



Fair Isle Bird Observatory
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22nd Sept 2020

Dear Fellow-Birdwatcher,

You may already know Fair Isle as a hot-spot for migrating birds and one of the most exciting places to bird-watch in the British Isles. Fair Isle Bird Observatory (FIBO) was established in 1948 and is one of the world's longest-established and best-known bird observatories. We record and undertake research into bird migration and the sea-bird colonies on Fair Isle.

On 10th March 2019 the Observatory buildings were completely destroyed by a fire, the cause of which has never been ascertained. FIBO is now appealing to birders round the world to donate money to our Rebuild Appeal, so that the Observatory can be rebuilt during 2021 and re-open for guests and researchers in the spring of 2022.

FIBO has comprehensive records of Fair Isle's breeding sea-birds and migrant birds of many species that have been built up over some seventy years. In this era of climate-change, it is important that this work can continue uninterrupted. We also record cetaceans, marine life, plants, moths & butterflies.

Fair Isle is a tiny island (4m x 2m) located between the Orkney and Shetland islands, off the north coast of Scotland. Fair Isle is UK's most remote inhabited island, with a permanent population of some 50 islanders that is doubled between April and November by guests, researchers and staff staying at the Observatory. FIBO is a vital part of the island economy and the sustainability of this remote and fragile island community is dependent on rebuilding the Observatory as soon as possible.

The estimated total cost of the rebuild is approximately £7.4m, of which £4.5m will come from our insurers, and we hope to obtain financial support from public-sector bodies such as the Scottish Government, Highlands & Islands Enterprise and Shetland Islands Council. FIBO will also contribute £0.3m from its own reserves. The gap between the insurance pay-out and the cost of the new observatory is because the new building will be bigger, be a totally-green building with its own solar power, have much-enhanced research facilities and be better-equipped for staff and guests.

FIBO itself needs to raise at least £650,000 from donations, some of which we hope to obtain from private-sector companies and charitable foundations. This leaves a substantial amount that we need to raise by donations from individual members of the public. We aim to do this through thousands of donations from bird-watchers and other nature-lovers across the UK and elsewhere.

I am writing to you in the hope that you are willing to publicise our appeal on your web-site and through your social media channels, so that your members and followers may donate via FIBO's web-site at www.fairislebirdobs.co.uk where the different options for making donations are shown.

Yours sincerely,

Mike Wood
Finance Director
Fair Isle Bird Observatory Trust

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