**Environmental Statement 2023 Shetland Seabird Tours ltd – THE NOSS BOAT**

As professional, passionate naturalists, we hold strong conservation and environmental values. Running a Shetland-based marine wildlife and photography boat business in the Shetland tourism sector is a dream business for us, it is more of a vocation than just a job! Within our business comes a strong responsibility and desire to make sure we are doing what we can to be as environmentally aware, eco-friendly, and sustainable as possible, all part of our strong environmental business ethos. We recognise the impact our business activities may have on the environment & continue to work to limit the day-to-day impact of our own actions through environmentally friendly practices. We have an environmental-based action plan & this is constantly growing and changing as we find different ways to become greener within our own specific business structure. Please contact us if you’d like more details regarding our environmental business action plan.

We endeavour to emanate our personal passions for the environment and conservation values within our business structure and ethos. As part of our seasonal daily Noss Boat tours, we deliver live commentary on the local marine environment and the species we come across, from seabirds to cetaceans as well as promoting the geomorphology of the area and the internationally important Noss National Nature Reserve. Delivering enthusiastic, fun, sociable & engaging but most importantly educational commentary on marine conversation and biodiversity to our thousands of passengers each year, is very important to us.

Our tours are designed to be as informal yet engaging & enjoyable to young passengers as much as adults. Inspiring young passengers at such an impressionable age, may forge deep passions & connections with the environment which could last a lifetime. Helping our passengers gain wildlife knowledge which may then drive their own passion & desire for protecting the environment is a key element to our business. We always have a specialist wildlife expert onboard all tours.

We support local and national conservation organisations both in membership & in some cases personal voluntary work: Current memberships include: Shetland Bird Club, ORCA (first ever corporate lifelong member of ORCA 2017), RSPB, BTO, Friends of Fair Isle Bird Observatory. You will also find leaflets & promotional flyers for some of these charities & organisations onboard.

We are fully accredited WiSe members. The overall aim of this organisation is to minimise disturbance to marine wildlife at sea.

We work annually with SOTEAG (Shetland Oil Terminal Environmental Advisory Group), helping them carry out the majority of seabird monitoring surveys around Shetland waters. We also collaborate with the RSPB & Nature Scot for other boat-based, bird monitoring schemes alongside our scheduled tours. We encourage citizen participation in surveys & monitoring with organisations like The Shark Trust - egg case hunting & recording, & Nature Shetland/Shetland Bird Club online reporting of local birds and other wildlife.

By calculating and offsetting our carbon footprint, we have been a certified CARBON NEUTRAL BUSINESS since 2020 (2020-2023).

As a growing company, we work & collaborate with other wildlife tour companies, holiday operators, professional photographers, conservationists, wildlife surveyors, local cafes and businesses. Collaborations like this hold another responsibility, and we endeavour to work with clients who hold similar environmental values as us. We continue to maintain and raise a high level of understanding & participation of environmental best practice within our business and with those we work with.

Noss Boat merchandise & products. We have a unique, carefully designed onboard and online shop. We procure goods and services which are environmentally responsible and ethically sourced wherever possible, from eco-friendly, ethically sound clothing to recycled greeting cards and notebooks. We have SST refillable multi-use water bottles for the 2023 season. We also give free eco-friendly gift packs to young children who join us on our tours.

We use environmentally friendly & sustainably sourced boat cleaning & maintenance products as standard. Our small onboard toilet has associated eco-friendly antibacterial hand gels, recycled toilet paper & paper towels. We use biodegradable bags to remove toilet waste. Other onboard litter is sorted & where possible recycled.

We always keep a fuel usage log. The boat is kept out of the water during the winter months & only relaunched for bespoke survey work, this minimises the impact on fuel & wildlife. We have fuel and oil absorbent matts on board to absorb any small, accidental fuel or onboard oil spills.

We encourage our passengers to use the excellent public transport system in Shetland where possible & to visit restaurants & cafes which promote the use of fresh, local ingredients. With an increase in electric vehicles on and coming to the Isles we always point out where the electric points are located on the Isles.

Shetland Seabird Tours advocates recycling & limited plastic use onboard & out of season & carries out independent beach cleaning on mainland Shetland during the winter months. We also promote other beach cleaning initiatives online via social media. During the tourist season we actively remove any large floating litter such as mangled nets & ropes (as well as freeing many a live gannet from sea litter!) found during our tours or at any time we are out on the water.

The nature of our business with most bookings taking place online, means that we generate very little paper waste & recycle what we use. We use LED lights at home as standard.

