



Berkshire Ornithological Club

Minutes of Committee Meeting

held on Tuesday 4th April 2023

via Zoom

Present: Sally Wearing (SW, Chair), Debby Reynolds (DR, President), Robert Godden (RG), Edwin Bruce-Gardner (EB-G, Treasurer), Jane Campbell (JC, Secretary), Iain Oldcorn (IO), Andy Tomczynski (AT), Sue Charnley (SC), Marek Walford (MW), Anna Mortimer (AM), Elaine Charlson (EC) and Chris Foster (CF)

1. Apologies for absence: Neil Bucknell (NB) and Bob Lyle (BL)

2. Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on 19th January 2022

A spelling error will be corrected. The minutes were approved and will be **signed by SW**.

3. Matters Arising and Review of Actions not covered elsewhere

JC contacted Maiden Erlegh School who no longer want our telescope. Other local schools are also not interested. SW reported the scope is non-functional so it will be disposed of. **The tripod will be advertised for sale to members.**

RG passed contact details for Silwood Park to IO.

JC contacted Jason Righelato who is willing to help us with minor website issues but suggested that we find a developer if we want to make major changes. Jason will make changes to allow us to advertise our beginner bird walks on a separate tab. **JCC will ask Jason what expertise is required to manage our site. An appeal for a suitable member will then be made and if unsuccessful a commercial developer will be sought.**

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

- a. The 2018 Report and the Berkshire Birdscapes booklet has been distributed to all members. Complimentary copies have also been sent.
- b. The Club's insurance policy is renewed. Edwin will manage this in future.

5. Treasurer's Report. The report was circulated before the meeting.

EB-G informed the committee that there was nothing of note that was not included in his written report.

SW asked that EB-G separates costs for the annual reports from other stationery expenses.

EB-G asked if subscriptions should be raised from October 1st, the admin required is considerable, so an early decision is necessary. Various opinions were expressed but as there is currently no financial need to increase subscriptions, they will remain the same. This will be reconsidered next year at the April committee meeting.

Donations (£300-£400) in memory of Dot Lincoln have been received. **IO will send details of members who have asked how to donate to EB-G.**

a. Annual Review of the Reserves Policy

It was agreed that our reserves should be increased from £16K to £18K.

b. Annual Review of Asset Register

The asset register has been updated. The webcam (value £20) will be added and RG will claim the £20 it cost. **JC will ask Ray Reedman for the telescope and presentation controller.**

6. Membership Secretary's Report. The report was circulated before the meeting.

IO had nothing to add to his report. SW noted that the recent survey of bird clubs indicated that membership is rising in many clubs whereas ours is dwindling.

It was agreed all new members will receive the latest Bird Report and the 'Where to Watch' and 'Berkshire Birdscapes' booklets. **JC will provide the necessary publications to EB-G.**

7. Programme Report

Indoor Programme: The report was circulated before the meeting.

SC has booked speakers for most of the next season and has informed them our start time is now 7.30. She would welcome ideas for the Christmas event and asked that Neil and Chris think of suitable speakers for the BOC/Reading University event. Events must be published on the website in July.

JC will consider changes to the format of the photographic competition.

SW will provide instructions to a volunteer who will edit our lecture recordings in future.

Outdoor Programme: The report was circulated before the meeting.

RG is unsure how best to provide a programme next year. Peter Driver's suite of local beginners' walks has started well and the collaboration with NDOC is successful. DR suggested that it is not a failure if our outdoor programme is descoped next season. DR also asked if there is an appetite for international trips. CF pointed out that international trips do not fit our aim to promote birding in Berkshire and that the environmental impact of such trips should be considered. **DR will reflect on this and report back.**

JC will contact BL for more information on his request to discuss ICE cards.

8. Conservation-Sub-Committee Report: The report was circulated before the meeting.

Neil has invited Matthew Stanton from BBOWT to speak at our next meeting and this will be first on the agenda.

9. Strategy Group: The report and other documents were circulated before the meeting.

Publicity leaflet: Two revisions are needed. Firstly, to refer to Robert Gillmor as the late Robert Gillmor and secondly a change to make it obvious that we welcome everyone.

SW will ask Gaia to make these changes.

JC will ask the committee for suggestions where this flyer can be placed.

JC will obtain a quote to print the leaflet.

SW asked if Gaia could produce a template based on the flyer's design to replace our current programme card. **CF will action this.**

Strategy Group will consider running a bird watching course for beginners.

SW will arrange another sub-group meeting and invite DR.

10. Editorial Board Report: A report was circulated prior to the meeting

There is good progress with the 2019 report.

How to further distribute 'Berkshires Birdscapes' was discussed. **DR will ask Paul Goriup for contacts in the ecological network.** RG suggested an advert in the Ecologists magazine, Neil will be asked to distribute to the local nature partnership. **CF suggested asking Parish councillors if they would like a copy and will produce a draft email which he will distribute to the committee.**

Robert Gillmor's Original Art: Four originals are with SW and two with Rob Still. **SW will contact an auction house to ask their worth and what commission would be charged.**

11. Outcomes from Informal Committee Meeting at Debby's: A report was circulated prior to the meeting

Item 5: BTO Youth Advisory Group: DR will approach the BTO youth group and hopes to report back before our next meeting.

Item 6: Conservation Subcommittee: This was not discussed in Neil's absence.

Item 7: School conservation project: It was agreed to pass this to Neil.

Item 8: RSPB and BBOWT: this will be discussed at the next Strategy subgroup's meeting.

12. Club Archives: this was circulated before the meeting

JC offered to hold the archives and will work with AM to obtain them from Andy Horscroft. This will include the BBRC archive.

The club does not have a copy of all reports and it was suggested we email members asking for those we need to either be donated or left to the club as a legacy.

SW to draft email for IO to send out to all members about the archive.

SW will upload PDFs of the 2017 and 2018 reports to the website

MW informed us that there was no handover when he took over as county recorder, he has stored data on a Google Drive and suggested the password should be recorded.

It was agreed that we do not need to keep reports from other groups in our archives.

13. Contingency Planning: A report was circulated prior to the meeting

The five points on SW's report were agreed. EB-G suggested we also document 'a year in the life of...'

JC will contact committee members asking them to document their roles and will set up a Google Drive. There was concern from some that Google is not simple to use and RG's suggestion of a training session was agreed.

14. Annual review of

- a. review of GDPR document
- b. review of Privacy Notice
- c. review of safeguarding documents

No changes are required for these documents. **JC will update the review date.**

15. AOB

- a. AT pointed out that one banner photo on our website is a flock of Sanderlings, a bird not often found in Berkshire! This was removed after the meeting.
- b. EB-G asked if we could meet face-to-face. There were mixed opinions with EB-G and JC keen but others indicating they would not or could not travel to a meeting. Hybrid meetings were suggested but finding a suitable venue and ensuing technical issues may make this difficult. One suggestion is that an occasional meeting could be face-to-face with most remaining on Zoom. DR is prepared to host but prefers Zoom as it is more efficient.

16. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be on **Tuesday July 4th 2023, at 7.30pm**, to be held online via Zoom.

Jane Campbell, 6th April 2023