

# The Society of Photographers Member's Handbook



[www.thesocieties.net](http://www.thesocieties.net)



**The Society  
of Photographers**

*Cover image by Catherine Brown  
[www.jellymediastudios.com](http://www.jellymediastudios.com)*



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*Professional Imagemaker Magazine June-July 2024*



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# Welcome

Welcome to The Society of Photographers, we look forward to sharing the passion of photography with you.

With over 30 years of experience, we are delighted to provide our members with the very best in benefits of membership, education and support.

Our highly skilled network of internationally renowned lecturers and advisers are all committed to help you and your business succeed with positive growth in what is a competitive market place.

However, progress within your business is a two-way thing. To coin an old phrase 'you only get back what you put in' is more than true. Your knowledge and expertise will be exponentially increased if you attend the major programmes that we arrange.

The largest of the programmes is the Convention, held in London each year, and is the ideal opportunity for you to learn from the experts. The event is by far the largest gathering of like-minded professional

photographers eager to share their knowledge and friendship. Attendees have the opportunity to meet representatives from all the major manufacturers from all over the world.

Members are positively encouraged to enter our various photographic competitions, and gain endorsements and feedback on their skill levels. In addition, to assist members, a structured system of benchmarking is offered through the qualifications structure.

To help members to achieve their goals, the mentoring programme has been developed to give positive feedback with in-depth critiques and analysis of work, along with guidance on how a member's skill level can be enhanced.

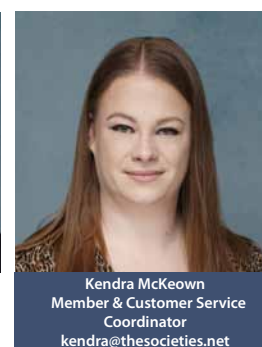
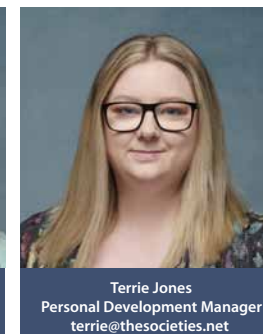
Our Head Office support team are there to help and support you. Do get involved and you too will reap the rewards of your investment of being a member of The Society of Photographers.

*Regards, Colin Jones - CEO*



# Meet the team

At The Society of Photographers, we have a team of people who work dynamically to achieve the objectives of our organisation, set out in our Mission Statement, "to encourage high professional standards and ethics in photography".



# Mission statement

The aims of The Society is to encourage high professional standards and ethics in photography by providing continued training programmes that will benefit the experienced professional along with the newcomer to the business. Through it's publications it encourages the development and discussion about all aspects of the business of photography and promotes the interests of photographers.

To provide a focused assessment of photographic and allied products, which are of specific interest to those who earn money from their

photography and to provide essential information on radical changes in photographic capture, manipulation and output.

To encourage newcomers to the profession by providing support and ongoing image assessments, qualifications and competitions, in order to encourage and inspire them to achieve their ultimate goals.

The organisation prides itself on cultivating friendships and an understanding among photographers from all corners of the globe by having alliances with other International based Associations.

# Rules and code of conduct

## 1. Name of associations

The Society of Wedding and Portrait Photographers  
The Society of International Sport and Leisure Photographers  
The Society of International Travel and Tourism Photographers  
The Society of International Nature and Wildlife Photographers  
The Society of International Media and Press Photographers  
The Society of International Commercial and Industrial Photographers  
The Society of International School and Event Photographers  
The Society of International Fashion and Glamour Photographers  
The British Professional Photographers Associates  
Hereafter referred to as The Society of Photographers.

## 2. Objectives

The Society of Photographers' objectives shall be to provide co-operation between and act generally in the common interest of the Members in all matters concerning their photography and to give assistance to individual members where appropriate.

## 3. Rules of membership

(a) Membership of The Society of Photographers, shall be open to persons who are engaged in full-time photography, or are aspiring photographers, shall be accepted into membership by the secretary of The Society of Photographers.

(b) A member may withdraw from the 'SOCIETY' by giving clear notice in writing prior to their next annual subscriptions falling due, to The Society of Photographers, such notice shall not be deemed to have been received unless acknowledged by The Society of Photographers in writing. On expiry of such notice such members shall forfeit all benefits and interest in the 'SOCIETY' as from that date, but shall be liable for any unsatisfied dues or commitments towards the 'SOCIETY' including full memberships fees for the year in which the resignation becomes effective.

Membership is non refundable. Once a member has joined The Society of Photographers their membership will run for the period stated on the application form. A member may withdraw from membership at any time but their fee for the current year will not be refunded.

Annual and Monthly memberships that are on an automatic renewal, such as Direct Debit or Paypal are due on the anniversary of joining. To cancel these membership options you will need to cancel your payment plan at source as well as giving clear notice in writing to The Society of Photographers.

(c) All members agree to abide by the Rules and Code of Conduct of The Society of Photographers.

4. Every member shall at all times present himself/herself, his/her photography services, in such a manner as will uphold and dignify his/her professional status and the reputation of The Society of Photographers.

5. Every member shall exercise all reasonable skill, care and diligence in the discharge of the duties agreed to be performed by him/her giving consideration to the requirements of the client. Additionally members must have the appropriate professional indemnity and public liability

insurance where appropriate.

6. Any member being an employee shall not undertake photographic work outside his own organisation without notifying or obtaining permission from his employer.

7. In whatever capacity a member may be engaged he/she shall act in a just and faithful manner towards clients, employers, employees and towards others with whom his/her work is connected and towards other members.

8. No work shall be undertaken by a member acting by/as a consultant or practitioner on the invitation of a prospective client without a proper fee.

9. A member, on being approached or being instructed to proceed with any photographic service upon which he/she is aware another member is engaged, shall notify the fact to such other member in a professional manner.

10. A member will not lay claim to any qualification or distinction that has not been properly achieved.

11. The competition is open to all members. Images submitted for competition may be used for promotional use by The Societies of Photographers, unless otherwise agreed in advance.

12. Full members may register for The Society of Photographers' Forum. The Society of Photographers reserves the right to withdraw Forum membership for breaches of the Forum rules, a copy of which can be found on the Forum.

13. Use of logos – members may only use the logos of The Society of Photographers, which they subscribe to. If using the logo/s on a website then a hyperlink to the relevant 'Society' must be created.

14. Members agree to receive regular newsletters via email.

## Code of conduct:

Members of The Society of Photographers are governed by the Code of Conduct of the Society. The clauses given above indicate the general standard of conduct to which members must adhere in carrying out their professional duties. The Societies of Photographers has power at its absolute discretion to expel or to suspend from membership any member guilty of dishonourable conduct prejudicially affecting his/her professional status or the reputation of The Societies of Photographers or for his/her failure to adhere to the Code of Conduct published by The Societies of Photographers.

The Society of Photographers, B.P.P.A Limited  
Clwyd Chambers, Clwyd Street, Rhyl, Denbighshire, LL18 3LA, UK  
+44 1745 356935 - info@thesocieties.net

## Professional Imagemaker

Professional Imagemaker magazine is published six times each year with regular contributions. It is seen as one of the most informative magazines in the photographic business.

Aimed at the professional photographer through to the serious enthusiast, Professional Imagemaker features articles on photographic techniques, photographic software, specialist interviews, practical advice and photographic inspiration to name a few, to inspire and educate you to enhance your photographic career.

Members also benefit from accessing one of the largest archives of photographic information and articles from our Professional Imagemaker archives. With superb publications of our leading magazine now available through our Member's Dashboard facility, members can read through the complete archive at no additional charge. The archive is continuously being added to and members will gain access throughout their membership period.

<http://professionalimagemaker.thesocieties.net/>



# Getting started

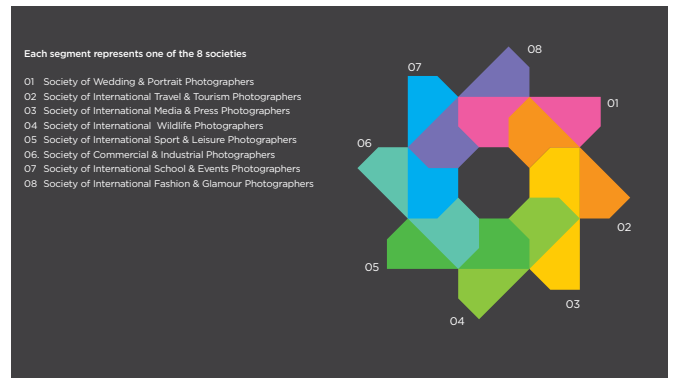
## Logos

There are several different types of Society's logos available for our members to use. All our members are able to use our logo that states that they are a member of the Society/Societies that they subscribe to.

The logos may be used on their website, literature and stationery though if using a logo on a website a hyperlink back to the appropriate Society is requested.

When a member gains a qualification they are then able to use a different logo that states they are now a 'Qualified Member' of the organisation.

All logos are available to download from our website: [thesocieties.net/logos/](https://thesocieties.net/logos/) or available on request by contacting The Society's Head Office.



## Legal Assistance Helpline (UK only) – Professional Membership only

As the complexities of our legal system have increased, so the cost of obtaining the necessary expert advice to bring about speedy and satisfactory solutions to worrying problems has risen beyond the budget of many businesses. It is for this reason that your association has set up an exclusive facility to provide professional qualified advice at any time of the day or night.

Please call 01745 356935 for details.

## Seminars

However experienced you are and however far you are into your photographic career, the seminars organised by us are designed to aid you in better running your photographic business. Whilst primarily you're there for the advice offered by practising photographers, an added benefit is the opportunity to meet industry figures and network with fellow photographers in your area; and who knows when it might be advantageous to call on them for support?

A list of the current seminars can be found online at: <https://thesocieties.net/photographic-seminars/>

## Photographic Roadshows

We also provide a range of trade shows, seminars, and photographic events across the UK aimed at the professional and aspiring photographer. Roadshows are the perfect opportunity to catch up with the latest products and services from the trade, and gain education from a series of seminars. You can pre-register for any of roadshows free of charge.

For a list of upcoming events please see our website: <https://thesocieties.net/roadshows/>



# Great Photographic Webinars

**Take your photography to the next level with The Society of Photographers exclusive webinars.**

From building your photo business, to making the most out of your social media profiles, learning new lighting techniques to colour management. We have a webinar to help you develop your skills.

*Exclusive to The Society of Photographers members.*

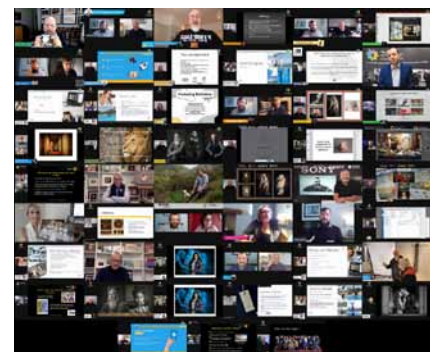
What a fantastic line-up of webinars we've had so far! And there's lots more coming your way...

A massive THANK YOU to all the presenters, you've all been amazing.

Over 200 hours of webinars to watch on our website at: <https://thesocieties.net/webinars/>

**Do you have something to share?** Would you like to be considered as a speaker for one of our upcoming webinars? We are always on the lookout for new topics and speakers to add to our upcoming webinar list.

**If you would like to be considered please email [colin@thesocieties.net](mailto:colin@thesocieties.net)**



# Gaining qualifications

The Society has a number of levels of qualifications/distinctions, which are awarded: Licentiate, Associate and Fellowship.

Qualifications can be applied for the following Societies:

## The Society of Wedding and Portrait Photographers

Subject matter: Weddings, portraits, fashion, glamour, children, babies, school and all other social photographic subjects.

Qualifications/distinctions available: LSWPP ASWPP, FSWPP

## The Society of International Sport and Leisure Photographers

Subject matter: Events, all sports and leisure activities.

Qualifications/distinctions available: LSISLP, ASISLP and FSISLP

## The Society of International Nature and Wildlife Photographers

Subject matter: Landscape, wildlife, nature, seascapes, insects and bugs, astronomical, marine, and all other natural scenes, animals or plants.

Qualifications/distinctions available: LSINWP, ASINWP and FSINWP

## The Society of International Travel and Tourism Photographers

Subject matter: Continents, countries, cities, towns, national parks and places of interest.

Qualifications/distinctions available: LSITTP, ASITTP and FSITTP

## The Society of International Media and Press Photographers

Subject matter: Press, photojournalism, advertising, media, PR and all news-related images.

Qualifications/distinctions available: LSMIPP, ASIMIPP and FSMIPP

## The Society of International Commercial and Industrial Photographers

Subject matter: Products, corporate, construction, banking and finance, industrial, and commercial.

Qualifications/distinctions available: LSICIP, ASICIP and FSICIP

## The Society of International School and Event Photographers

Qualifications/distinctions available: LSISEP, ASISEP and FSISEP

## The Society of International Fashion and Glamour Photographers

Qualifications/distinctions available: LSIFGP, ASIFGP and FSIFGP

We appreciate that some subjects could easily apply to more than one of the 'Societies' – we recommend that you send some sample images and our advisers will guide you.

### How do I apply?

Firstly, read the following pages and decide which level of qualification you wish to apply for but please note that the system is progressive. Therefore it would be neither logical, advisable nor even permissible to consider a direct application for Associate or Fellow without having your feet on the first rung of the ladder (Licentiate).

If you are not sure if your work is up to any of the required levels, simply utilise the benefits of the 'Mentor Me' programme, details of which you will find in this handbook. If you are not working digitally, you can send a selection of small proof prints and a contact sheet. Be aware that these are not normally returned. You will also be sent a report of your images by post. PLEASE NOTE: THIS ADVICE DOES NOT GUARANTEE SUCCESS but is intended to let you know if your work is in the right ballpark.

### When do I apply?

Licentiate and Associate qualifications are judged on a monthly basis, whilst Fellowship qualifications are judged at the annual Convention; please contact Head Office for further information.

### Some general points

If your submission is to be judged as a printed panel, please supply a diagram of how you wish the prints to be arranged in advance.

The identity of the photographer must remain anonymous except by means of the application form.

Images should be presented with the same care and consideration, as you would do for any of your clients.



A submission of 20 prints is required at 20x16" mounted on to board no thicker than 8mm.

Presentation will be taken into account and images should ideally have been taken in the previous 36 months.

The decision of the judges is final.

### If I pass?

You will receive your certificate and a letter of congratulations. Time to get out the champagne and arrange some press coverage.

### If I fail?

You will receive a report back with a critique (digital submissions only).

**IMPORTANT NOTE: It may take up to 6 weeks to receive feedback from the qualifying judges depending on the time of year and workloads. Please be patient, as we will make our best endeavours to get back to you as speedily and efficiently as we can.**



## Digital submission for Licentiate and Associateship guidelines

We are mindful of the needs of our members, who for the most part operate within the digital arena. Therefore, it makes perfect sense to open up the accessibility of submission for qualification in a more contemporary and practical manner by allowing panels of high-quality digitally captured images to be presented.

To try to avoid any confusion in making a digital submission for your qualification we feel that it is essential to lay down a number of guidelines.

1. Unless otherwise agreed with The Society management team, a digital submission will take the form of 20 images in JPEG format, sequentially numbered 01 to 20 with no prefixes whatsoever.
2. Each file should not exceed 4MB.
3. The files should be placed in a single folder and inserted into a zip folder for electronic upload to our upload facility.
4. The zip folder should be named as follows: YourName\_MembershipNumber\_Qualification.zip for example John\_Jones\_12345\_LSWPP.zip
5. Keep the images to 2000 pixels on the longest side.
6. Ideally you should enclose a short note stating your current position, experience, aspirations and outlining any relevant training you may have undertaken.

<https://thesocieties.net/qualifications/>

*"Since joining The Society of Photographers I can honestly say that my photography is on a journey to another level!" ★★★★★ - Della McGowan LSWPP*

Nov 2020

## Licentiate

The 'Society' are doing their best to lead the way in the accessibility of qualifications by acknowledging the importance of a digital submission.

Access to this qualification is best attained by making full use of the 'Mentor Me' programme during which we are able to give you positive advice in support of your application.

### Categories of Licentiate

**LSWPP** – Licentiate of The Society of Wedding and Portrait Photographers  
**LSISLP** – Licentiate of The Society of International Sport and Leisure Photographers  
**LSINWP** – Licentiate of The Society of International Nature and Wildlife Photographers  
**LSITTP** – Licentiate of The Society of International Travel and Tourism Photographers  
**LSIMPP** – Licentiate of The Society of International Media and Press Photographers  
**LSICIP** – Licentiate of The Society of International Commercial and Industrial Photographers  
**LSISEP** – Licentiate of The Society of International School and Event Photographers  
**LSIFGP** – Licentiate of The Society of International Fashion and Glamour Photographers

### What we expect of a Licentiate

Images must show be of good saleable work consistent with standard professional practice. Judges are looking for a good use of skill and technique in most applicable elements (see What are the Judges looking for? For a full list of elements) in a minimum of 16 out of the 20 images submitted. For this level of qualification we require a minimum of four different commissions/sessions to be included in each submission, to achieve a good use of skill and technique over a variety of sessions shows the consistency we are looking for to award Licentiate.

### Print submission for Licentiate

A submission of 20 prints is required at 20x16" mounted on to board no thicker than 8mm. In the case of an SWPP (LSWPP) submission your application should consist of either wedding or portrait images from at least ten commissions. (Mixed wedding/portrait panels are not acceptable).

In the case of all other submission your application should be in a singular discipline i.e. landscapes, pictorial, illustrative, commercial etc. If in doubt please contact head office for advice.

Further advice on submissions and the requisites for a successful Licentiate application is available via the Mentoring Programme.

### What it costs

**DIGITAL SUBMISSION FEE: LICENTIAE £75**

**PRINT SUBMISSION FEE: £225**

## Associateship

### Categories of Associateship

**ASWPP** – Associate of The Society of Wedding and Portrait Photographers  
**ASISLP** – Associate of The Society of International Sport and Leisure Photographers  
**ASINWP** – Associate of The Society of International Nature and Wildlife Photographers  
**ASITTP** – Associate of The Society of International Travel and Tourism Photographers  
**ASIMPP** – Associate of The Society of International Media and Press Photographers  
**ASICIP** – Associate of The Society of International Commercial and Industrial Photographers  
**ASISEP** – Associate of The Society of International School and Event Photographers  
**ASIFGP** – Associate of The Society of International Fashion and Glamour Photographers

### What we expect of a Associate

Images must show be of good saleable work consistent with standard professional practice. Judges are looking for above average skill and technique in most applicable elements (see What are the Judges looking for? For a full list of elements) in a minimum of 16 out of the 20 images submitted, with the remaining 4 images reaching the requirements of Licentiate level for the panel to be passed. For this level of qualification we require the images 'sit together' as a body of work representative of the photographer's unique style, creativity and skills.

### Print submission for Associateship

A submission of 20 prints is required at 20x16" mounted on to board no thicker than 8mm.

In the case of an SWPP (ASWPP) submission your application should consist of either wedding or portrait images from at least ten commissions. (Mixed wedding/portrait panels are not acceptable).

In the case of all other submissions your application should be in a singular discipline i.e. Landscapes, pictorial, illustrative, commercial etc. If in doubt please contact head office for advice.

Further advice on submissions and the requisites for a successful Associate application is available via the Mentoring Programme.

### What it costs

**DIGITAL SUBMISSION FEE: ASSOCIATE £150**

**PRINT SUBMISSION FEE: £225**

*"I found the Mentor Me programme with the society invaluable to improving my photography and helping me gain my Licentiate qualification in sport and leisure photography. Will now be going on to use the programme again to improve even more and hopefully gain further qualifications with the society." ★★★★★*

- Tim Armstrong LSISLP Nov 2020



# Gaining qualifications

## Fellowship – Print Submission

Fellowship of the Society is the highest distinction and recognises you as a master of your craft, able to create work of the highest standard both technically and artistically. It is essential that applicants take serious advice from a recognised Mentor at the level of Fellow to ensure that the application is at the highest level of content and presentation.

### Categories of Fellowship

**FSWPP** – Fellow of The Society of Wedding and Portrait Photographers

**FSISLP** – Fellow of The Society of International Sport and Leisure Photographers

**FSINWP** – Fellow of The Society of International Nature and Wildlife Photographers

**FSITTP** – Fellow of The Society of International Travel and Tourism Photographers

**FSIMPP** – Fellow of The Society of International Media and Press Photographers

**FSICIP** – Fellow of The Society of International Commercial and Industrial Photographers

**FSISEP** – Fellow of The Society of International School and Event Photographers

**FSIFGP** – Fellow of The Society of International Fashion and Glamour Photographers

### Print submission for Fellowship – Our highest accolade

A submission of 20 prints is required at 20x16" mounted on to board no thicker than 8mm.

Submissions should consist of, in the case of an SWPP application (FSWPP), the very best of either wedding or portrait images from as many commissions as you wish as this must be an ultimate expression of your skills and abilities as a consummate professional. (Mixed wedding/portrait panels are not acceptable). In the case of all other application you must concentrate on one area of expertise and excellence only.

### What it costs

**SUBMISSION FEE: £225**

## Mentor Me programme

Our Mentor Me Programme is part of our Continuing Professional Development initiative and is utilised by many of our members. Through this invaluable programme our dedicated team of Fellow, Master and Grand Master Photographers provide one to one appraisals of work and advice for progression through written reports.

The Mentor Me Programme is a designed to be a cycle, with unlimited access available to our 'Professional' level members. It is a process of submitting images for critique, receiving written reports from the allocated Mentor and then applying the new knowledge gained to produce further images to submit in a cycle of CPD (Continuing Professional Development). The program is designed to assist our members with preparing to submit for Qualifications, although some members use the advice given to improve their entries for our Monthly Image Competition and Annual 20x16" Print Competition also.

Once members receive their written report the onus is on them to take the advice given and apply it to their work before submitting another set of images to us, although this may seem a daunting prospect some of our Mentors do offer additional support through this process by the way of email communication if needed. As previously stated, the Mentor Me Programme is designed to be a cycle of learning and growth, so it is advisable to members to submit subsequent sets of images for critique once they have applied the advice given in their written reports so that our Mentoring Team can continue to provide guidance and support throughout the process of development. Professional level Members who use the Mentor Me Programme as a way of gauging the standard of their work prior to submitting for Qualification are far more likely to gain Licentiate, Associate or Fellowship Qualifications on their first attempt than members who do not utilise this free and unlimited benefit of membership.

In an effort to make Continuing Professional Development available to all, our Mentor Me Program is available to our Enthusiast and Retired members, although restricted to two submissions per calendar year, and to Digital members/non-members for a fee.

**Full details on the mentoring programme can be found at: <https://thesocieties.net/mentoring/>**

**IMPORTANT NOTE: Due to the popularity of the 'Mentor Me' Programme it may take up to a month to receive feedback from your Mentor.**

*"This has significantly helped me improve my photography and resulted in a Licentiate qualification" ★★★★★*

- Alan Lyall LSINWP LSWPP Nov 2020

## Rules of Qualification

1. All Qualification panels must be submitted in the form of 20 images of a single genre.
2. Entrant must have solely captured and created the original photographic exposure. (Strictly no images created using AI software are permitted)
3. All digital manipulation must have been performed by the entrant.
4. Any images that violate copyright, trademark or any other applicable law will be disqualified.
5. The entrant's name, or any other distinguishing marks, must not appear on the face of the images.
6. Images submitted for Qualification must have been captured within 36 months of the submission date. Exceptions may be made in the case of composite images, where elements of the image were captured by the photographer outside of the 36 month time period.
7. No entry will be eligible that has been made under the supervision of an instructor, in collaboration with another photographer (not including mentoring), or as a class assignment.
8. No exact same image may be entered more than once in the same submission but exact same images may be used for successive submissions, such as resubmissions for the same qualification or a new submission for the next level of qualification.
9. Any images which do not follow the category definition will be automatically disqualified.
10. Any entry which has been reproduced from an existing photograph, portrait, graphic or any other artwork produced by another person is a violation of the rules and will be disqualified, this includes stock images and digital backgrounds.
11. Entrants agree that any photograph entered may be used by The Society and/or Professional Imagemaker in any of the publications, printed materials, or electronic media. Also the image may be used for promotional use by The Society, unless otherwise agreed.
12. Images entered for SWPP under the genre of wedding must be from commissioned weddings where the entrant was the principle professional photographer and must have been taken on the day the register was signed.
13. Qualifications are a benefit of membership to The Society of Photographers and any successful submissions can only be advertised for as long as the entrant remains in membership.
14. We reserve the right to: change or modify the rules without notice.

### Printed Qualification submissions terms and conditions.

All bookings/qualification submissions are final. Refund Policy – No Refunds

# Aspects of competing

## Mike McNamee's thoughts on the annual Photographer of the Year judging.

### Remove distracting detail

When preparing your file, put yourself in the position of the judges. Assuming that your image has survived the initial cull and you are still in the mix, it is highly unlikely that you will be on your own. Indeed, in previous judging, just one picture was given the universal nod from the half dozen or so that remained in the frame at the end. In the main, then, there will be a small number of images left, about which the judges will have divided opinions. At this stage a debate is held and the champions of any particular picture will try to persuade their fellow judges of its superior merits. If, as happens, there is a close vote, it is distracting detail that a champion of an image will have the greatest difficulty in defending – the pictures are of equal merit, but picture 'A' has a fire extinguisher left in the background. You cannot easily defend against this; your picture has been deemed of equal pictorial/impact merit to its competitor, but those defending another image can easily and irrefutably attack your choice. The writing is on the wall when a judge says, 'let's have another look at that image, you know, the one with the plug on the wall' (it happened!). The moral of this tale is that you should imagine you are down to the wire, the final choice between your own and another image – have you left anything in the image for the judges to pick on? Three offending items spring to mind from previous judging sessions: the famous plug socket, a cup and saucer, and the hands of bar staff, either side of an image, just intruding into the picture – arguably none should have been left in. Do not confuse this advice with leaving in essential messy detail which sets the scene and places the subject in their environmental setting, we are talking here about stuff that has obviously been overlooked.

### Do not go for fancy offset mounts and frames

If you waste more than half the pixels on a fancy, asymmetric frame you run the risk of not leaving enough pixels to provide essential detail. Some entrants wasted even more than half the available pixel area.

### Sharpen at the delivered resolution

Sharpening at the working resolution is vital. With so few pixels to work with, it is important that the radius of the sharpening is in sympathy with the size of the image. At 1024 pixels wide, some images cannot take any sharpening at all.

### Scale with care

You may have an award winner at 6,000 x 4,000 pixels, all nicely vignetted and skilfully sharpened. If you bash it down to 768 pixels high by 512 pixels wide, many things may happen, most of them detrimental to your image. Go carefully!

### Enter the correct category

As judges we are most unlikely to give an award in the 'Portrait' category to an image that is patently a portrait of a bride. There is already wedding categories and we would look stupid if we were to award out-of-category. This being the case you are wasting your time entering brides under portraiture. Similarly if your bride is entered under bridal portraiture but is dressed in civvies you had better make sure it is obvious for some other reason that she is a bride!

### Banding

Beware of banding creeping in when you scale an image or apply a softening technique. A small amount of banding might go unnoticed in the preliminary stages of judging but following on from point 1 of this article, when push comes to shove we look far more critically. As judges we are not prepared to give awards to images that are obviously flawed regardless of how good the underlying image is. We cannot take the risk that we can get a high resolution from the photographer for subsequent reproduction! Banding is an issue that we are seeing more and more in our entries and seems to arise from the uncontrolled use of actions and plug-ins. This cost one entrant very dearly; I was defending my own final choice

robustly, but had the rug pulled from under me when somebody pointed out banding in the skin. I insisted that the image was doubled checked in Photoshop but the banding was still there at all resolutions (it was also there in the print when we checked later). I lost my case and the image was passed by!

So there you are. These are purely my own thoughts. We are going to implement some changes for next season but will, no doubt, continue to be bombarded with mislabelled, wrongly categorised, incorrect resolution images with flawed attention to detail – that is what separates the winners from the also-rans. Good hunting, think before you enter!

### What the judges are looking for:

#### 1. Impact

Is the sense one gets upon viewing an image for the first time. Compelling images evoke laughter, sadness, anger, pride, wonder or another intense emotion.

#### 2. Creativity and style

Creativity is defined as the external expression of the imagination of the maker by using the medium to convey an idea, message or thought. Style is defined in a number of ways as it applies to a creative image. It might be defined by a specific genre or simply be recognizable as the characteristics of how a specific artist applies light to a subject. It can impact an image in a positive manner when the subject matter and the style are appropriate for each other, or it can have a negative effect when they are at odds.

#### 3. Composition

Is important to the design of an image, bringing all of the visual elements together in concert to express the purpose of the image. Proper composition holds the viewer in the image and prompts the viewer to look where the creator intends. Effective composition can be pleasing or disturbing, depending on the intent of the image maker.

#### 4. Image or print presentation

Affects an image by giving it a finished look. The mats and borders used should support and enhance the image, not distract from it.

#### 5. Centre of interest

Is the point or points on the image where the maker wants the viewer to stop as they view the image. There can be primary and secondary centres of interest. Occasionally there will be no specific centre of interest, when the entire scene collectively serves as the centre of interest.

#### 6. Lighting

The use and control of light refers to how dimension, shape and roundness are defined in an image. Whether the light applied to an image is manmade or natural, proper use of it should enhance an image.

#### 7. Colour balance

Supplies harmony to an image. An image, in which the tones work together, effectively supporting the image, can enhance its emotional appeal. Colour balance is not always harmonious and can be used to evoke diverse feelings for effect.

#### 8. Technical excellence

Is the print quality of the image itself as it is presented for viewing. Sharpness, exposure, printing, mounting and correct colour all speak for the qualities of the physical print.

#### 9. Photographic technique

Is the approach used to create the image. Printing, lighting, posing, 'digital negative' exposure, film choice (if used), digital output to file, paper selection and more are part of the technique applied to an image.

#### 10. Story telling and subject matter

Story Telling refers to the image's ability to evoke imagination. One beautiful thing about art is that each viewer might collect his own message or read her own story in an image. The subject matter should always be appropriate to the story being told in an image.

# Monthly Image Competition



The Society of Photographers Monthly Image Competition is a 'must' for all our members. There are 28 categories that cover all aspects of photography and it is judged by some of the most esteemed Fellow, Master and Grand Master photographers in the UK and across the world. All entries which gain the coveted 'Gold' award are put forward to our annual judging and, if deemed to be the best, can gain their maker a prestigious 'Photographer of the Year' Award within its category at our annual Presentation Evening.

The closing date for the monthly competition is the last day of each month. All the awards for this competition are presented at the annual Awards Dinner.

To upload your competition entries, follow these simple instructions:

Firstly, once your image is ready to be uploaded to the competition. Take the image in to Photoshop and set the image size to 2,000 pixels on the longest side.

Then use the 'Save for Web & Devices...'

Setting should be:

JPEG  
Maximum  
Quality: 100

This will strip the exif data out of this image to avoid an error message.

Remember to name your image:

Firstname\_lastname\_fullcategoryname\_  
monthofentry\_countryofresidence\_currentyear\_  
membershipnumber.jpg  
e.g. *Terrie\_Jones\_The\_Natural\_World\_Wild  
Animals\_January\_UK\_2024\_2345.jpg*

**The login details for the competition are as follows**

Username: member  
Password: 2026

<http://thesoc.net/competition/>

Click the link 'Upload file' Select the Album (Category) you wish to enter. Browse your computer for the image. Leave ALL other fields empty.

Click upload file.

The image will then be approved by our staff; please bear in mind this may take up to 48 hours with longer delays over the weekends.

If an image is uploaded with a filename such as 'IMG\_1297.jpg' with no reference to the member, the image will be removed and we will not be able to contact the member to explain the reasons.

Applicants agree that any entered photograph may be used by The Society and/or Professional Imagemaker in any of the publications, printed materials or electronic media. Also the image may be used for promotional use by the The Society, unless otherwise agreed. Prizes will not be awarded if the winner does not attend The Annual Awards Presentation or provide an acceptable reason for absence.

**Failure to name your image(s) correctly will result in your image(s) being deleted.**

## Score Categories

**Gold:** Excellent use of imagination, skill and technique in most areas. Awards will go forward to the annual judging and are deemed to be images of the highest standard and will be published in Professional Imagemaker.

**Highly Commended:** Good saleable work exhibiting above average skill and technique in most areas. These images will be reviewed at the end of each year by a panel of judges and have the potential of being reclassified as Gold.

**No Award:** Images which are EITHER a) Good saleable work consistent with standard professional practice in most applicable elements or b) images needing improvement in skill and technique in most applicable elements.

**Disqualified:** These images have not adhered to the competition rules or category definitions.

## Rules of the competition

1. Entrant must have solely captured and created the original photographic exposure. (Strictly no images created using AI software are permitted)
2. All digital manipulation must have been performed by the entrant.
3. Any images that violate copyright, trademark or any other applicable law will be disqualified.
4. The entrant's name, or any other distinguishing marks, must not appear on the face of the image.
5. Only one image per category per month is to be entered.
6. No entry will be eligible that has been made under the supervision of an instructor, in collaboration with another photographer, or as a class assignment.
7. No exact same image may be entered more than once under any condition.
8. No image that receives a Merit in the 20x16 annual competition may be entered into the monthly image competition in the same year.
9. Any images uploaded which are not correctly named will be automatically disqualified.
10. Any image which does not follow the category definition will be automatically disqualified.
11. Any entry which has been reproduced from an existing photograph, portrait, graphic or any other artwork produced by another person is a violation of the competition rules and will be disqualified, this includes stock images and digital backgrounds.
12. Entrants agree that any photograph entered may be used by The Society and or Professional Imagemaker in any of the publications, printed materials, or electronic media. Also the image may be used for promotional use by The Society, unless otherwise agreed.
13. Images entered into Wedding must have been taken on the day the register was signed and must be commissioned work only.
14. By uploading and entering in to The Society Monthly Image Competition, You agree to have read and fully understood the Rules of the Competition and Category Definitions.
15. Only open to current Society Members
16. We reserve the right to: change or modify the rules without notice.
17. Images entered into The Natural World – Wild Animals must be of wild animals in their environment. Images taken of captive wild animals not permitted. Examples of this are animals in zoos, wildlife parks, sanctuaries and farms where the animals are kept in enclosures and often a fee or donation is charged for visitors to see them. Images taken using commercial hides where the lighting is set up by somebody else will be disqualified.





## Categories and definitions

### Advertising and Commercial

Images entered may be of the following genres: Advertising, Product, Food, Architectural, Still Life, Interior Design as well as Marketing Material, Headshots and Business Portraits. Commissioned Work only.

### Architectural

Images need to be commercial architecture images, photographed in a way that says as much as possible about the design and feel of a structure. Commissioned and Self-Commissioned work permitted.

### Aerial and Drone - NEW FOR 2026

Images entered into this category must be captured from an elevated perspective using aerial platforms such as drones or aircraft. The images should demonstrate strong composition, technical control, and creative use of viewpoint to present landscapes, architecture, environments, or subjects in a visually compelling way. Both Commissioned and Self-Commissioned work are permitted.

### Children

Portraits of children from the age of 42 days (Newborn category is up to 42 days) to 16 years. Commissioned and Self-Commissioned work permitted.

### Commissioned Portrait

Images entered can be either contemporary or traditional portraits taken in a studio or environmental setting. Commissioned work only - We reserve the right to request proof of commission.

### Creative Portrait

Images entered can be either contemporary or traditional portraits taken in a studio or environmental setting. This category can also incorporate family portraits. Judges are looking for good lighting, posing and expression. Non-commissioned work only.

### Documentary

Images entered into this category should be those that provide a straightforward and accurate representation of people, places, objects and events with little to no input from the photographer. Minimal post processing is permitted such as cropping, conversion to black and white and dust spot removal. No composites permitted. Commissioned and Self-Commissioned work permitted.

### Events

This is quite an open category, any photograph taken at an 'Event' can be entered. The judges want to see images that show the essence of the event and images which make you think 'I wish I'd been there'. Commissioned and Self-Commissioned work permitted.

### Family and Group Portrait

Any image which contains two or more subjects (including pets) Commissioned and Self commissioned work permitted.

### Fashion and Beauty - NEW FOR 2026

Images entered into this category may showcase clothing, jewellery, makeup, accessories, hair, or any other fashion-related element, as well as boudoir or portrait imagery that enhances the subject's beauty and elegance. Models are permitted. Images featuring models wearing bridal gowns should be entered into this category rather than the Wedding categories. Both Commissioned and Self-Commissioned work are permitted.

### Illustrative

For this category we are looking for artistic images including, digital art and composites. Commissioned and Self-Commissioned work permitted.

### In-camera Artistry

For this new category, we are looking for straight out of camera images. The only editing accepted is cropping. This open category accepts all genres. We reserve the right to request the original capture. Commissioned and Self-Commissioned work permitted.

### Individual Portrait

Images entered must be of one human subject (no pets permitted). In the case of composite images the subject may not be placed into the image more than once and all reflections must be achieved in-camera. Models permitted. Images can be in a contemporary or traditional style and can be taken in a studio or environmental setting. Commissioned and self-commissioned work permitted.

### Macro and Close-up

Images entered into this category must be either close up or macro and can contain any subject matter. Commissioned and Self-Commissioned work permitted.

### Maternity

This category is specifically for images of pregnant women. Partners and siblings are permitted. Commissioned and Self-Commissioned work permitted.

### Media and Press

Images of news images can be entered into this category as well as publicity shots. Commissioned work only.

### Monochrome

Images entered into this category must be either black or white OR coloured in one single tonal range, for example sepia images are permitted. There are no subject restraints, any subject and style as long as it's monochromatic. Commissioned and Self-Commissioned work permitted.

### Newborn

Images must be of children aged 42 days and below, or have a corrected age of 42 days and below in the case of prematurely born children. Parents not permitted unless being used as a prop (example shoulder/arm not showing face) Commissioned and Self-Commissioned work permitted.

### Nouveau - NEW FOR 2026

This Open category is exclusively for members within their first 12 months of membership and is designed to encourage new members to participate in competition. Images may be entered in any genre or style. Entries in this category will be judged using the same standards and scoring criteria as all other categories. Both Commissioned and Self-Commissioned work are permitted.

### Open Avant Garde

Images entered into this category should be experimental or innovative, pushing the boundaries of what is expected to be the norm. Images can be of any genre. Commissioned and Self-Commissioned work permitted.

### Pet Portrait

Images entered into this category must be portraits of domestic or tamed animals which kept for personal companionship or pleasure, examples of this include (but are not restricted to) cats, dogs, small reptiles and mammals which live with their owner in a home environment. Images taken of captive wild animals not permitted. Examples of this are animals in zoos, wildlife parks, sanctuaries and farms where the animals are kept in enclosures and often a fee or donation is charged for visitors to see them. Commissioned and Self-Commissioned work permitted.

### Sport

Images entered in this category must have been taken at a sporting event. Judges are looking for a perfectly captured moment. Portraits of athletes must be entered into the Portrait categories. Commissioned and Self-Commissioned work permitted.

### The Natural World – Botanical and Fungi

Images taken of Plants, Forests and Fungi in their environment, no studio images permitted. Commissioned and Self-Commissioned work permitted.

### The Natural World – Landscapes

Images entered into this category can be landscapes, cityscapes or seascapes. Commissioned and Self-Commissioned work permitted.

### The Natural World – Wild Animals

Images taken of wild animals in their environment, no captive animals permitted. Images taken using commercial hides where the lighting is set up by somebody else will be disqualified. Commissioned and Self-Commissioned work permitted.

### Travel

With the whole world to photograph this is a very wide ranging category. Many different types of images can be entered including press images or any image showing the culture or environment of an area. Commissioned and Self-Commissioned work permitted.

### Visual Narrative

Images entered must have a strong visual narrative, telling a story through photography. Commissioned and Self-Commissioned work permitted.

### Wedding

Images entered into this category must be from commissioned weddings where the entrant was the principle professional photographer and must have been taken on the day the register was signed. The judges are looking for images that are either styled or in a photojournalistic style. (Authors may be required to provide details of the shoot). Commissioned work only.

# Members' online directory

The website is a major benefit to your business. As a member you can have a static page on our website(s); your page can include:

## Full Listing

- Name
- Society's Qualification(s)
- Business name
- Address or PO Box number
- Telephone number
- Mobile/Cell phone
- Web address
- Skype contact
- X link (formerly Twitter)
- Facebook link
- Instagram
- Blog link
- List of specialties
- Self portrait
- Signature image
- Members' bio/profile
- Link to Bing Maps (UK only)

## Partial Listing

- Name
- Society's Qualification(s)
- Business name
- Town and County only
- Mobile/Cell phone
- Web address
- Skype contact
- X link (formerly Twitter)
- Facebook link
- Instagram
- Blog link
- List of specialties
- Self portrait
- Signature image
- Members' bio/profile

## Who are you?

It is a proven fact that potential clients like to know who they are dealing with. With this in mind we have for some time been able to display an image on members' pages of themselves.

All you need to do is send in a image of yourself, 200 pixels wide as a JPEG to ben@thesocieties.net.

You can also email any of the team the following details to include on your page:

- Skype contact (username)
- X link (<https://twitter.com/TheSocieties>)
- Facebook link (<https://www.facebook.com/theSocieties>)
- Members' bio/profile
- Instagram link (<https://www.instagram.com/thesocietyofphotographers/>)
- TikTok link (<https://www.tiktok.com/@societyofphotographers>)

## Adding a slideshow/video clip to your members' page

You can give real impact to your page by adding a slide show or video clip.

These clips can reinforce your message and create a desire for consumers to engage your services.

If you would like to add a slideshow or video to your members' page, please email colin@thesocieties.net with the link to your YouTube, Vimeo, etc clip so we can add it to your page.

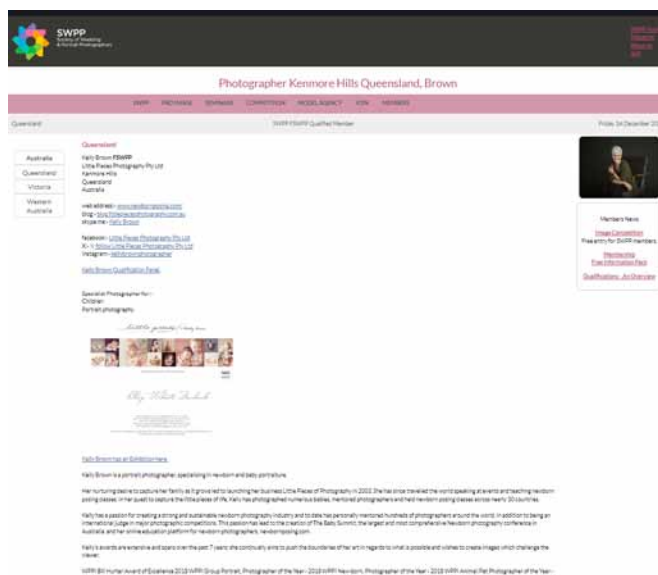
## Signature image

A signature image is the one image that defines the quality of your photography. An eye-catching image will attract potential customers and encourage them to contact you with a view to engaging you for their photographic requirements.

To add a Signature Image to your page, all you need to do is email your photograph to ben@thesocieties.net.

## Keep us updated!

It is of paramount importance to keep us updated with your current contact details. If your email address, website, postal address, mobile phone number, etc change then please let us know as soon as possible, so we can update our records and keep your contact details correct for potential clients viewing our listings.



## Kelly Browns' FSWPP SWPP Member's Directory Online Exhibition

As professional photographers we are in the business of providing power-packed imagery and it is essential that we maximise our potential by creating customer awareness. The internet is by far the most powerful tool for attracting new clients with the role of the web changing day by day.

Online Exhibitions are linked from the member's page and they are a popular facility for consumers wishing to have a sneak preview of members' work.

A complimentary Online Exhibition is available for each Society you are a member of.

## How to submit images for your Online Exhibition

1. Select up to 30 images\* to include on the page
2. Resize the images to 800 pixels on the longest side
3. Rename the images to 1-30.jpg
4. Compress all the files into one zip folder
5. Please then rename the zip file
6. YourName\_Surname\_MembershipNumber  
i.e. John\_Jones\_12345.zip
7. Please then email the zip folder to ben@thesocieties.net



Angela Adams FSWPP Grand Master Photographer Online Exhibition

\*Dependant on your membership level

# The 10-Point Challenge

## Maximise Your Membership!



The Society  
of Photographers



We're excited to invite our valued members to make the most of the incredible benefits available to them. Join the **10-Point Challenge** today and see the difference it makes!

Each step is designed to help you grow your skills, connect with others, and showcase your work.

### **Mentoring – Expert Guidance at Your Fingertips**

Receive personalised one-on-one support from leading photography experts. Refine your craft and work towards qualifications by submitting 20 JPEG images (2,000 pixels on the longest side), numbered 01–20, focused on a single subject.

<https://thesocieties.net/mentoring.htm>

### **Enter the Monthly Image Competition**

Our monthly competition is a highlight for members, offering 28 categories judged by experts from around the world. Showcase your best work and compete for Gold awards, which qualify you for the prestigious *Photographer of the Year* title at our Annual Awards Presentation.

Find helpful uploading tips here:

<https://thesocieties.net/competitions/>

### **Join our Photographic Webinars**

Enhance your skills with exclusive member-only webinars covering lighting, editing, business advice, and more. Join live sessions or watch recordings anytime to learn at your own pace.

<https://thesocieties.net/webinars/>

### **Members' Exhibition – Get Your Work Seen**

Feature your work in our popular online gallery. Simply send 15–30 JPEGs (600px wide) to [ben@thesocieties.net](mailto:ben@thesocieties.net) and enjoy greater exposure. You can also add a 'Signature Image' to your member page to highlight your style.

### **The Society's Members' Facebook Group – Connect with Peers**

Join our exclusive **Members Only** Facebook Group, a vibrant space to share ideas, ask questions, and stay updated with the latest Society news and benefits.

<https://facebook.com/groups/thesop/>

### **Show Off the Society Logo**

Proudly display the official Society logo and let others know you're part of one of the photography industry's most respected organisations.

<https://thesocieties.net/forum/index.php/topic,37482.0.html>

### **Self-Portrait – Get Noticed**

Clients want to know who they're working with. Upload a 200px wide photo of yourself to your member page to increase visibility and boost referral potential.

Email your image to

[ben@thesocieties.net](mailto:ben@thesocieties.net).

### **Submit Your Bio – Boost Your Online Presence**

Make your member profile stand out with a detailed bio. Include your services, qualifications, achievements, and client testimonials to attract more attention.

Update your bio here:

<https://thesocieties.net/dashboard/profile/>

### **Add Slideshows or Video Clips**

Engage visitors with dynamic slideshows or video showcases. Send us links to your YouTube, Vimeo, or other videos to feature on your member page.

### **Save Money with Member Discounts**

Take advantage of exclusive discounts from top photography brands and service providers. These savings can more than cover the cost of your membership!

<https://thesocieties.net/benefits/photographic-trade-discounts.htm>

**Need Help?** If you have any questions about making the most of your membership, our friendly team is here to assist you. Don't hesitate to get in touch!

**Visit Our Website** <https://thesocieties.net> | **Email:** [info@thesocieties.net](mailto:info@thesocieties.net) | **Phone:** +44 1745 356935

# Smart insurance for photographers and video makers



**aaduki**  
multimedia insurance

FROM PARTNERS &  
BROKER OF THE YEAR 2023



## Welcome to Aaduki: the home of great insurance for members of The Societies of Photographers.

### First-class service

Our team have been working with photographers and video makers for more than 15 years - supporting them with the advice and financial protection for their equipment, liabilities and businesses. They understand the risks and pressures of running your own business.

### Easy to arrange

We love speaking with our clients - to discuss your insurance needs with a real person, simply call us on 01837 658 880 or email us your contact details to let us know when it's convenient to call you, or you can arrange your cover by visiting our website [aaduki.com](http://aaduki.com).

### Why do I need specialist insurance?

Many photographers and video makers earn their living, or contribute to their households, by undertaking professional work for clients - that means you need to have the right insurance in place to protect your equipment, your team (if you have one) and yourself from potential liability. It can be confusing, which is why our team is here to help you understand what insurance you have and what you need, depending on your circumstances.

## What if...

- ...you damage crucial kit on location?
- ...you're held legally liable for injury or damage to a third party or their property?
- ...an employee injures themselves at work?
- ...your client is not happy with the quality of your work?

Not sure what insurance you need?  
Call us to talk it through and we will be happy to advise you.

### Exclusive member price starting from £113.20\*

- £2 million public liability insurance
- £125,000 professional indemnity insurance
- 12 months cover instead of 11 for the first year to welcome you to the team
- Discounts available for equipment cover

\*Based on estimated turnover of less than £100,000 and subject to underwriting criteria.

Our team are on hand to give you expert advice.  
Get in touch, we'd love to hear from you!

### 10 reasons why you should give us a try!

1. The Societies of Photographers recommended and approved insurance provider
2. Specialist policy wordings for photographers
3. Tailor made cover that's unique to you
4. Advice from a real person - to help you get the best from your insurance
5. Dedicated claims handling teams
6. 12 months cover for the price of 11 for The Societies of Photographers' members in your first year of cover
7. Package discounts exclusive to members
8. Expert staff on hand to answer queries at The Societies roadshows throughout the year
9. Over 15 years' track record
10. Refer a friend, and you could receive £10 off your next insurance premium - with Aaduki One

### Not due for renewal yet?

To take advantage of our 'reminder service', just let us know when your current insurance expires, and we'll contact you within 30 days of your renewal to discuss your requirements.

As part of the Partners & Group, we can also help with:

- Home & motor insurance
- Film & TV production insurance
- Insurance for business owners and shareholders

[info@aaduki.com](mailto:info@aaduki.com)  
[www.aaduki.com](http://www.aaduki.com)

Advice that makes a **difference**

# Insurance for Photographers

Specialist insurance and advice for:

- Photographic & computer equipment
- Hired in equipment
- Public & employers' liability
- Professional indemnity

Aaduki Multimedia Insurance

01837 658 880 | [www.aaduki.com](http://www.aaduki.com) | [info@aaduki.com](mailto:info@aaduki.com)



Approved and Recommended by  
The Societies  
of Photographers



**aaduki**  
multimedia insurance

FROM PARTNERS &

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