



Berkshire Ornithological Club

Minutes of Committee Meeting

held on Wednesday 6th July 2011 at
63 Hamilton Road, Reading.

Present: Renton Righelato (chair), John Roberts (Treasurer), Mike Turton (Secretary), Neil Bucknell, Ray Reedman, Ted Rogers, Bill Nicoll, Colin Wilson, Hugh Netley, Chris Heard, Gordon Langsbury, John Lerpiniere, Fraser Cottington

1. Apologies for absence: Debby Reynolds, Heidi Bailey, Ken Moore, Ken White, Sarah Priest.
2. Minutes of the Committee meeting held on 29th March 2011 were approved and signed.
3. **Matters Arising**

Item 14f (Jan 2011 meeting) – **QMR permits: Action:** RRi to discuss future arrangements for issue of permits with CW/HB.

Item 6 – Certificate for Dot. Action carried forward. RRi has spoken to Dot about presentation.

Item 8 – only one of the 2011/12 indoor meetings has had to be moved to the HUMSS building.

Item 11 – Display boards have not yet been discussed by membership services committee.
Action: CW to progress design ideas drawn up by Ruth Angus.
Needs publicity officer to look after them and to arrange for people to attend events. Ask for volunteers at opening indoor meeting, through newsletter and via website.
Action: Membership Committee to discuss this.
FC offered to identify opportunities for displays at the Dinton Multi-activity Centre.
4. **Treasurer's report**

Report circulated prior to meeting. Balance on Conservation Fund stands at £4,493. Balance on Atlas Group stands at £4,680 and General Fund at £15,896 (up £3,000 from end of last financial year). A claim is in progress for Gift Aid of £1,368, of which £182 is due to the Atlas Group.

The Conservation Committee recently agreed a grant of £395 to BBOWT for a telescope to be used at Greenham Common. This was well used on one of their Saturday walks, but there was no acknowledgement that the scope had been donated by the BOC which was a condition of the grant.
Action: RRi to see if there is an acknowledgement on the BBOWT website and put an item on the BOC website.
5. **Atlas Group update**

Report circulated prior to the meeting. Major push to get confirmed breeding appears to have been pretty successful. Records from the east of county are up, but records from the west are down.
Action: RRi to circulate latest stats and put them on Berksbirds and BOC websites.

Question raised over whether increased observer effort for this Atlas will skew any comparison with the data in the last Atlas. NB agreed that this would need to be taken into account in the analysis of the results.

6. Conservation

a. Conservation Officer report:

Report circulated prior to the meeting. Jeremy Davy to let JL have copy of plans for Woolhampton pits. .

Action: JL to tell Jeremy Davy to contact CW to get bird records for the area.

Action: JL to liaise with Ken Moore about plans for the site.

b. Conservation Fund

Proposal from NB that NDOC be invited to nominate a representative to sit on the Conservation Fund committee, was approved *nem com*. The Conservation Fund was created largely from the surplus from the last Atlas and it is anticipated that any surplus generated by the current Atlas project will go to the fund.

c. Henley Road GPs

HN gave an update on the site. Lafarge have 10 years funding for management with the possibility of additional funding for a further 10 years. 1 hide is in place. Path to be rerouted to avoid disturbance to birds. There is potential for additional work to improve facilities.

HN & RRI attended meeting with Oxford OS committee members and Ian Lewington on management and access. Proposal is for combination lock on the gate with the combination to be given to OOS and BOC members. There will need to be a mechanism for regulating the issue of the combination to members.

The Committee confirmed that the BOC was happy, in conjunction with OOS, to provide advice (through HN and an OOS representative) to Lafarge on future management and make the site more widely known, but there may be a problem with any financial involvement as it is outside the county. HN was formally nominated at the BOC representative on the project – approved *nem com*.

d. Burnthouse Lane GPs

Site being restored to floodplain pasture. KM has had meetings with Hanson, Englefield Estates, Grazeley Parish Council & AWRE about the restoration. KM has good relationship with Hanson, but feels that his input to the plans would carry more weight if he was formally representing BOC. KM was formally nominated as the BOC representative on the restoration project subject to reporting back to the Committee and asking Committee to endorse any decisions made on their behalf. Approved *nem com*.

e. Field Farm

This is a rough area behind the eastbound M4 Reading Services which is interesting both botanically and ornithologically. There is very restricted access. Hanson are actively seeking KM's advice on future management of the area. The Committee formally nominated KM as the BOC representative on the restoration project subject to reporting back to the Committee and asking Committee to endorse any decisions made on their behalf. Approved *nem com*.

There is the possibility for active BOC involvement (perhaps in conjunction with the Theale group). KM is discussing financing of any future management work with Hanson.

f. Sandford Farm

FC brought plans for the area alongside the Sandford Farm development for information. These were available for viewing after the meeting.

g. Conservation Advisors

Following discussions c-f above, a discussion took place on whether contact points are needed, either in geographic areas or as habitat specialists, to provide advice to landowners or to spot opportunities for BOC to become involved in projects. A list of site/habitat liaison officers could be published on the website. A suggestion was made

that a conservation page be developed for the website.

Action: Conservation sub-committee to discuss ideas.

It was noted that anyone who is nominated to be an official BOC representative on a project does not need to be a member of the Committee.

h. Swift nestbox pole

Action from Jan 2010 meeting. No progress. To be included in conservation report when there is any progress to report.

i. Kennet Meadows

Concern over state of meadows west of the A33 raised at Mar 2011 meeting is now closed as the meadows are very wet.

Any progress on the future of the site previously earmarked for development by the Prudential to be included in future conservation reports.

j. Conservation Strategy

No progress – NB to look at output from discussion before the next meeting.

7. **Reading & District Angling Association**

Report from meeting with RDAA circulated prior to the meeting.

Del Shackelford appears to be willing to discuss mitigation measured to replace lost nightingale habitat, but needs to report back to the RDAA committee to gain approval for proposal to develop a management plan.

All members need to ensure that anglers are not being upset by birdwatchers.

Action: RRi to keep members informed of progress.

Proposals contained in the report were approved *nem com*.

8. **Membership Sub-committee report**

Report circulated prior to the meeting.

Action: TR to extract recent trip reports from the newsletter and submit for inclusion on website.

9. **Programme Sub-committee report**

Programme for 2011/12 indoor meetings, together with initial progress on 2012/13 programme was circulated prior to the meeting.

Magazine Miscellany evening needs to include an update on the Atlas. Also need to encourage non-Committee members to do a slot.

Need to have an evening on the Atlas in the 2012/13 programme

Draft of 2012/13 programme will be available for discussion at the next Committee meeting

Action: All to submit suggestions for talks to RRe in the next few weeks.

Action: CW to investigate possible links with Silwood Park for meetings

Action: BN to circulate 2011/12 outdoor programme

10. **August mailing**

Target for posting is late August. Outdoor programme starts in September. Need volunteers to help. MT to coordinate mailing.

Contents:

- Newsletter (Ted)
- AGM agenda, minutes of last AGM and details of committee posts up for election (Mike Turton)
- Membership renewal form (Heidi)

- Programme card (Ted)
- Garden bird feeding survey form (Ted)
- Bird report if ready
- Questionnaire (for those not receiving link by email) + SAE for reply (Mike Turton). It is possible to put marker on labels for those people who need printed questionnaires.

Action: GL to send photo for AGM agenda to MT

11. **Editorial Board report**

Reports from CW and KM circulated.

2006/7 report: 2006 report now back with CW for amendment. CW still uncertain whether the report would be ready for the August mailing.

Derek Barker has completed the systematic list for the 2008 report.

Work has not yet started on the 2009 report.

Derek Barker nearly ready to start work on the 2010 report.

Problems with use of 'per *observer name*' on records. Needs to be taken up with Marek & KM.

Derek Barker currently has no internet access. It would be very helpful both to him and others involved in producing the reports if he were to have broadband access.

A proposal that the BOC fund 1 years broadband connection for Derek to assist report production up to a maximum of £200 with no commitment to funding in future years was approved unanimously. Derek Barker to be asked to advise the Committee of costs involved.

12. **AGM**

Report and proposals circulated prior to the meeting.

The proposal to change the number of committee members elected each year as follows:

- At the 2011 AGM, two Ordinary Committee Members are elected for 3 years and one for 2 years.
- At the 2012 AGM, two Ordinary Committee Members are elected for 3 years and one for 1 year
- From 2013 onwards, two Ordinary Committee Members will be elected for 3 years at each AGM

was approved *nem com*.

The duties of Ordinary Committee Members of the Berkshire Ornithological Club was approved *nem com*.

Need to encourage newer and younger members to stand for election.

Action: All to think about possible nominations for election to the Committee

Action: RRi to ask Tim Ball if he is willing to stand again this year.

13. **BOC participation at Rain Forest Experience**

RRe involved with RDNHS and BBOWT in planning for events at the Living Rainforest at the end of July/beginning of August. Concern expressed about NDOC not being involved, although it is in their area.

It was agreed that RRe would be representing BOC at this event. Will need display boards.

Action: RRi to report on this to NDOC.

14. **Any Other Business**

a. Website: Mike Taylor would like single source of material for the website. Any material for the website (flagging any urgent items) to be submitted to CW, who will work with Mike Taylor to prioritise work on the website and membership database.

b. Printing

Need to coordinate the printing that is done by the Club and possibly save money by arranging special deals. Two options - negotiate deal with a printing company or buy a colour copier. Former is preferable because of running costs and space.

Action: MT/CW/TR to discuss print volumes, whether we need colour, and possible companies.

Action: All to provide suggestions on printing companies to CW

Proposal on a printing company or purchase of a printer to come back to Committee.

c. Southern Bird Fair to be held at London Wetland Centre in February. No space for organised trip in 2011/12 programme, but the event should be promoted by the BOC.

Action: MT to include agenda item at spring Committee meeting to discuss whether trips should be organised to this event in future years.

d. JR informed the meeting that he had not renewed the licence for special raffles which the Club took out last year for the Mike Dilger meeting.

e. NB informed meeting of an exhibition of Robert Gillmor paintings at the Reading Museum in October.

Action: NB to follow up whether BOC can get involved.

Action: CW to provide NB with name of contact at the museum.

f. There has been another break-in at QMR and there may now be security guards on site after hours. Thames Water have not contacted BOC about this.

g. All Committee members urged to advertise Bird Fair trip.

Action: RRe to send out publicity material

h. BN no longer investigating possibility of a trip to Lesvos.

i. Any contributions for the newsletter to be with TR by the end of July.

15. **Date and venue for next meeting.**

Wednesday 19th October 2011, 7.30pm at 63 Hamilton Road, Reading.