



OWPG open letter: ‘opportunities’ to supply photos for no payment

The Outdoor Writers and Photographers Guild, which represents many of the UK’s leading creative professionals specialising in the outdoors, is deeply concerned by your appeal for people to donate photographs for your new website.

We appreciate that funds are tight at the moment, but perhaps this should suggest that you rein in your ambitions for your new website rather than asking photographers to bail you out. It is clear that you are soliciting large numbers of images. We would ask if all the others working on this project are doing so for free? If, as we strongly suspect, the answer is no, then the message that is being sent is that photography is the one element that is of negligible value.

Professional photographers are inundated with invitations to work in return for credits or links to their websites. Without ways to generate revenue, such invitations are worthless and demeaning. Professional photography requires considerable skill and experience. It also requires substantial and continuing investment in camera and computer equipment.

Perhaps you would like to consider that our members play an important role in promoting areas like yours, through our photography and writing for magazines, guidebooks and a host of other outlets. Most of us do this work because we love it, but we can’t continue if there is no way to make a living.

There may be a short-term benefit to your organisation in adopting this approach, but we would argue that a publicly-funded body such as yourselves should consider the long-term implications of the approach it is taking.