OSME and gave a talk on Sociable Lapwing conservation.

5. Treasurer's report and adoption of the Accounts for 2024

- OSME Treasurer opened his verbal report by paying tribute to John Warr, long-term treasurer and council member who sadly passed away in 2024.
- Due to delays in the final auditing of the 2024 accounts, these were presented in draft for provisional approval. In addition, it was proposed that the final 2024 accounts will be presented at next AGM for final approval by the members.
- These proposals were unanimously accepted.
- A major concern continues to be the rising costs of mailing *Sandgrouse*, especially to addresses outside the UK. Members are encouraged to switch to a digital subscription.
- Issues with customs tax for some members seem to have been resolved by moving to a new distributor, but OSME Council will continue to monitor this.

6. Appointment of Accounts Examiner for 2025

- OSME will be appointing a new accounts examiner who will need proposing and approval at the next AGM.

7. Election of Officers

- Murray Brown was re-elected for a further 5-year term. Luke Delve was elected as a new Council member for a 5-year term.

8. Any other business

- There were no other items proposed and no questions from members.

OSME Chairman thanked all those for attending and for their continued support and closed the AGM which ended at 10:39am UK time.