



Berkshire Ornithological Club

Minutes of Committee Meeting

held on Wednesday 4th July 2012
at 63 Hamilton Road, Reading

Present: Renton Righelato (chair) (RRi), Mike Turton (Secretary), Neil Bucknell (president), Ray Reedman (RRe), Bill Nicoll, Carole White, Tim Ball, Martin Sell, Chris Heard

1. Apologies for absence: Heidi Bailey, John Roberts (Treasurer), Ted Rogers, Ken Moore, Fraser Cottingham, Ken & Sarah White

2. **Minutes of the Committee meeting held on 20th March 2012**

Martin Sell was added to the list of Apologies for Absence. The minutes were then approved and signed.

3. **Matters Arising**

Item 3 (investigate options for communicating with members not on the internet):

Action: MT to put item in newsletter asking people who are not on email and who wish to be notified of changes to meetings by phone to contact him.

Item 5: Action: RRi to ask Robert Gillmor if is happy for the BOC to dispose of the original artwork for previous report covers in aid of Club funds. MT/RRi to discuss options for disposal with JR.

Item 10: RRe has had contact with the Biology Dept at the University, who will advertise the indoor meetings and coach trips. There may also be an opportunity for BOC to provide input to course bird ID modules.

4. **Treasurer's Report**

Report circulated prior to meeting. Club funds are currently

General	£17,240
Conservation	£4,224
Atlas	£7,631

Included in the above is a Gift Aid tax refund of £1,570, £170 of which is from Atlas donations. The rate of tax refund reduced this year, but we maintained this level of income because of donations from Brian Uttley (£145) and Tony Knight (£748).

Subs income is £5,299; last year was £5,413. Colin continues to sell data with £640 received, and further payments are due. We have not yet received an invoice from Thames Water for QMR (£500).

Action: JR to ensure that £500 is reserved in the accounts to cover this.

The University has surprisingly not yet asked for a deposit against next season's bookings, but rate is agreed at £193 a meeting. The cost of the room was again discussed; BOC already gets the room at a discounted rate and equivalent facilities elsewhere are normally more expensive. The venue for indoor meetings and the question of charging for admission to meetings needs to be reviewed again at a future committee meeting.

Action: MT to include on agenda for a committee meeting during next 12 months.

Action: Budget for the next 4 years to be reviewed at the next committee meeting, taking planned report publication into consideration (RRi/BN).

Raffles

It was agreed that raffles would continue for the present. Need to ask members again for donations of raffle prizes and for help with running the raffles.

Action: Ask for donations of raffle prizes at first meeting of the new season.

Action: BN to discuss with JR how raffles are run and bring recommendations to committee.

Appointment of independent examiner

Donald Reid Limited were appointed as independent examiner for the 2011/12 accounts. Approved *nem com*.

5. **Changes to the Constitution**

Proposed changes to the constitution and the revised constitution were circulated prior to the meeting and approved *nem com*. To be put to membership for approval at the AGM.

6. **Editorial Board Reports**

No report submitted; update given verbally by RRI.

2008 Report

With Rob Still for design work. To go to printers last week in July with completion by 10th August.

The 2006/7 report cost approx £2,981 (slightly under budget). 2008 report will probably cost around £2,500. Approval given for RRI to spend up to £2,700 in printing report. Print run to be 380 copies.

2009 & 2010 Reports

These are being written in parallel with 2009 systematic list being written by SAWS and 2010 by Derek Barker. Good progress being made on 2010.

Action: RRI to talk to KM about progress on 2009 report.

Neither report will be ready until end 2012 at the earliest. Proposal is to post these reports together after allowing members to collect them from indoor meetings. Option for combining these as a single volume to save costs were discussed briefly.

Action: Discuss simultaneous printing of 2009 and 2010 reports at next committee meeting.

Action: RRI to talk to Derek Barker about combining the two reports.

General

A suggestion that observers' initials be omitted to save paper was discussed and rejected. Initials need to be there to enable records to be traced back easily and there would be little cost benefit or saving in paper by omitting them or making them smaller.

Consideration to be given to making reports available on the website for downloading after a certain period of time has elapsed, as there appears to be very little market for sale of printed copies.

7. **AGM**

Vacancies on the committee were circulated prior to the meeting. Volunteers are needed for the following posts; these do not necessarily all have to be committee members:

- Publicity officer
- Events management
- Someone to join the programme sub-committee to take responsibility for excursions
- Link with the University
- Someone to represent the membership living in West Berkshire

These should be taken into consideration when approaching possible new committee members. A number of possible candidates were discussed.

Action: MT to include the above posts on AGM papers.

Action: MT to send out an email to all members asking for volunteers to contact him and to include the request as top item on the BOC website.

Action: MT to approach possible candidates as discussed.

NB took the chair for a discussion on possible candidates for chair to be elected at the AGM. One possible candidate has been approached, but has not yet made a decision. Job description was discussed; it is difficult to write as, apart from chairing Club and committee meetings, the role very much depends on the individual.

8. **Events**

Newbury Show

Stand booked – it will have an Atlas theme. Need volunteers to help set up on Friday 14th September and man the stand on Saturday 15th and Sunday 16th – am and pm shifts. NDOC unable to help this year.

Action: Any committee members who are able to help should contact NB.

Action: NB to contact possible helpers.

Action: NB to contact Rob Still for Atlas display material.

Ascot Retirement Fair

Big event at Ascot racecourse on 15th August. Need 3-4 people to help man the stand. Cost £20. It was agreed that BOC should have a stand at this event if volunteers were available.

Action: Any committee members who are able to help to should contact RRe by 11th July.

Earley Green Fair

Pitch booked. Ruth Angus to provide a gazebo and help man the stand with RRe.

Action: MT to send email to committee asking for volunteers to help at all above events.

9. **Programme Sub-committee report**

Report including 2012/13 indoor programme circulated prior to the meeting.

Indoor programme: 2012/13

RRe in discussion with Angela Houghton (Reading Museum) about integrating Saturday talk in with one of their events. Alternative venues at St Peters Hall or Leighton Park. Speaker would be Dominic Couzens.

ID workshop has not been well-supported recently. This will probably be dropped in 2012/13 and a new format developed for future years.

Speaker costs likely to be £100-£200 more expensive than last year.

RRe publicising some talks with a wider audience appeal to appropriate outside groups. Also asking whether indoor meetings can be included in BBOWT events calendar. Need to maintain links with other local natural history groups.

Outdoor programme: 2012/13

Coach trips: 3 organised by E. Berks RSPB, 3 by BOC and 1 by Wokingham & Bracknell RSPB group. Details to go in BBOWT events calendar.

Outdoor programme circulated prior to meeting. Complete apart from a few details.

Need someone to take over from BN as excursions organiser.

10. **Sales of bird food**

BOC has been approached by a supplier asking if we would be interested in selling bird food, with some of the income going to Club funds. The Club has done this in the past and felt that the amount of work required, together with the number of suppliers in the marketplace, did not justify the amount of income that the Club would receive.

11. **Future of Berkshire Bird Index**

Produced up to 2009 by Chris Robinson and Patrick Crowley, this is an impressive database produced using BBS data and showing trends for species in the county. Chris has moved away and Patrick is moving. Proposal from Patrick is that the money in the BBI bank account (£453) be donated to the BOC and the account closed by 10th August, and that the BOC should take over producing the index (Ken White is willing to take over running the BBI). The proposal was accepted *nem com*. BBI bank account signatories are Patrick, Chris and NB – need to check with Chris that he is happy with the proposal. It was suggested that annual reports be published on the web and as part of the Birds of Berkshire annual report. The money from BBI will need to be identified separately in the accounts, but held in the general funds.

12. **August mailing**

Proposed timetable and contents circulated prior to meeting. Report will not now be available until after 10th August. Volunteers required to help assemble mailing.

Action: MT to tell RRI if delay to report will cause a problem with scheduling the mailing.

13. **Reports for consideration**

a. Atlas Group update

Report circulated prior to the meeting.

About half species accounts produced in draft form. Target publication date is mid 2013.

A list of species still requiring sponsorship is on the BOC website

b. Conservation Report

Report circulated prior to the meeting.

Fobney has been flooded, preventing monitoring of Barn Owl boxes. Little Ringed Plover present, but probably didn't nest. Lapwing fledged one chick successfully. Gadwall nested, but no evidence of chicks. There is still a big problem in controlling unauthorised access, particularly at the west end. Reading BC have not yet repaired the fencing; if this doesn't happen soon, BOC may have to consider withdrawing from the project because the area will not be sufficiently protected to act as a bird reserve.

Padworth Common: the deadline for submitting written comments has passed, but it may still be worth writing in to support fencing the common as part of the grazing plan. Better for individuals to write, but BOC could also make a submission.

Action: TB to circulate his submission to West Berks Council for committee members to use as a basis for a letter.

Tree Sparrows: Alan Larkman has offered to show BOC his work on the Oxfordshire Tree Sparrow project. NB/TB interested in getting involved.

Action: RRI to liaise with Alan Larkman.

14. **Any Other Business**

No other business was raised.

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

Tuesday 16th October 2012 at 7.30pm. Venue 63 Hamilton Road, Reading.