



SCOTTISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' CLUB

ANNUAL REPORT

2016/17

SCOTTISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' CLUB

Annual Report and Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 March 2017

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Head Office

Waterston House
Aberlady
East Lothian
EH32 0PY

Club Officials

President: James Main (Ian Thomson to June)
Vice President: Jeremy Wilson (James Main to September)
Honorary Secretary: David Heeley
Honorary Treasurer: Andrew Thorpe (Alan Fox to September)

Office bearers are also members of Council

Council Elected Members

Elected at Club AGM (year of election/re-election):

Alison Creamer (2016)
Bob McGowan (2016)
Chris Wernham (2016)

Elected at branch AGMs:

Ayrshire – David Rackham
Borders – Neil Stratton (Ray Murray to September)
Caithness – Angus McBay
Central Scotland – Roger Gooch
Clyde – Iain Gibson
Dumfries – Lesley Creamer
Fife – Paul Taylor
Highland – David Bain
Lothian – Richard Leslie
Moray – Melvin Morrison
North-East Scotland – Alan Knox
Orkney – Helen Aiton
Stewartry – vacancy
Tayside – John Campbell
West Galloway – Geoff Sheppard

Honorary Presidents

Roy Dennis
Frank Hamilton

Honorary Members

Sandy Anderson (to March)
Dougal Andrew
Ian Andrews
Stan da Prato
Iain Gibson
Mike Harris
Angus Hogg
Andrew Macmillan
Ray Murray (to September)
Daphne Peirse-Duncombe
Ron Summers
Adam Watson

Independent Examiner

AW Scotland CA
10 Craighall Crescent
Edinburgh EH6 4RY

Bankers

Royal Bank of Scotland Plc
Edinburgh Castle Street Branch
109-109a George Street
Edinburgh EH2 4JW

Solicitors

Morton Fraser
Quartermile Two
2 Lister Square
Edinburgh EH3 9GL

Investment Advisors

Brewin Dolphin Securities
10 George Street
Edinburgh EH2 2PZ

SCOTTISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' CLUB

Annual Report

For the year ended 31 March 2017

Council's Report

The Council has pleasure in presenting its report for the year ended 31 March 2017. This report is prepared in accordance with the charity's constitution and the Statement of Recommended Practice – Accounting and Reporting by Charities, and complies with applicable law.

CONSTITUTION

From 1st April 2015, the SOC operated under the charity's new constitution as a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO). The management of the SOC is the responsibility of the Council whose members are elected and co-opted under the terms of the constitution.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the SOC are to advance the education of the public in the study of birds in Scotland, and in furtherance thereof, but not otherwise:

1. To promote the study and documentation of Scotland's birdlife.
2. To promote interest in wild birds.
3. To support the conservation of birds and their habitats in Scotland.
4. To provide a focus for anyone with an interest in, and for information relating to, the study of birds in Scotland.
5. To encourage the practice and appreciation of the visual arts of natural history.

There have been no changes in objectives since the last annual report.

REVIEW OF ACTIVITIES

Council

All Council members, by law, are trustees of the Charity. Four meetings were held at RSPB Loch Leven, Kinross, during the year, with some items of business also conducted by email. Following the resignation of Ian Thomson in June, James Main assumed the role of Acting President and Paul Taylor Acting Vice President as a temporary supportive measure.

The AGM appointed James as President, Jeremy Wilson as Vice President and Andrew Thorpe as Treasurer, replacing Alan Fox who was thanked for his invaluable contribution to the Club during his tenure. Council also welcomed Chris Wernham, Head of BTO Scotland, who agreed to stand as an elected member of Council. Alison Creamer and Bob McGowan kindly agreed to remain as members for a further one year and two years respectively.

Council was saddened to learn of the death of Club trustee and Borders bird recorder, Ray Murray, in September (*Scottish Birds* Vol 37, p31-3) and Honorary Member, Sandy Anderson, in March (*Scottish Birds* Vol 37, p226-7)). Much of the business during the year focused on the Club's finances, governance, new projects and conference planning.

Approved minutes of Council meetings are available to view or download from the SOC website.

Membership and Club development

The total number of members saw an upturn of 2.4% to 3351 (where family and joint memberships are counted as two individuals) in the twelve months to 31 March 2017 (Figure 1). In a time when, for some, resources are strained and budgets tightened, Council would like to reinforce its gratitude to members who continue to support the SOC year after year, including those who spread the word by encouraging friends and family to join – a warm welcome is extended to all new members.

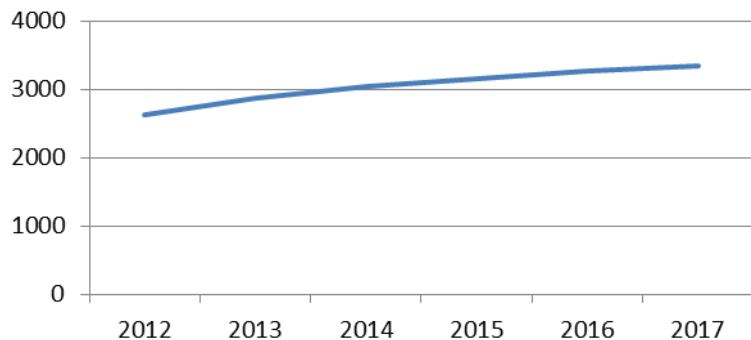


Figure 1: Total number of members

Membership category figures reflect those of previous years. However, most notably, the number of Student memberships was up by almost 50%. This may be attributed in part to the Young Birders' Training Course and the resulting publicity, as well as to the Club's general drive to engage students and young people through social media and by promoting attractive discounts on membership and conference fees. Small increases were observed across all categories apart from Junior membership, which decreased by 27%.

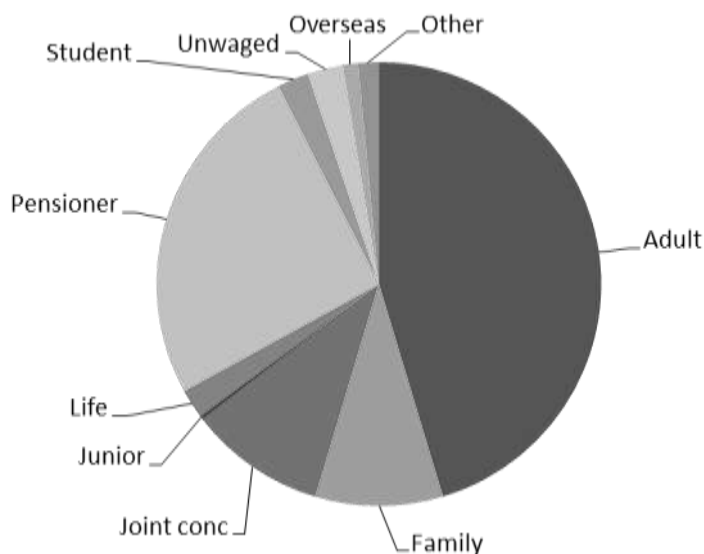


Figure 2: Membership by category at 31 March 2017 (based on the total number of subscriptions – 2809 – as opposed to the total number of individual members within subscription – 3351).

The number of new subscriptions received during the year was 248. While this is slightly down on last year, by around 6%, the total membership figure is still at its highest level in the Club's history and the total number of individual members has continued its upward trend over recent years.

In analyzing lost memberships, 13% were a result of individuals who sadly passed away and a quarter related to members who actively instructed a cancellation of their subscription. Of these, no single overriding factor emerged as a key motive for the decision to discontinue but rather a variety of reasons appeared, ranging from financial constraints, age- and health-related issues and moving away from Scotland to changes in personal circumstances and resulting diminished time for, and/or

interest in, birds or Club activities. Lapsed memberships accounted for the majority – almost 60% – of lost support, where there was no renewal payment made and no response to overdue reminders. Almost 75% of the cancelled or lapsed memberships were members who joined in the last five years.

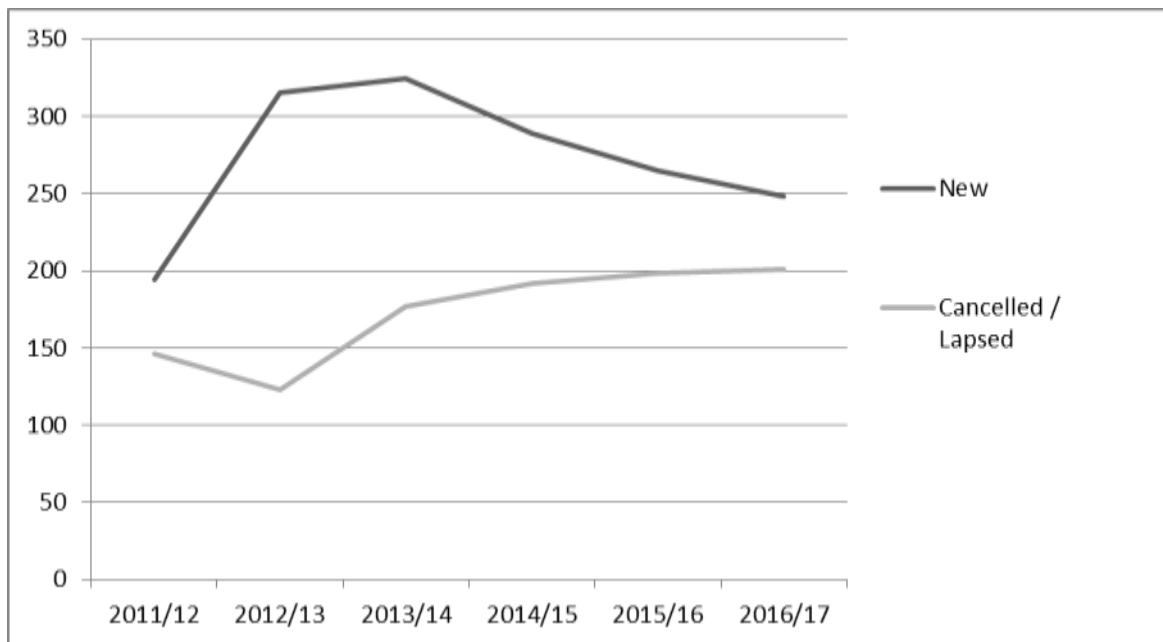


Figure 3: Total gains and losses in subscriptions

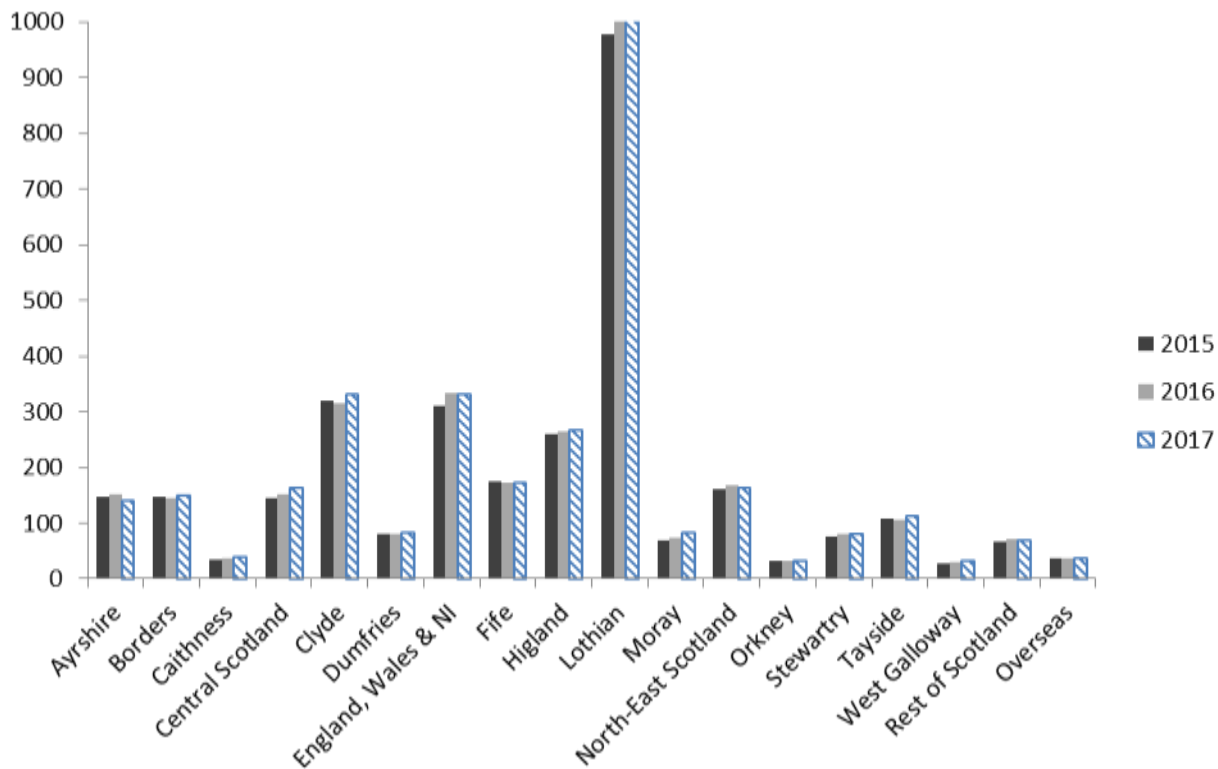


Figure 4: Total number of members by geographic location

The total number of supporters remained largely steady or showed a slight increase across the board, in terms of geographic area. Despite this, a few branches, particularly the smaller groups in more rural locations, reported difficulty in attracting younger members along to indoor meetings, as well as finding fresh blood for committees.

One welcome piece of publicity came in the form of the SOC featuring as 'Bird Club of the Month' in the April edition of *British Birds*' (*BB*) e-news, with an article about the Club reaching thousands of *BB* subscribers around the UK and beyond. This was followed by an insert in the June issue of the printed journal. The focus of the campaign was promotion of the SOC's own publication, *Scottish Birds*, and resulted in six new subscriptions.

Thanks to the support and generosity of speakers, volunteers, colleagues and activity leaders, the SOC enjoyed a high profile presence at the Scottish Birdfair in May (*Scottish Birds* Vol 36 (3)). Part of Scotland's Big Nature Festival, led by RSPB Scotland, the event once again took place at Levenhall Links, East Lothian. The weekend returned eight new memberships.

Another key national event supported by the Club was Hen Harrier Day, which takes place each year in early August to coincide with the start of the Grouse shooting season. The SOC helped to publicise the event on social media and the website, and had a presence on the day, thanks to local members, Eilidh McNab and Scott Paterson, who ran the SOC stand at RSPB Loch Leven.

Mindful that a significant number of members are located some distance away from branch hubs, making it difficult to regularly attend branch-organised activities such as talks and outings, Club Development Officer, Jane Cleaver, devised *The Hoot* – a quarterly email digest launched in August and designed to bridge the gap between issues of *Scottish Birds*. Content is exclusively bird-focused, featuring weird and wonderful Did-You-Knows, fascinating anecdotes and observations from members, and the spotlight on a topical piece of ornithological research. The service is a deliberate side step away from other Club email communications, which tend to be more focused on branch and HQ events and, as such, are limited to a relatively small proportion of the membership.

The Club is very fortunate to have an extremely skilled membership working across a wide range of ornithology-related fields and ways are being sought in which to pass on this wealth of knowledge to future generations. So far, this has centred around encouraging student participation and attendance at the Club's Annual Conference and the BTO/SOC Scottish Birdwatchers' Conference, developing the SOC/ Isle of May Bird Observatory (IoMBO) Young Birders' Training Course (YBTC) and, more recently, working with the youth nature conservation network, A Focus On Nature (AFON), to promote its free mentoring scheme. An article on the scheme was published in *Scottish Birds* Vol 36 (3) and a dedicated Mentoring page was created for the SOC website. The Club looks forward to nurturing further ties with AFON and similar groups as part of its commitment to supporting aspiring young naturalists.

With help from AFON and the British Trust for Ornithology (via blog posts on their respective websites), combined with an encouraging number of shares, tweets and retweets on social media, the 2016 YBTC received another enthusiastic response with 28 applications received, including three from Switzerland. Jane continued to play a significant role in preparation and promotion of the course, which funds six young enthusiasts to spend a week on the Isle of May learning essential bird survey skills and techniques. This year, IoMBO's Stuart Rivers and Mark Oksien were joined by Lothian branch member, Alison Creamer, to assist with delivering the course. An account of the week's activities was published in *Scottish Birds* Vol 36 (4).

On behalf of SOC and IoMBO, Jane submitted an application to RSPB Scotland's Nature of Scotland Awards, entering the YBTC in the Innovation category. This was the first time SOC had submitted an application to the scheme and the Club was delighted to be invited to attend an evening reception at the Scottish Parliament in September, where the shortlist was announced. Sadly, the application was not successful on this occasion. However, the project has been put forward again for the 2017 awards, this time in the Youth and Education category.

Staying with innovative ideas, Council approved the plan for a mobile application for Android and iOS devices to provide a unique resource on where to watch birds in Scotland. The app looks set to be one of the most ambitious and exciting projects for the Club since the publication of the

award-winning book, *The Birds of Scotland* (December 2007), and fulfils a number of the Club's constitutional objectives. Crucially, it will be aimed at reaching a vast audience of younger birdwatchers across the UK and beyond. An app working group was formed in early 2017, comprising Jane, Alan Knox (Council member), and Martin Cook (Moray branch Secretary and local Bird Recorder) and by the end of the reporting year, a significant amount of research had been carried out to inform and refine the requirements and specifications for a project brief to put out to tender to professional app developers.

The Club's website has become the main source of new memberships, with many birdwatchers coming across the SOC for the first time through web searches. This highlights the importance of a well-devised and engaging online presence. As well as a vital recruitment tool and source of up-to-date information on the Club's work and activities, the website also facilitates the majority of membership renewal payments and conference bookings and channels a steady stream of general enquiries through the Contact Us facility. However, it is the photo gallery that continues to attract the most hits, with keen photographers able to upload their latest bird images. Unfortunately, after operating smoothly for nearly four years, the website began to show signs of gradual failure this year. A decision was made for the site to undergo another major re-design, scheduled for late 2017. Meanwhile, the Club's social media presence continued to grow, with the number of followers on Facebook topping the 2000 mark and Twitter fans numbering nearly 3500.

With a number of new branch websites and newsletters up and running, as well as an increase in the use of the Mailchimp email facility for promoting local activities, a revised version of the Branch Communications article which first appeared in *Scottish Birds* in 2014 was published in this year's March issue (Vol 37 (1)). As well as serving as a comprehensive guide to the range of services available, the article urged members who are not currently receiving local circulars, and who wished to do so, to contact Waterston House to check that their email address is up to date.

Branch committee members were themselves the focus of other digital developments, with the launch in July of an online portal accessed via the SOC website. The facility provides local Club officials with a host of useful information and guidance on branch-related management and administration. Further work is planned to enhance the portal, which it is hoped will engage and support existing and incoming committee representatives.

Branch Activities

Most branches organized field trips once a month throughout the year, with some also delivering additional week-day outings as well as short breaks away. Staff member, Kathryn Cox, worked with local committees to put together another excellent programme of indoor meetings during the winter session (April to September), with talks covering a wide range of insightful and entertaining bird-related topics, delivered by our growing bank of first-class speakers who kindly volunteer their time to visit the local groups. Most branches reported good attendance at both meetings and outings.

Branch representatives and members helped to promote the Club by facilitating an SOC presence at local events, a couple of which took place in April: North Ayrshire RSPB 40th Anniversary Bioblitz at Eglinton Country Park; and the Highland Wildlife Fair, University of the Highlands and Islands Campus, Inverness. The latter, organised by Highland Environment Forum, was a one-day event featuring stalls, talks, guided walks and exhibitions showcasing the many different projects underway to protect and conserve Highland Wildlife.

Activity in Caithness was dominated by the final push to produce the revised version of the publication, *Birds of Caithness* (see Publications on p14). The branch reported a healthy attendance at its indoor meetings and managed to organise another enjoyable annual Bird Race.

Clyde Branch members were kept abreast of local sightings via the daily Grapevine service, thanks to the efforts of Val Wilson and Iain Gibson. The social media Facebook Group 'Clydebirds' for news on local bird sightings, administered by SOC member John Molloy, now has over 550 users.

A key challenge for the branch continues to be the absence of a Chairperson – a position which has now been vacant for several years. Despite this, committee members Iain Gibson and Liz Parsons forged ahead and met with the Glasgow Airport Sustainability Manager and this resulted in an agreement to enter a partnership with Clyde SOC to fund and manage Paisley Moss LNR, an important bird habitat adjacent to the airport and the last remnant of what was formerly the very extensive Great Moss.

The Dumfries excursions programme included a three-day break to Yorkshire in April, taking in the Dales en route to Scarborough where the group visited birding hotspots Forge Valley, Scarborough Mere and Bempton Cliffs among other sites, managing a total of 103 species.

Meanwhile, Caerlaverock and the Dumfries area was the destination of choice for the Fife branch weekend away in February and the group continued its tradition of getting together for a Christmas meal in December. Particular highlights were the hosting of the Scottish Birdwatchers' Conference in March and the publication last August of *The Breeding & Wintering Birds of Fife: An atlas for 2007-2013*, published by the Fife Ornithological Atlas Group, with assistance from the SOC's Birds of Scotland Fund. Many Fife members were involved in several years' fieldwork for the book so it was a great culmination of all this work to see the Atlas in print.

Lothian, the Club's largest branch, reported average attendance at meetings of around 60, limited to 50 (with advance booking required) for the two meetings held at Waterston House, owing to space limitations. Outings, which are equally well attended, focused mainly on sites in and around the Lothians, with the exception of a trip to Lindisfarne in September. As with neighbouring Borders, the Lothian Discussion Group got together at Waterston House for monthly meetings between September and April. A welcome development was the resurrection in September of the branch newsletter, *Lothian Bird Bulletin*, delivered to members by email.

In neighbouring Borders, the *Borders Bird News* Yahoo group delivered information on local sightings to a growing number of users, reaching around 250 in the reporting year. As with Lothian, recruitment for local surveys took place via the SOC Borders Discussion Group, which held its monthly meetings from April to September. The branch suffered two sad losses during the year: Ray Murray (local recorder and *Borders Bird Report* editor) and Life member, Campbell McLellan.

In Highland, the branch website, which was launched in March 2016, established itself among members as the main go-to platform for bird sightings and branch news and events. Indoor meetings were well attended and a good turnout reported at the outings, which included a trip to Skye, a long weekend in the Isles of Uist, and a joint outing with Moray branch to Glen Brown and Glen Livet area. The Moray group's outings themselves continued to prove popular, with around 20-25 members participating. In spring, activities included a dawn chorus walk at Loch na Bo, a successful boat trip with Gemini Explorer to look for White-billed Divers off Portsoy, and another successful Bird Race, involving seven teams, followed by a social evening at Dunphail. A dawn excursion in early October produced the spectacular sight of around 40,000 Pink-footed Geese leaving the roost in Findhorn Bay.

North-East Scotland (NES) branch reported an average attendance of around 27 members at its indoor meetings, comparable with recent years. One field trip was organised in May to sites along the Moray coast. The branch ran a survey of singing Chiffchaff, a species which has increased greatly in the North-East in recent years, with an excellent response summarized in the spring 2017 branch newsletter. Some members again searched for inland Nightjar but the hoped-for first breeding for many decades remains to be seen. Two branch newsletters were produced, published on the SOC website as well as emailed to branch members. The NES atlas fund made grants to two local projects: Sound recorders and associated software to enable remote recording of Nightjar in possible breeding habitat in the region; and financial support for the production of the *Mammal Atlas of North-East Scotland and the Cairngorms*, published by NESBReC in 2017, and edited by SOC Local Recorder, Nick Littlewood and others.

Orkney branch activities are restricted to four meetings a year, with attendees this year enjoying excellent talks from local speakers as well as those from further afield to whom the branch is very grateful.

Stewartry branch welcomed the return of popular speakers, Gordon Yates and Angus Hogg, as part of this year's programme, with both attracting an attendance of around 40. The annual trip 'up North' saw a group of 10 members and friends head to the Isle of Mull for a week, enjoying views of nesting White-tailed Eagles from their self-catering accommodation. The autumn break was a week in Montrose, where nine Stewartry members teamed up with three Tayside SOC friends.

This year's recipients of the SOC's Branch Recognition Awards for exceptional service to their respective groups went to Alistair Duncan (North-East Scotland) and Norman Elkins (Fife), with Alistair able to attend the conference to receive his certificate from SOC President, James Main.

Waterston House

The number of visitors passing through headquarters was just over 10,000 in the reporting period, comparable with previous years. Staff and volunteers were delighted to receive news that the centre had made it into the 2016 edition of Peter Irvine's *Scotland the Best* guide book.

Dave Allan organised another excellent programme of art shows featuring work from first-time SOC exhibitors Jane Smith, Jo Ruth, Greg Poole and Jan Wilczur. Greg and Jan exhibited jointly with returning artists, John Threlfall and Richard Allen respectively. Also back by popular demand were Chris Rose, Carol Barrett and Group Twelve Textiles.

Regular events held during the year were the spring and autumn optics demo days, the popular Birdwatching for Beginners guided walks, organised and led by Dave Allan, and two autumn goose talks as well as an early morning walk at Aberlady Bay. The latter were well attended and run in collaboration with East Lothian Countryside (ELC) Ranger Service, with local reserve warden and SOC member, John Harrison, kindly delivering his usual informative and entertaining talk as well as leading the walk. HQ also ventured into new territory when the opportunity arose to host a couple of one-off events: In May, the library was hired by award-winning poet and story writer, Alison Lock, and writer/editor, Anna Levin, to run a full-day nature writing workshop 'Words and Wings'; and in August, an audience of just over 30 members of the public were treated to an intimate evening of acoustic music and North-East Scotland folklore in the gallery by SOC member and singer-songwriter, Jenny Sturgeon, and Old Blind Dogs frontman, Jonny Hardie.

The gallery continued to be used on a weekly basis by Aberlady Craft Group and by East Lothian Council for the bi-annual meeting of Aberlady Bay Advisory Group. The library was also the venue for a Fair Isle Bird Observatory Trust meeting (November) and a RSPB Conservation Science team session (December). In a slight departure from birds, Waterston House agreed to serve as a monitoring centre for the Southern Scotland Bat Survey, commissioned by Scottish Natural Heritage and managed by BTO. Between May and September, a total of 27 members of the public from Lothian region borrowed a bat detector kit via an online booking system.

The garden continues to wow visitors, with the trees and shrubs maturing and the wild flower meadow ablaze with colour during the summer months. The volunteer gardening team organised the instalment of a much-needed new wooden shed, sited attractively amongst the small wooded area at the West gable end of the building and purchased with the aid of a generous donation from Lothian member, Nancy Pringle, the widow of former Head Gardener, John Pringle. Other necessary furnishing and fittings for the building were covered by the 200 Club, run by Daphne Peirse-Duncombe and Vicky McLellan. Purchases included a new portable projection screen and branded tablecloths for HQ events, and computer work station equipment.

In early 2016, the Club received a generous pledge of funds from the estate of Lothian member, Fiona Govan, who sadly passed away suddenly in 2015. The funds will go towards covering the cost of developing the pond area to the rear of Waterston House in order to make this an accessible area for visitors to explore. The Management Committee is extremely grateful for this generous and thoughtful gesture.

The garden also attracted much interest from the local primary school, with p1-3 pupils visiting in September, accompanied by teachers and John Harrison, to learn about the wildflowers from local horticultural expert (as well as editor of *Scottish Birds*), Stan da Prato, and to gather seeds for the school's newly created wildlife garden. P1 pupils had a return visit in March, again accompanied by John, to site an infra-red camera in the grounds in order to capture footage of passing wildlife.

John also used the garden to carry out another season of moth monitoring with a small team of local enthusiasts, recording HQ's abundance of species, and in early August, the British Dragonfly Society hired the library for a half-day ID course, attended by around 15 people.

On the evening of 8 August, Waterston House suffered a break-in where the door was forced open and an attempt made to flee with the cash register. The incident coincided with John Harrison arriving on site to set his moth trap and, as such, the burglar was caught in the act. Fortunately John was not harmed, no cash was taken and the person was successfully identified and charged. The cost of repairing and reinforcing the damaged door was covered under the Club's insurance. In light of the event, there was a review of building security and staff and volunteer safety.

From May, HQ's opening hours for visitors changed to 10am-4pm all year round (previously 12noon-6pm at weekends during the summer).

Management Committee

The Management Committee met four times at Waterston House to discuss the overall management of the Club's headquarters, including staff pay structure, appraisals, recruitment and training, building maintenance, security and insurance, and IT infrastructure.

Council asked that the Staff remuneration structure be reviewed with a view to adopting a more formal approach. Paul Taylor joined the Committee to help with this exercise and agreed to stay on the team as a member thereafter. External expertise was also employed to progress the matter and the exercise was nearing completion by the end of the reporting year.

Another important issue was the selection of a Pension Scheme, in accordance with new Government legislation requiring all employers to make a plan available to qualifying staff. The Committee selected the Government-operated scheme, NEST, with two members of staff choosing to sign up.

George Waterston Library

The SOC Library is the largest specialist library of its kind in Scotland, with over 5000 books and journals from around the world, and an emphasis on material relating to Scotland. There is also a unique archive of important notebooks, photographs, sound recordings and ephemera. The library and the archives are used by researchers and casual visitors, and loans of books are available to SOC members. In 2016/17, there were 80 adult users (an increase of just one on the previous year), and 61 books were borrowed, the same as last year, maintaining an increase which had built up over recent years. Two researchers who had made extensive use of the SOC library and archive collections and expertise submitted (successful) PhD theses to the Universities of Edinburgh and Glasgow.

Karen Bidgood, part-time staff Librarian, intimated her departure from the post after eight years of sterling service to the Club (*Scottish Birds* Vol 37 (2)). Council is grateful for all she did for the Library, keeping it running smoothly and providing help to visitors and enquirers. Karen was assisted by volunteers Susan Horne, Gloria Mitchell, Bill Torrance and Cameron Mirza, as well as staff member, Jean Torrance, and several long-standing Library Committee members, without whose support the Library and Archives would be unable to function. Lesley Creamer again gave specialist advice and assistance with updating the library book catalogue and Mike Smart provided IT help. Ian Elfick continues to oversee the management of the Archives. Lesley Creamer and Susan Horne were both appointed to the Library Committee during the course of the year.

New material was added to both the Library and the Archives, including items still being assimilated from the defunct Scottish Natural History Library. Work continues on prioritising Scottish-related material within the Library and a number of journals and other publications that no longer meet the Club's collecting policy were removed from the shelves and either sold or passed on to other ornithological libraries. Waterston House again received several significant donations of second-hand books for which the Club is very grateful. These help to build the collections and the sale of surplus items raises useful funds for the charity.

During the year, two new online resources were created for the SOC website. The first celebrates the life of Donald Watson, after whom the art gallery at Waterston House is named, and includes digitised versions of all of his art works that the library holds. The second commemorates around 125 former Club members with web links to their digitised obituaries in *Scottish Birds* or *Scottish Bird News*. The obituaries provide a rich insight into Scottish ornithology over the past century.

Alan Knox, Chair

Bird Recording in Scotland

SOC continues to be a core-partner in the Bird Track Steering Group and has affirmed its commitment to the project for the latest five-year review period. Scottish-based contributions involve just under 1,000 users and the last 12 months has seen a 7.5% increase in records to nearly 600,000 individual sightings. Recent developments of the Euro Bird Portal aligned with the current EBBC Atlas work has allowed even greater visualisation of our records in a European context, providing even better feedback for contributors at a wide scale. Locally, moves are in progress to enhance liaison with Scottish recorders and how records are supplied to them for use in annual reports, for example.

Stuart L Rivers, SOC BirdTrack representative

The network of 20 SOC local bird recorders plays a vital role in collating data, which are used for compiling the regional bird reports, feeding into BirdTrack and informing development and planning applications affecting bird habitat. In September, the Club sadly lost long-time Borders recorder, Ray Murray, who passed away suddenly while on holiday overseas. David Parkinson and Martin Moncrieff took up the reins in February. Also in February, Yvonne Benting returned to the role in the Outer Hebrides, replacing Ian Ricketts.

Scottish Raptor Monitoring Scheme (SRMS)

The SOC continues to play a role as one of the eight partner conservation organisations that provides annually a report on the abundance, breeding and distribution of the 19 raptor species in Scotland and information on trends. This data forms the baseline for dealing with issues related to raptor conservation for the Scottish Government. A paper on the Scheme is due for publication in *Bird Study*. The group produces an annual report, with financial assistance from the SOC's Birds of Scotland Fund secured from 2017. The report can be accessed via the SRMS website: <http://raptormonitoring.org/>

Gordon Riddle, SRMS SOC representative

Research & Surveys Committee

During the 2016/17 year under review, all of the R&S Committee's business was conducted by email. In 2016, the Endowment Fund, through its Research Grants, supported an increased number of studies of Scottish birds – 10 in total. These were all good quality applications and Council felt that, rather than reduce funding to some of them, supplementary funds would be made available from the Endowment Fund for this year to provide for them. R&S Committee is grateful to Council for this generosity. The projects supported were: Common Sandpipers (Highland) £600, Jack Snipe (Clyde) £600, LBB Gulls (Firth of Forth) £300, Manx Shearwaters (Isle of May) £300, Nightjars (Grampian) £750, Orkney Sanderling £500, Orkney skuas £350, Ring Ouzels (Grampian) £200, Twite (Western Isles) £100, and waders (Glen Clova) £300.

R&S Committee is very grateful to SOC member Liz Leyden for kindly donating a sum raised at the funeral of Ayrshire member, Duncan Watt, for supporting future Scottish bird projects.

Tom Dougall, Chair

Scottish Birds Records Committee

The committee continued in its role assessing the records of rare birds in Scotland, and managing the *Scottish List* for the SOC. SBRC welcomed Mark Warren, representing Highland, as a new member in November 2016, replacing John Sweeney, who retired from the committee. SBRC would like to acknowledge and thank John for his hard work and contribution to SBRC work during his tenure.

During the year, SBRC managed and processed five batches of records, each containing around 15 descriptions. All batches were circulated electronically using Dropbox technology. This allows the circulation process to be completed quickly, and avoids postage costs and the potential loss of records when using surface mail. Accepted records were immediately posted on the SOC website, with all outcomes passed on to local recorders, who in turn informed observers. A continuing venture for SBRC is the publication of annual summaries of SBRC adjudicated species in *Scottish Birds*, in a format that follows reports published by BBRC in *British Birds*. These publications highlight the work of the committee and the SOC, and encourage the submission of bird records to local recorders. The 2015 SBRC report was published in 2017, being co-authored by Bob McGowan and Chris McInerny.

SBRC continued to appreciate a warm and constructive working relationship with local recorders and observers, without whom the committee could not catalogue the incidence of rarer birds in Scotland. Council thanks all members of SBRC for their hard work during the year.

Chris McInerny, Secretary

The Birds of Scotland Fund

During the year, a reprint of Jack Gordon's *The Birds of Wigtownshire 1890-1935* and *The Breeding and Wintering Birds of Fife 2007-13*, both supported by the Birds of Scotland Fund, were published, with a number of additional projects approaching publication at the time of writing.

Only two applications were received in 2016/17: Support for the publication of the *Scottish Raptor Monitoring Scheme Annual Report* was awarded for the next three years; the other proposal was not supported. A total of 33 applications have now been received since the fund was set up. Nineteen of these have received or are in the process of receiving support. There are a number of projects which will be supported that are now 'in the pipeline', but further applications are still welcomed (details are available on the SOC website). A review of the Fund is due in 2017/18.

David Jardine, Chair

Conferences

SOC Annual Conference & AGM, Atholl Palace Hotel, Pitlochry, 23-25 September 2016

Owing to there being no October or November dates available at the Atholl Palace Hotel and in light of the popularity of the location and venue, Council decided to hold the 2016 conference at the earlier time of late September. Attendance of 155 was slightly down on previous years, possibly a result of the change to the usual date.

The theme was Scotland's Marine Wildlife and delegates heard insightful presentations by Ruedi Nager (Glasgow University), Alex Kinninmonth (Head of Marine Policy, RSPB Scotland), Laura Bambini (Seabird Recovery Officer, RSPB Scotland), Debbie Russell (St Andrews University), Liz Humphreys (Research Ecologist, BTO Scotland), Sarah Wanless (NERC Individual Merit Scientist), Hannah Grist (CoCoast Project Officer, Scottish Association for Marine Science) and Euan Dunn (Principal Policy Officer – Marine, RSPB). In a departure from the usual format, the Sunday included a musical slot, with SOC member and singer-songwriter, Jenny Sturgeon, entertaining attendees with a mix of her acoustic music and folklore from her native North-East Scotland, finishing with a well-received sing-along!

The Saturday morning offered delegates a choice of outings to local birding hotspots, thanks to walk organisers and leaders, Ben Darvill and David Jarret (BTO Scotland), Simon Pawsey (Speyside Wildlife) and David Merrie (SOC Tayside).

Council is grateful to Swarovski Optik for its generous support, which helped to cover the cost of the subsidised student places at the event. A full write-up of the conference was published in *Scottish Birds* Vol 36 (4).

Scottish Birdwatchers' Conference, Carnegie Conference Centre, Dunfermline, 18 March 2017

'Bird Life from Fife' was the apt and catchy title of the one-day joint BTO/SOC event, attended by 170 birdwatchers from around the country. The programme featured talks by Norman Elkins (Fife Bird Atlas team), Allan Perkins (Senior Conservation Scientist, RSPB Scotland), Gavin Siriwardena (Head of Terrestrial Ecology & Principal Ecologist, BTO), Will Cresswell (Professor, School of Biology, St Andrews University), David Steel (Isle of May Reserve Manager, Scottish Natural Heritage), Owen Selly (Sea Eagle Officer, RSPB Scotland) and John Calladine (Senior Research Ecologist, BTO Scotland). The day ended with a feast of bird images from Fife-based photographer, John Anderson, entertaining attendees with tales of his local birding adventures.

Fife SOC branch committee and BTO Scotland organised a choice of evening meal venues for the Saturday evening and led a number of outings on the Sunday. A write-up of the conference was published in *Scottish Birds* Vol 37 (2).

Publications

Scottish Birds

Four issues of *Scottish Birds* were published during the year. Positive feedback regarding the excellent standard of content of the publication continues to come in to HQ. As well as providing an important platform for publishing new ornithological research, the journal serves as an excellent promotional tool, attracting new members to the Club. No editorial meetings were held in the reporting year, with any pressing issues dealt with by email. The back catalogue of the journal is available on the SOC website as well as via the Biodiversity Heritage Library (BHL) online facility: <http://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/>

Scottish Bird Report

This digital resource is available via the SOC website and contains searchable data up to the year 2010. During the reporting period, work to update the facility was delayed owing to the loss of lead editor, Ray Murray, as well as co-editors being involved in the writing up of the forthcoming South-East Scotland atlas. Digitised copies of the print version of *Scottish Bird Report* are available via BHL (see above)

Scottish Raptor round-up

The archive of this report (historically included in *Scottish Birds*), as published by the SOC on behalf of the Scottish Raptor Study Groups, is available in digital format via BHL (see above. See also Scottish Raptor Monitoring Scheme on p11).

Scottish Bird News

From 1986 to 2009, *Scottish Bird News* ran for 91 issues and included all manner of articles and Club news from headquarters and the branches. It is an important record of the Club's activities over that period and, as such, Council decided to make that record more widely available through the BHL site (see p13).

Local bird atlases

The Breeding and Wintering Birds of Fife 2007-13 was published in August, with assistance from The Birds of Scotland Fund. In February, Caithness branch delivered a limited run (60 copies) of hard copy format of *Birds of Caithness* – a revised version of the digital publication launched in December 2015.

Regional bird reports

The 2016/17 period welcomed printed reports for the following regions (and reporting periods): *Angus & Dundee (2012)*, *Arran (2016)*, *Ayrshire (2013)*, *Dumfries & Galloway (2015)*, *Fife (2013)*, *Highland (2014)*, and *Isle of May (2015)*. *Birds in Moray & Nairn 2015* was published online only (www.birdsinmorayandnairn.org). Similarly, the Fife report was a concise version, with a fuller digital report on CD available to order, and the Isle of May report continued its print plus CD format.

Staff

Dave Allan, part-time Events Coordinator, organised an excellent series of art exhibitions. Dave's enthusiasm and expert bird knowledge continues to attract a steady stream of beginners and improvers to HQ's programme of guided walks. Dave covers the weekend shift at Waterston House and delights in discussing 'what's about' with visiting birdwatchers. He has also earned a reputation for providing sound advice on buying optical equipment.

Karen Bidgood, part-time Librarian, managed a small team of volunteers to ensure that library catalogues are kept up to date. She also dealt with library subscriptions and exchanges, organising book reviews and coordinating Library Committee meetings. Karen intimated her resignation in March - see p10 and *Scottish Birds* Vol 37 (p153)

Jane Cleaver, full-time Development Officer, focuses on growing Club membership, supporting the branch network and raising the SOC's public profile, not least through securing a presence at key bird events, forging partnerships and seeking opportunities with like-minded organisations, and steering new Club projects such as the *Where to Birdwatch in Scotland* app (see Membership & Club Development p6). Jane also manages the SOC website and social media pages, assists branches with the promotion of local talks and outings, and produces the new e-digest, *The Hoot*.

Kathryn Cox, part-time Admin Assistant, does a sterling job of keeping on top of the Club's membership admin, including processing new subscriptions, setting up payments, organising renewal reminders and keeping branch representatives informed of changes. Kathryn also processes conference bookings, monitors stock in the SOC shop and liaises with branch officials to produce the programme of talks and outings.

Wendy Hicks, full-time Office Manager, oversees the day-to-day running of Waterston House as well as providing support to the office bearers and Development Officer and dealing with wider Club business including conference organisation, fielding funding applications and submissions to *Scottish Birds*, coordinating the quarterly mailings, compiling the Annual Report and attending Council and Management Committee meetings.

Jean Torrance, part-time Bookkeeping Clerk, continued to keep a sharp eye on the Club's accounts including prompt submission of VAT and Gift Aid returns. Such is Jean's diligence and efficiency that the SOC accounts once again received an excellent bill of health from the financial examiner. During the year, Jean intimated her plans to retire at the end of 2017. Jean is an integral part of the team and she will be sorely missed. Council is extremely grateful for all Jean's hard work as well as the generous advance notice of her retirement, greatly facilitating the process of recruiting her replacement.

in January, staff and a group of regular HQ volunteers participated in a Fire Safety Training course delivered on site by Borders Fire Safety Services Ltd. In March, Jane and Kathryn attended a free seminar on data protection, hosted by the Edinburgh Voluntary Organisations' Council and presented by a senior policy officer from the Information Commissioner's Office in preparation for the new General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which comes into force in May 2018.

Volunteers

The running of the Club relies heavily on volunteer support – from the trustees themselves to branch representatives and members who help the SOC have a presence at local wildlife festivals and high profile birding events such as Scotland's Big Nature Festival and Hen Harrier Day.

On a country-wide scale, volunteers provide the main input to the SOC's branch activities and local bird recording effort. Much of the latter is of significant national importance to conservation bodies and government. Some contributors have carried out regular surveys on the same sites for many years, providing invaluable long-term datasets. Council wishes to acknowledge the tremendous work that goes into such fieldwork and congratulates all those volunteers who give their time to contribute to local bird reports and atlases.

Waterston House is very fortunate to have a dedicated core of volunteers, a number of whom help out on a weekly basis, meeting and greeting visitors and assisting in areas such as office admin, exhibitions and events, building maintenance, library tasks and covering for staff on leave or off site. A small lively team of volunteers continues to work hard each Wednesday morning to maintain HQ's much-admired garden.

Council wishes to thank everybody who supports the SOC through their voluntary efforts.

Finance

The details presented here are a summary only; the full accounts are available on the SOC website. Alternatively, a hard copy can be requested from Waterston House.

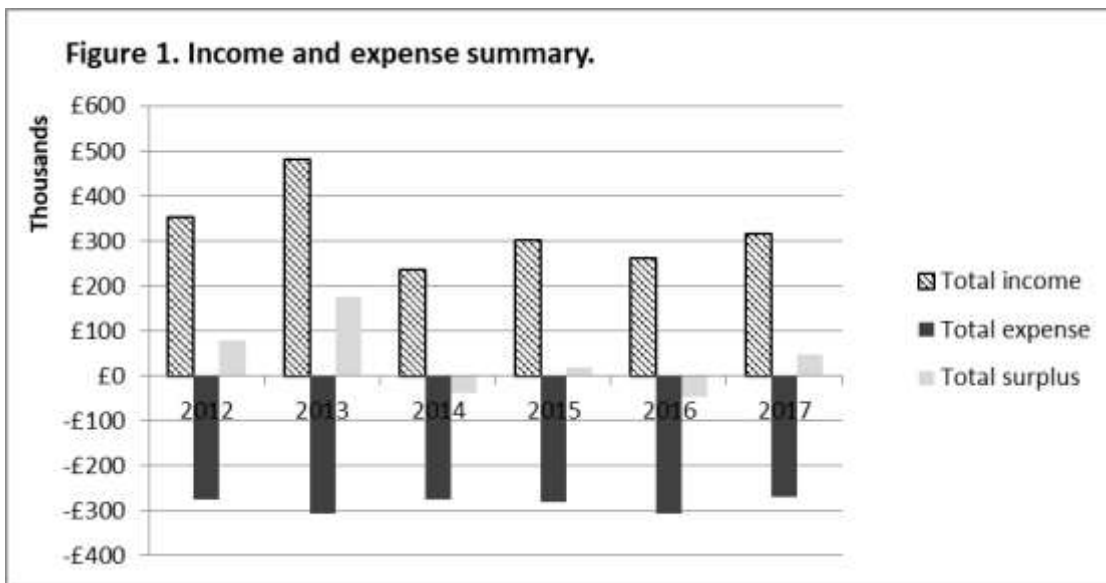
Honorary Treasurer, Andrew Thorpe, firstly wishes to take the opportunity to thank the previous Treasurer, Alan Fox, for his considerable help in the handover period and subsequently in the preparation of these final accounts. Jean Torrance at Waterston House has also been most helpful and instructive in keeping the Treasurer apprised of the various financial issues which have arisen during the past year.

Conversion to Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO)

As reported in 2015/16, the SOC SCIO was formed on 29 March 2015 and the assets of the SOC unincorporated organisation and SOC Enterprises Ltd were transferred into the new SCIO and merged on 31 March 2015. As such, the Charity has subsequently been accounted for as a merger under the provisions of Charities Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP).

Accounts Summary

In the year to 31 March 2017, the SOC recorded a surplus of £48,874 (2016: deficit of £45,104) on a total income of £266,295 (2016: £273,226), as shown in Figure 1. The total assets, including branch funds, rose from £1,549,256 to £1,598,227.



Valuation of fixed assets

These are difficult to value and so are usefully separated. Waterston house depreciation was calculated at £8,724 for 2016-17 (2015-16: £8723). SOC made new investments (£15,464) and disposed of others (£37,254). Gains on revaluation of these investments during the year were £50,418 (2016: losses £11,558). At the end of the year, the value of SOC investments stood at £375,417 (2016: £346,789).

BS3 Fund

Sales of the digital format of *The Birds of Scotland* continued slowly. Together with the grants awarded and loans repaid, the Fund recorded a surplus of £2,395 for the year, with the assets of standing at £78,699. The Fund is due for review in the 2017/18 period, with a decision to be made over whether the scheme continues or is wound up with remaining assets transferred to general Club funds.

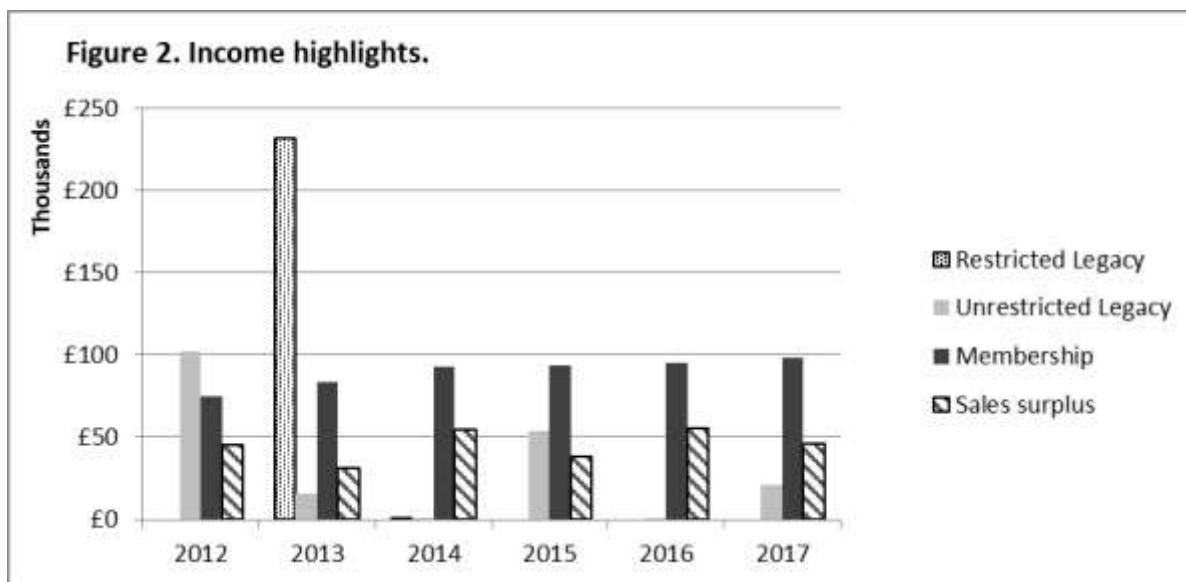
Branch Accounts

The financial year 2015-2016 was the first year that SOC accounts included full details of branch accounts, previously considered not to be material compared to general Club accounts. At 31 March 2017, funds held by Branches stood at £66,636 (2016: £65,418), a surplus of £1,218 on turnover of £15,628.

General Club activities

The remaining surplus for the year from general Club activities was therefore £3,568 (2015-16: deficit £22,018). Highlights of the financial year 2016-17 were (Figure 2):

- Income from membership subscriptions reached its highest ever level £98,095 (2016, £95,241).
- Profits from sales fell to £46,521 (2016: £55,229) including £22,573 commission on art sales at Waterston House (2016: £27,682).
- Legacy income was up on the previous year at £21,500 thanks to a generous legacy from the estate of Duncan Watt (2016 legacy income: £1,030).
- Waterston House is now eleven years old. A professional maintenance schedule that was commissioned in the previous year resulted in a property maintenance expenditure of £4,265 to the Property Endowment Fund in 2016-17.



In summary, while the surplus of £48,874 is pleasing, the organisation continues in a phase of reliance on income from legacies and art sales, all of which can vary considerably between years. This is reflected in increased income from membership subscriptions (in a year when individual subscription levels remained unchanged) and sales at Waterston House. Looking ahead, there remain risks around highly variable legacy income. However, the Club has sufficient reserves to withstand these over the next 5-10 years.

Legacies

Council wishes to record with special thanks a generous legacy received during the year from the estate of long-standing Ayrshire branch member, Duncan Watt (*Scottish Birds* Vol 36 (4))

Report of the Trustees of the Property Endowment Fund of the SOC

At 31 March 2015, the Property Endowment Trust was wound up and its assets transferred to the new SOC SCIO. The PEF trustees considered that the transfer would continue to meet the requirement to fund the provision and maintenance of a Scottish Centre for Ornithology, and that The Property Endowment Fund will continue to be reported in SOC accounts as a Restricted Fund. The Fund assets at 31 March 2017 were £336,496 (2016: £340,761), with expenditure during the year of £4,625 (2016:£11,134) on maintenance of Waterston House.

Financial Reserves policy

The new SCIO adopted the SOC reserves policy. This policy is for the Charity to maintain a level of financial reserves of at least £130,000, representing about six months' income. This level allows the SOC to maintain its regular charitable activities despite potential large inter-annual variability in income. At 31 March 2017, Club reserves stood at £317,000.

Investment policy

In 2014, Council appointed Brewin Dolphin as investment managers under the company's discretionary managed scheme. The new SOC SCIO has continued this relationship. Under this scheme, Brewin Dolphin is responsible for the investment decisions, guided by SOC's investment policy. During the year, £37,254 of sales and £15,464 of purchases were made. Capital appreciation of £50,418 was recorded and dividend income of £12,807 was received in the year. This represents a total return after fees of 18.58% and compares to a return on the linked benchmark (Risk Category 6 – Balanced Benchmark) of 19.46% and the FTSE 100 Index – total return of 23.34%. Clearly, the improved performance of our investments compared to the year 2015-16 has benefitted Club income and contributed to the overall surplus.

Risk Management

Management Committee continues to assess and manage the major risks to which the Charity is exposed. Council is grateful to Honorary Secretary, David Heeley, for facilitating the production of a well-devised and comprehensive Risk Register for this purpose.

Taxation

The SOC is a charity and is recognised as such by the HM Revenue and Customs for taxation purposes. As a result there is no liability to taxation on any of its income.

Council's responsibilities

Charity law requires Council to prepare financial statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity and of the surplus or deficit of the Charity for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the Council members are required to:

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

Council is responsible for keeping proper accounting records, which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity and ensures that the financial statements comply with the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006. It is also responsible for safeguarding the Charity's assets and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.


Independent Financial Examination

AW Scotland C.A. was appointed as Independent Examiner to the Charity and he carried out the independent examination required under the Charities and Trustees Investment (Scotland) Act 2005.

Council would like to thank Waterston House staff and the various committee officials and Club representatives for their assistance in compiling this year's annual report.

Approved by Council on 28 August 2017

and signed on the trustees' behalf by **James Main** (President)

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James Main". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent initial 'J' and a trailing flourish.

MINUTES OF THE 80th AGM OF THE SOC

5.00pm, 24 September 2016, Atholl Palace Hotel, Pitlochry

- 1 Present** James Main (Acting President), Paul Taylor (Acting Vice-President), Alan Fox (Hon. Treasurer), David Heeley (Hon. Secretary), c72 Members.
- 2 Apologies for absence** Apologies were received from Norman Elkins, Bidy Gray, Joan Howie, Carol James, David Jenkins, Margaret Jenkins, Ann Macintosh, Colin Macintosh, Campbell McLellan, Vicky McLellan, Mike Martin, John Savory, Ian Wallace and Alastair Whitelaw.
- 3 In memoriam: Ray Murray, Duncan Watt.** The Chair (James Main) noted with shock and great sadness the recent and unexpected death of Council member Ray Murray. He read a moving tribute from past-President Mark Holling that illustrated and highlighted Ray Murray's significant contributions to the SOC and his key role in the birding community in the Borders.

The Chair also informed the meeting of the recent death of Club member Duncan Watt after a long illness and presented a tribute to his contribution to the SOC in Ayrshire.
- 4 Minutes of the 79th AGM, 31 October 2015** The Minutes for meeting 31st October 2015 were approved without correction. There were no matters arising.

Adoption of the Minutes:

Proposed: Paul Taylor **Seconded:** Doreen Main Approved without dissent.
- 5 Annual Report 2015-2016** The Chair, James Main presented the Annual Report for 2015–2016. The Club continued in a solid financial state, and the Club as always was well supported by its various committees. He concluded by thanking all who had contributed to the production of the Annual Report, the staff at Waterston House and the Branch Committees. No questions or queries were forthcoming from the Meeting

Adoption of the Annual Report:

Proposed: Chris Wernham **Seconded:** David Jardine Approved without dissent.
- 6 Annual Accounts 2015-2016** The Hon. Treasurer, Alan Fox (AF), presented the Annual Accounts. On behalf of the Club he offered thanks to the Club bookkeeper, Jean Torrance and to Sandy Scotland, the Independent Financial Examiner. He drew the Meeting's attention to the fact that the Accounts were the first set since the Club assumed its new status as an SCIO, and that this was reflected in a change in the format in which they were presented. Summarising, he noted that the Club was in possession of significant assets amounting overall to some £1.5m with approximately £260k in reserves which equated to more than a whole year's expenditure. He noted the healthy position of sales at Waterston House and concluded that the Club continued to be on a sound financial footing. There were no questions from the floor.

Adoption of the Accounts:

Proposed: Roger Gooch **Seconded:** Richard Leslie Approved without dissent.
- 7 Election of Council Members** The Chair, James Main, informed the meeting that due to a number of factors such as secondments and changes in status, the situation had arisen whereby vacancies for all three Elected Members to Council had arisen at the same time. He had contacted two of the Elected Members due to stand down and was pleased to note that Alison Creamer was prepared to serve for another one year, and that Bob McGowan was prepared to serve for another two years. The meeting was invited to support this proposal, which it did without dissent.

The Chair noted that Chris Wernham had been nominated as the third Elected Member, and invited any further nominations from the floor. None were forthcoming.

Election of Chris Wernham as Elected Member:

Nominated: David Jardine **Seconded:** Richard Leslie Elected unopposed.

8 Election of Office Bearers

The Chair noted that he had been in the role of Acting President since the resignation of Ian Thomson. He passed the chairing of the meeting to the Secretary, David Heeley (DH), to conduct the election of President. DH noted that James Main had indicated that he was willing to stand for election, and that no further written nominations had been received. Further nominations were invited from the floor, and none were forthcoming.

Election of James Main as President

Nominated: Paul Taylor **Seconded:** Roger Gooch Elected unopposed

The Secretary congratulated James Main on his appointment, which was met with acclamation by the Meeting, and passed the Chairing of the meeting back to the newly elected President.

The Chair noted that the election of President created a vacancy for Vice President. He was pleased to inform the meeting that Jeremy Wilson had indicated that he was willing to stand for this position. Further nominations were invited and none were forthcoming.

Election of Jeremy Wilson as Vice President

Nominated: James Main **Seconded:** Paul Taylor Elected unopposed.

The Chair congratulated Jeremy Wilson on his appointment, which was met with acclamation by the Meeting.

The Chair informed the Meeting that the Alan Fox, the Honorary Treasurer, was standing down after many years of excellent service to the Club. He was pleased to note that Andrew Thorpe was willing to stand for this position. No further nominations were forthcoming.

Election of Andrew Thorpe as Honorary Treasurer

Nominated: Alan Knox **Seconded:** Alan Fox Elected unopposed.

The Chair congratulated Andrew Thorpe

The Chair informed the Meeting that David Heeley was prepared to continue in his role as Honorary Secretary and sought approval for the continuation.

Approval that David Heeley continue as Honorary Secretary
there being no other nominations; carried *nem con*

9 Appointment of an Independent Financial Examiner

The Chair noted that it was formally necessary for the Club to approve the appointment of an Independent Financial Examiner on an annual basis. The present Examiner, Sandy Scotland, had indicated that he was willing to continue in this role, and the Chair, noting his effectiveness, recommended that he be re-appointed.

Approval that Sandy Scotland continue as the Independent Financial Examiner to the Club

Proposed: Jeremy Wilson **Seconded:** Paul Taylor Approved without dissent.

10 AOCB

On behalf of the Club, the Chair passed a vote of thanks to Alan Fox on his relinquishing the post of Hon. Treasurer. He noted the significant contributions that Alan Fox had made over a period of some seven to eight years in both the financial management of the SOC and also in leading the process of conversion to an SCIO. He presented AF with a small token of the Club's appreciation. There was no other competent business

11 Date and place of next meeting

The Chair announced that the next Annual General Meeting of the Club would be held at the Atholl Palace Hotel, Pitlochry on 21 October 2017.

The meeting closed at approximately 17:30.

STAFF

Development Officer: Jane Cleaver

Office Manager: Wendy Hicks

Bookkeeping Clerk: Jean Torrance

Events Coordinator: Dave Allan

Administrative Assistant: Kathryn Cox

Librarian: Karen Bidgood

CLUB COMMITTEES

Management committee

James Main (President), Jeremy Wilson (Vice-President), David Heeley (Hon. Secretary), Andrew Thorpe (Hon. Treasurer), Doreen Main, Mike Martin, Paul Taylor

Publications committee

Ian Andrews (Coordinating Editor, *Scottish Birds*); Stan da Prato (Editor: Peer-reviewed papers, *Scottish Birds*), assisted by Ian Bainbridge, Mick Marquiss, Clive McKay, Will Miles and Bob Swann; Jimmy Maxwell, Harry Scott and Stuart Rivers (Editors: Articles, News & Views, *Scottish Birds*); *Vacancy* (Editor, *Scottish Bird Report online*)

Library Committee

Alan Knox (Chair), David Clugston (Hon Librarian), Ian Elfick (Archivist), Lesley Creamer, John Davies, Norman Elkins, Susan Horne, John Law, John Savory, Bob McGowan

Research and Surveys Committee

Tom Dougall (Chair), Michael Bell, Colin Corse, Raymond Duncan, Les Hatton

Scottish Birds Records Committee (SBRC)

Mark Wilkinson (Chair), Chris McInerny (Secretary), John Bowler, David Parnaby, John Nadin, David Pullan, Martin Scott, Mark Warren, Bob McGowan (Museum Consultant)

SBRC Scottish List subcommittee

David Clugston, Ron Forrester, Angus Hogg, Bob McGowan, Chris McInerny, Roger Riddington

The Birds of Scotland Fund Committee

David Jardine (Chair), Mike Martin, Chris McInerny, Bob McGowan, Paul Taylor

BRANCH COMMITTEES

Ayrshire Chair – David Rackham, Vice-Chair – Pat Gibbs, Secretary – Anne Dick, Treasurer – Ian Clark, Members – Roger Hissett, Norman Lawrie, John Rogers, Tony Scott, Jim Thomson

Borders Chair – David Parkinson, Secretary – Neil Stratton, Treasurer – Martin Moncrieff, Member – Malcolm Ross

Caithness Chair – Julian Smith, Secretary – Angus McBay, Treasurer – Heather Byrne

Central Scotland Chair – Roger Gooch, Vice-Chair – John Crook, Treasurer/Secretary – Neil Bielby, Members – Eilidh McNab, Ken Wilkinson

Clyde Vice-Chair – Bernie Zonfrillo, Secretary – Ian Fulton, Treasurer – David Clugston, Members – Sandra Hutchinson, Fiona Morton, David Palmar, Liz Parsons, Toby Wilson, Alan Wood, Council rep – Iain Gibson

Dumfries Chair – Brian Smith, Secretary – Pat Abery, Treasurer – Christine Dudgeon,
Members – Lesley Creamer, Drew Davidson, Edmund Fellowes, Kevin Findlater, Bobby Smith,
Robin Thomson

Fife Chair – Paul Taylor, Vice-Chair/Treasurer – Elizabeth Irwin, Secretary – Caroline Gordon,
Members – Elizabeth Adams, Rob Armstrong, Howard Chapman, John Irwin, Andrew Riches

Highland Chair – David Bain, Secretary – Kathy Bonniface, Treasurer – Lynda Graham,
Members – David Galloway, Peter Gordon, Alex Joss, Al McNee, Carol Miller, Peter Stronach

Lothian Chair – Richard Leslie, Secretary – Doreen Main, Treasurer – Stephen Hunter, Members
– Marjorie Adams, Alison Creamer, Gillian Herbert, Morag King, John MacLean, Hilary Maxfield,
Cherle Smith

Moray Chair – Roy Dennis, Secretary – Martin Cook, Treasurer – Melvin Morrison,
Members – David Law, Sheena Nicolson, Richard Somers Cocks, Alastair Young

North-East Scotland Chair – Jenny Weston, Secretary – John Wills, Treasurer – Paddy Grant
(Graham Cooper to Oct), Members – Hugh Addlesee, Graham Cooper (from Oct), Alan Knox, Eric
Meek (to Feb), Brian Pirie

Orkney Chair/Treasurer – Peter Slater, Secretary – Helen Aiton

Stewartry Chair – Geoff Packard, Vice-chair/Joint Treasurer – Peter Swan, Secretary/Joint
Treasurer – Joan Howie, Members – Andrew Bielinski, Jeremy Brock, Iain Matthewson, Mark
Pollitt, Graham Smith

Tayside Chair – John Campbell, Secretary/Treasurer – Brian Brocklehurst, Members – Ron
Downing, Jon Cook

West Galloway Chair – Alan Johnstone, Vice-Chair – David McGhie, Secretary/Treasurer – Geoff
Sheppard, Members – Sandra Alder, Jean Sheppard

SOC RECORDERS

Angus & Dundee – Jon Cook

Argyll – Jim Dickson

Ayrshire – Fraser Simpson, Assistant –
Angus Hogg

Borders – Ray Murray (to Sept), David
Parkinson & Martin Moncrieff (from Feb)

Caithness – Sinclair Manson

Clyde – Iain Gibson, Assistant – Val Wilson

Clyde Islands – Bernard Zonfrillo

Dumfries & Galloway – Paul N Collin

Fair Isle – David Parnaby

Fife – Malcolm Ware

Forth (Upper) – Chris Pendlebury, Assistant
– Neil Bielby

Highland – Peter Gordon

Isle of May – Iain English

Lothian – Stephen Welch

Moray & Nairn – Martin Cook

NE Scotland – Nick Littlewood

Orkney – Jim Williams

Outer Hebrides – Yvonne Benting (Ian
Ricketts to Feb)

Perth & Kinross – Scott Paterson

Shetland – Rob Fray

For up-to-date Club information, visit www.the-soc.org.uk



www.facebook.com/ScotlandsBirdClub



@ScottishBirding



81st SOC Annual General Meeting
21 October 2017
Atholl Palace Hotel, Pitlochry

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the 80th AGM, 24th September 2016
3. Annual Report 2016-2017
4. Annual Accounts 2016-2017
5. Election of Council Member
6. Re-election of Honorary Secretary: David Heeley
7. Appointment of an Independent Financial Examiner
8. AOCB

To book a place at this year's annual conference, visit www.the-soc.org.uk or contact the office on 01875 871330. If you plan to pop along to attend the AGM only, please let us know.



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Log it or lose it!