



The Derbyshire Ornithological Society

Diversity Policy

Our survival depends on diversity

We recognise that everyone is individual and different and value what that difference brings to the DOS. We want to support everyone to unlock their birding potential and better reflect the wider community within Derbyshire.

Where we are now

The DOS is predominantly a white, male, over 50 years of age organisation. Less than 15% of subscription payers are female, however many more are part of family memberships. The DOS had a Junior Membership in the past however this was withdrawn because we had no one in that group and also for data privacy reasons – it is assumed juniors will be part of a Family Membership.

We have made no progress against our aim to have an improved gender and ethnicity balance at committee level and continue to find it difficult to attract younger, non-white, non-male volunteers. We acknowledge that we have more to do in other areas, particularly in representing the age, ethnic and racial diversity within the county.

Derbyshire as a Whole (Statistics current 2020)

Derbyshire (excluding the City of Derby see below) is a mainly rural county with a population of some 807,000 (317 people/km²) and a place of geographical and social contrasts. The median age is 46 and 177,000 are over 65 with ethnic minorities making up some 4% of the total population. Nine towns have populations in excess of 20,000. 27% of the population live in rural areas including the Peak District National Park. Derbyshire has an increasingly elderly population with pensioners making up 22% of the total (cf. 16% for England). Unemployment is well below the national average but there are parts of Chesterfield (Derbyshire's largest town) and Erewash where the rate is nearly twice the national average. There is a high reliance on the manufacturing sector for jobs with around 20% of all employment over twice the national rate of 8%. There are 18 areas in Derbyshire which rank amongst the 10% most deprived areas in England.

The City of Derby lies at the southern end of Derbyshire and contains an additional population of around 256,000 with some 25% of the total within BAME¹ minority groups.

Our beliefs

We believe that nature is a right of everybody and being an equal, diverse organisation is the right thing to do to find solutions to our common challenges comes from the trustees of our organisation. Like all birdwatching and wildlife organisations we have great difficulty in both recruiting a representatively diverse membership and then encouraging all to take part in activities and leadership roles.

¹ BAME – Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic



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Our Trustees have agreed that:

The DOS will identify ways of becoming as a more diverse organisation and work with other local organisations to develop best practice. Having Equality, Diversity and Inclusion recruitment and membership policies as a top priority, fully integrated and institutionalised in our culture, is a way to help us achieve our aims of the study, recording and conservation of birds and their habitats within the County.

We want to reduce the DOS membership Gender Gap and encourage membership from the BAME community.

Our General Committee has agreed that we want to achieve the following targets:

EQUALITY

- A gender membership gap of 50% or less, supported by an action plan outlining of steps we will take to achieve that
- Equality of opportunity amongst committee members, with a proportionate representation at this level both of members who self-declare a disability and of members from Black Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds.

DIVERSITY

- 25% of Trustees will be female.
- 5% of members will have a self-declared disability.
- 5% of members will be from a Black, Asian or minority ethnic background.

INCLUSION

- All our policies and procedures will be analysed to identify and remove any barriers to equality of opportunity. For example: offering help with equipment which can be expensive in our hobby.
- Members and volunteers from different backgrounds are readily accepted and made to feel welcome at the DOS. For example, being paired with an experienced birder.
- The DOS has a real commitment to improving its performance in Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.
- We will monitor our progress against our targets and aspirations and take further action if we are not achieving them.

Embedding the case for change

We are building organisational awareness and understanding of need through Bulletin articles and sessions at our Indoor Meetings where we will ask the members for their views and for ideas on how we can become more diverse.

We are keen to encourage more membership applications from people from BAME backgrounds and younger people (18-25) who are currently under-represented as DOS volunteers and members.



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We have begun updating our people imagery to be more reflective of the diversity of the communities we are part of.

We have updated our recruitment and induction materials, to better reflect these commitments and to reshape the first impressions people have of the DOS.

We have launched an eLearning module for our trustees covering unconscious bias (the positive and negative stereotypes that can shape our views and impact our actions).

We have introduced an Equality Analysis tool to reduce bias when planning projects or formulating or revising policies.

We have made, and will continue to make, improvements to our web accessibility.

Building our organisational understanding

We have overhauled our existing equal opportunities monitoring data capture to better reflect external best practice. We are committed to growing our knowledge and tackling emerging issues and have expanded existing surveys and run focus groups with our Black, Asian and minority ethnic staff to help us answer specific questions to formulate solutions.

Additional Information

<https://www.bto.org/community/blog/diversity-birding-why-it-matters>

https://www.rarebirdalert.co.uk/v2/Content/Birding_in_the_UK_Where_Are_the_PeopleLikeMe.aspx?s_id=558059018



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Appendix 1 – Addressing Bias

The DOS recognises that bias as an issue and will follow the steps below to address this issue:

1. Understand the issue and provide advice for trustees
2. Monitor Progress
3. Educate the Trustees and make them accountable for change
4. Challenge mindsets by challenging bias and sexism
5. Try to create committee roles that leverage diversity
6. Have transparency of opportunity for those wishing to become trustees and committee members
7. Demonstrate to female members and trustees that they are as equally welcome as male members and trustees
8. Handle diversity as we would any other improvement project
9. Share learning and good practice with other organisations and charities
10. Review our progress at least annually and keep members informed via our Bulletin