



Berkshire Ornithological Club

Minutes of Committee Meeting

held on Thursday 4th November 2021
via Zoom

Present: Rob Godden (RG, Chair), Eleanor Pitts (EP, Treasurer), Jane Campbell (JC, Secretary), Sally Wearing (SW), Sue Charnley (SC), Iain Oldcorn (IO), Andy Tomczynski (AT) and Renton Righelato (RRi)

1. Apologies for absence:

Marek Walford (MW, County Recorder), Chris Foster (CF), Ray Reedman (RRe)

2. Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on 8th July 2021

IO requested that the text in item 6 'that Ted Rogers is now providing backup for sending emails to our members' is changed to 'that Ted Rogers is continuing to provide backup for sending emails to our members'.

The minutes were approved and will be signed by **RG**.

3. Matters Arising and Review of Actions not covered elsewhere

IO informed the committee that Mr Knight has passed away so no further action is required regarding his membership.

Item 8: RG will progress the poster and booklet for the 75th anniversary event. **RRi** has discussed birding highlights with Andy Horscroft who agreed to put this together. This is required before the 2nd February event.

Item 8: SW has agreement from Cambell Murn that his talk can be made public on YouTube. Mary Craddock declined.

Ray's presentations: SW will give **JC** access to the YouTube account and **JC** will upload the first three presentations.

4. Formal record of items agreed by email or actioned since the last meeting

None.

5. Treasurer's Report

The report, accounts and draft budget were circulated prior to the meeting.

RRi thanked **EP** for another set of clear reports and accounts. **RG** reminded us that **EP** wishes to stand down as Treasurer and thanked her for her work. It will be a challenge to find a replacement and **EP** agreed to continue until a replacement is found. Bill Nicholls is standing down as the reviewer of our accounts and it was noted that the holder of this post need not be a club member. **EP** is willing to take on the reviewer role once she is no longer Treasurer. **EP** suggested that at the point of

handover to the new treasurer committee members should confirm the balances on all accounts.

Action: JC will investigate who offered to take the Treasurer role at LWT and ask if they are willing to do so for BOC.

- a. **Approval of Accounts 2020-2021** – these were approved by the committee
- b. **Approval of Draft Budget 2021-2022** – these were approved with the following notes.

IO asked if we should budget for printing more booklets and **RRi** informed us that he has approximately 100. It was agreed to leave this in the budget but, at **IO's** suggestion, to change the wording from 'Booklet if we print' to 'Booklet Reprint'.

RG noted that we should be prepared to answer questions regarding our reserve funds at the AGM.

6. Membership Secretary's Report

The report was circulated prior to the meeting.

EP and **IO** have reconciled the small differences in their figures. **IO** continues to chase non-payment of subscriptions and thinks it is possible we may lose 27 members this year and that there is a gradual downward trend in membership.

QMR: In discussion with Peter Newbound, because access is difficult and requires a key, it was agreed not to send QMR permits to all entitled members this year. There are 12 keyholders who will be sent permits and others will be informed that their permits will be issued when access is possible. **RRi** and Peter Newbound have discussed how to handle any twitches to allow non-keyholders access.

Action: Peter Newbound will draft a letter to non-keyholders.

Action: IO to contact **JC** later in the year to produce mail-merged permits.

MW asked **RG** if bird news at QMR should continue to be suppressed. **RRi** can see no reason for this.

Action: RG will inform **MW** that news at QMR can be made public.

Newsletter: Content is needed for the December newsletter.

Action: All to provide **IO** content for the next newsletter by 7th December

- a. **Revised Safeguarding and Equality Policies** – a draft was circulated before the meeting.

IO suggested a minor change to point 10. **EP** asked if a 'get-out' clause is needed and **SW** responded that 'reasonable adjustment' covers us.

It was agreed that **AT's** suggestion to add more detail regarding the accessibility and condition of sites is a good one that will be adopted. There is not enough room on the printed programme but more detail will be added to the website.

Action: Trip Leaders to provide this site information.

Action: SW to amend the policies as agreed and re-circulate for approval.

7. Publicity and Advertising

This update was received from CF by email:

Nothing to report on publicity, I've done very little in the last 4 or 5 weeks since the new term started.

RRi commented that our decreasing membership and attendance at meetings requires a publicity drive.

8. Programme Report

Indoor Programme: The report was circulated before the meeting.

SC asked for opinions on the three alternatives she proposed for indoor meetings. Although we think we can cancel bookings at the University (we now pay monthly) it was pointed out that the venue is published in both our printed booklet and online so should not be changed. **SW** suggested we wait until the end of this season to decide as we will then have a clearer idea of attendance. **RRI's** opinion is we should remain as we are and that some of our talks must take place at the university because they invite students and prestigious speakers. **RG** also favours remaining as we are because offering a hybrid meeting will be more difficult elsewhere.

IO, SC, JC and **EP** all stated their opinion is the university is too expensive for the number of members who attend.

Action: Remain as we are and re-valuate at the end of the season.

Christmas event: We have a talk on bats, another on peregrines and **SC** could not remember the third. **SC** asked if we should provide refreshments and although we have no idea how many will attend it was agreed to do so.

It was noted that this event is not on the programme.

Action: **SC** to update the website and provide text to **IO** to advertise by email.

Outdoor Programme: A report was circulated before the meeting.

It was pointed out that the trip advertised for 22/11 is last year's!

RG confirmed that the committee will take over planning the outdoor programme when Ray retires.

9. Conservation-Sub-Committee Report

The report was circulated prior to the meeting.

IO asked the cost of Lower Farm Gravel Pit and **RRI** responded that there is no clear answer.

10. Editorial Board Report

A report was circulated prior to the meeting by **SW** and **RG**.

SW hopes that the 2017 report will be published before Christmas and noted that it has been much more work than she anticipated.

11. AGM

This is on November 17th and will be held at Reading University and on Zoom.

SC informed us that one speaker will be remote. There is no-one to host this meeting on Zoom as **SW** is away and **JC** is secretary. It was suggested **CF** is asked.

Bob Lyle has agreed to join the committee and Jake Bishop declined.

SC agreed to stand down as a trustee if required.

Action: **JC** to ask **CF** to host the AGM.

Action: **SW** will revise her notes taken on how to set up the tech.

Action: **JC** to ask **RR** if he is retiring as a trustee as well as Outdoor Programme Secretary.

Action: JC to provide briefing notes for the President; create the slide deck; and create one PDF of the accounts.

Action: RG will draft his Chair's report, hopefully with birding highlights from Ken.

12. AOB

AT will provide 2018 birding highlights and was thanked by **RG**. This is required by the end of November 2021.

IO asked if the Reading University Bird Club still exists because last year's contact does not respond.

Action: IO to ask **CF** who he should contact.

13. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be on **Thursday 13th January 2021 at 8pm**, to be held online via Zoom.

Jane Campbell, 10th November 2021

Suspended Actions

Matters arising: SW had been given a telescope and tripod by a BOC member who wanted them to go to young birders or, if not, to be used to raise funds for the Club. It had been decided to offer them to Maiden Erlegh School, but this had not yet been possible.

Action: RRe to find out whether Maiden Erlegh School want the equipment.

Publicity and Advertising: the following actions will be continued when the current government restrictions are relaxed.

Action: CF to advertise free attendance in the University and to consider how to advertise in other places.

Action: RRe to investigate advertising free attendance at meetings in local schools.

Action: CF to put up posters advertising the BOC at the University.