

Sheffield Photographic Society. Annual Exhibition 2026

Entry Information, Guidance and Rules for Members

Introduction

The Annual Exhibition is the Society's showcase for the best work of its members. This year's exhibition will be held at Sheffield Cathedral (20th March to March 30th 2026) and is a prints-only exhibition.

Any paid-up member may submit work, though the entry must not have been accepted into a previous annual exhibition.

Images must be entirely the work of the photographer. Composite images and manipulations made from the author's own photographs are allowed in all classes except in nature and record. Techniques such as selection, noise reduction, "burning & dodging", textures, montage, HDR, focus stacking, stitching, cloning, healing, removal of distractions and other similar techniques are allowed. There are restrictions in relation to nature and record classes (see class rules below for what is permitted).

Images generated via AI are not permitted. All images or parts of images must be based on Photographic Images taken by the author. The Society will trust in the integrity of its members regarding appropriate use of AI tools.

All entries are put before a photographic judge, who chooses the images to be displayed. This selection process is necessary not only to maintain the highest standard but also because there is a limit to how much work we can show within the space available. The Exhibition Coordinator will ensure that each entrant has at least one print displayed in the exhibition.

The Exhibition Coordinator has the right not to accept any print if the coordinator considers the subject matter to be inappropriate for display in the exhibition or if the mounting does not meet the Society's standards.

Deadline for submitting your prints, entry form and PDIs is Tuesday 20th January 2026.

The judging day will be on Saturday 7th February and members will be able to attend to observe. More details regarding this will be provided nearer the time.

The Annual Exhibition is not linked in any way to the Perspectives Exhibition or Members' Competitions that take place throughout the season. Therefore any work which has been shown in a Members' Competition or Perspectives may also be submitted for the Annual Exhibition. Also, if you have won a certificate in a Members' Competition, this does not affect your status in the Annual Exhibition.

An exhibition catalogue is produced and each entrant receives a copy.

The Exhibition Coordinator will have a word with you if it is considered that your image is not appropriate for display in the venue.

Certain classes have strict rules and these are outlined later in this paper. Entry into a class signifies that your image conforms to those rules.

You may submit a maximum of six prints plus one Small Print. A print essay counts as one print within this total.

The entry fee remains at £1.50 per print (50p per print for Juniors). NB. There is also now an additional exhibitor's fee of £1.00 for every print selected for the exhibition.

Entry Classes.

Here are the Classes which may be entered:

Open

Small Prints

Beginners

Juniors

Photo Essay

Record

Nature

Sheffield (It's Life & Environs). This is judged by our President.

Rules for individual classes.

Photo Essay. These should be images on a theme or which tells a story, although judges might give preference to the latter. A photo essay should consist of four or more images combined as a single image. Images can be individually mounted or combined into a single image using Photoshop techniques. Images can be creatively arranged and be a mixture of sizes, not necessarily all horizontal, and can have text and other symbols mixed in. The overall size of the work must not exceed 40 x 50 cm or equivalent area including any mounts used. Members may enter only one photo essay. The photo essay counts as one print within the maximum total of six prints plus one Small Print

Juniors. Entrants must be aged under 18 on Collection Day and be the sons or daughters of paid-up members (paid-up on Collection Day). Family membership is not required.

Beginners. This Class is for members who have not won an award or certificate in any exhibition, or had work accepted in an open exhibition, or have been awarded any recognised photographic distinction. However, it is hoped that members will respect the spirit of this Class in that it is intended for inexperienced photographers who are new to club photography. Beginners may enter other classes but may not exceed the exhibition maximum.

Sheffield (it's Life and Environs). Entries must have been taken within the city boundary within the last three years from January 2026. The location and date of shooting should be included in the title. The image should be recognisable as an aspect of Sheffield life, or a building or open space, which reflects the current nature of the city. The content should make it suitable for archiving as an historical document. Entries to the Sheffield class will be judged by the President but the winning image will be submitted to the exhibition judge for consideration for 'Best Print Award', 'Best Monochrome Award' and 'Best colour Award'.

Small Prints. Entries must be in A5 size mounts (14.8 x 21cm). The printed area must be contained within a window, the maximum area of the window being 75 sq.cm. (e.g. 7.5cm high x 10cm wide). Please see the Exhibition Coordinator if you cannot produce a window mount.

Record. Entries should be buildings or other inanimate objects such as vehicles, machinery, statues or other objets d'art. The emphasis is on a high technical quality image which makes an accurate record of the subject. Artistic interpretation is not acceptable in this class, although direct monochrome conversions are acceptable. Digital manipulation should be limited to cropping, sharpening, contrast, colour corrections and correction of converging verticals. Only minor distractions or blemishes may be removed from the image. Any adjustments should not alter the main content of the original photograph. Titles should be factual, simply naming the building, feature or object.

Nature.

Nature photography is restricted to the use of the photographic process to depict all branches of natural history, except anthropology and archaeology, in such a fashion that a well-informed person will be able to identify the subject material and certify its honest presentation.

The story telling value of a Nature photograph must be weighed more than the pictorial quality while maintaining high technical quality.

Scientific bands, scientific tags or radio collars on wild animals are permissible. Images of birds that also show their Jesse will now be permitted in the Nature Class. Photographs of human created hybrid plants, cultivated plants, feral animals, domestic animals, or mounted specimens are ineligible, as is any form of manipulation that alters the truth of the photographic statement.

What do we mean by Feral animals? Feral refers to any variety of animal or plant which does not occur naturally somewhere in the world (ie it has been bred by humans and turned wild). It is ineligible even if it has gone feral and returned to the wild. This is because the category is about photographing natural things rather than any living thing. So wild horses are ineligible but grey squirrels are allowed. It has nothing to do with whether they are captive or not etc when photographed.

Processing of the captured image, by cropping, exposure adjustment, colour correction, noise minimisation, dodging/burning, HDR, focus stacking and sharpening, is allowed. Cloning of image defects and minor distractions, including overlapping elements, are permitted when these do not distort the truth of the photographic statement.

Images entered as Nature can have landscape, geologic formations, weather phenomena, and extant organisms as the primary subject matter. This includes images taken with the subjects in controlled conditions, such as zoos, game farms, botanical gardens, aquariums and any enclosure where the subjects are totally dependent on man for food.

Access to biological subjects may be restricted. By entering the event, Photographers warrant that they have followed relevant codes of practices and hold any necessary licences.

Trophies.

The Society has a number of trophies which have been donated over the years. The judge will be asked to select an appropriate winning image for each trophy. The trophy is held for a year. Highly Commended and Commended certificates may also be awarded.

At the discretion of the judge, trophies may be awarded within the Classes as follows:

Category	Trophy
Best Colour Print (this replaces the Pictorial category)	The Cooper Cup
Created & Altered Reality.	The Hodgson Cup
Portrait and Figure Study.	The Horton Cup
Photojournalism / Action.	The Dixon Trophy
Best Monochrome.	The Sweetman Monochrome Trophy
Beginners' Class.	The Rose Bowl

Record Class.	The Record Cup
Nature.	The Nature Trophy
Photo Essay Class.	The Constantine Cup
Sheffield & its Environs	The Fred Hague Trophy
Juniors Class.	The Junior Trophy
Small Prints Class.	The Ron Harrison Trophy
Best Print.	The Society Trophy

Guidance on the judging for specific trophies.

While all awards are obviously at the judge's discretion, most of the following conventions have been in use within our society for some years and have previously formed the guidelines for awarding the trophies.

Where specific rules apply to a particular class, these have already been outlined above in the rules for specific classes section of this paper.

Colour.

This can be awarded to any colour print irrespective of class entered.

Creative & Altered Reality

Images for this category covers both the use of creative in camera techniques, such as ICM and multi-exposure as well as highly manipulated images with a computer. It also covers prints that contain elements from several images which produce a final image that stimulates the imagination of the viewer. The judge will look for imaginative manipulation of an image by the photographer. Use of Photoshop and other computer and in-camera manipulations, over and above the basic and usual ones, are expected in this class.

Portraits and Figure Studies

The subject may be a human or an animal but it is likely that, other qualities being equal, the judge will give more marks to a human subject. Conventional portraits, head and shoulders or full length. 'Glamour' and nude studies, taken in or out of doors. If a figure is shown in a setting, the figure should be the dominant part of the composition. Please note the exhibition is in the Cathedral and the Exhibition Coordinator has the right not to accept any print if s/he considers the subject matter to be inappropriate for display.

Photojournalism/Action

Pictures of people at work are acceptable under this heading or in Portrait and Figure Study. Any subject that would be considered by an editor of a newspaper or magazine to be newsworthy. E.g. a famous person, travel scene, function, people (not portraits), sports, races, and incidents such as fires, etc. Titles should be explanatory.

Record

Please see the specific rules. In recent years the entry in the Record Class has been on the low side and so entry is actively encouraged in this Class.

Best Print

Best Print in the exhibition is awarded The Society Trophy

Monochrome

A traditional black and white work, or a monochrome work toned entirely in a single colour e.g. sepia. A black and white work modified by partial toning, or by the addition of one or more colours, is regarded as a colour image. This trophy can be awarded to any monochrome print irrespective of class entered

PLEASE NOTE THAT ENTRIES TO THE BEGINNERS, RECORD, NATURE, PHOTO ESSAY, JUNIORS AND SMALL PRINTS CLASSES WILL ONLY BE JUDGED FOR THE TROPHY WITHIN THAT CLASS (APART FROM THE COLOUR, MONOCHROME AND BEST PRINT TROPHIES).

All highly commended prints from each class will be considered alongside all the trophy winners, for either the best colour, or best monochrome trophy. All Trophy winners will then be considered for the Best Print Trophy.

Information on Entering your submissions.

You may submit a maximum of six prints plus one Small Print. A print essay counts as one print within this total.

The entry fee is £1.50 per print (50p per print for Juniors). There is also now an additional exhibitor's fee of £1.00 for every print selected for the exhibition.

Prints, Backing Boards on Mounts, Mounting Tape and Labels

Prints must be mounted in the usual way, to a maximum mount size of 50 x 40cm. Smaller mounts are acceptable, appropriate to the image. Mounts should be a maximum of 4mm thick.

The name of the author, title of the print and class entered must appear clearly on the backs of all prints, preferably on one of the Society's adhesive labels affixed at the upper right on the back of the print/mount.

Mounted panoramas must not exceed a mount area of 2000 sq.cm.

Heavy card backing boards on mounts is discouraged as this significantly increases the weight of the prints and may mean that more print boxes are required. The atmospheric conditions in the Cathedral mean that warping of images is very unlikely. If you want to use backing board then thin cardboard, available at all good stationers.

Please use good quality tape for mounting images. Mounting tape is available from most framing establishments for a few pounds including Inframe at Woodseats and Handsworth. Prints affixed to the mount with shiny brown parcel tape may not be accepted for selection, because the tape can damage other prints.

If you do not have club labels an ordinary label will suffice with your name, title of image and the category entered.

Whilst every care will be taken, the Society cannot be held responsible for the safety of work entered in the exhibition. Also, mounted prints measuring longer than 50cm cm do not fit into standard print boxes and are more susceptible to damage in transit.

When you enter, you will need to submit (or have submitted) together with your work:

- 1) an entry form downloaded from the website with all of your entries on it and emailed to eddie.sherwood@icloud.com. If this is not possible please just supply the printed form but make a note that no emailed entry has been supplied.
- 2) a backup printed entry form with all the images and classes that you enter. This can be a printed copy of the online form or you can use a copy of this form to make your entries. If you cannot print your own entry form then have a word with me and I will provide one.
- 3) your entry fee, if not paid by Bank Transfer.

4) digital high-quality jpeg files of each image sized at a maximum of 1600 x 1200 pixels per inch (ppi). The vertical side of the image must NOT exceed 1200 pixels per inch. The name of the image should be authors name_title of image e.g. John Smith_Sunset over the River Don. Please supply these by email to: eddie.sherwood@icloud.com.

Digital images supplied with prints are assumed to be available for selection by the Society for use representing the Society in inter-club competitions and events, unless the author indicates to the contrary to the Exhibition Coordinator

Entry Fees

Adults £1.50 per print, juniors 50p per print. Both up to a maximum of six plus one Small Print. These should ideally be paid by Bank Transfer with a reference of "Entry Fee 2026" but may be paid by cheque and handed in with your prints. If paying by cheque then it should be made payable to Sheffield Photographic Society

Exhibitor's Display Fees

Adults £1.00, junior 50p per accepted print. **These must be paid by 1st March 2026.** Failure to do so will mean your accepted prints will not be displayed at the Exhibition. These should ideally be paid by Bank Transfer with a reference of "Display Fee 2026" but may be paid by cheque and handed in with your prints. If paying by cheque then it should be made payable to Sheffield Photographic Society

Timetable

Closing date for entries and trophy return.	Tuesday 20th January 2026
The Keith Allchin Memorial Lecture	Friday 6th February 7:45 for 8:00 at Greenhill Methodist Church.
Judging Day	Saturday 7th February at St Peter's Church Hall 9.30 am to 1pm
Exhibition Set-up	Friday 20th March @10.00 at Sheffield Cathedral
Exhibition Take-down	Monday 30th April @10.30
Presentation of Awards	Tuesday 5th May at the AGM

Eddie Sherwood

Exhibitions Coordinator

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