



# Berkshire Ornithological Club

## Minutes of Committee Meeting

held on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> July 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), Neil Bucknell (NB) and Bob Lyle (BL)

**1. Apologies for Absence:** none received

**2. Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> April 2023**

The minutes were approved and will be **signed by SW**. It was agreed electronic signatures will be used.

**3. Matters Arising and Review of Actions not covered elsewhere**

**JC** collected a telescope and tripod from Ray Reedman. This will be advertised along with a tripod held by **SW** in the next newsletter. **JC to provide article (SW to provide photos of the tripod).**

**JC** asked Jason Righelato to suggest the skills required if we advertise for a volunteer or commercial web developer. No response received. **JC to follow up.**

**SW to provide instructions to a volunteer who has offered to edit our lecture recordings.**

**DR** informed us that, because of the environmental impact and the BOC's objectives, the club should not arrange any international trips.

**The publicity leaflet still needs to be edited; SW will follow this up. Once done JC will arrange for it to be printed and distributed.**

No new event template was provided so the current template will be used for the coming season's events. **SW to send JC last year's to be edited.**

**CF is still to draft an email to be agreed by the committee and sent to Parish councillors concerning Berkshire's Birdscapes.**

Robert Gillmor's art – **SW to contact an auction house once she has all six original works.**

**Contingency Planning:** some committee members have started to document their roles. **IO** is unsure how to use Google Drive and requested training. **RG offered to help.**

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

a. The annual report to the Charity Commission is complete.

b. The Club Archives are documented and held at **JC's** house. **JC** will provide an article requesting certain reports for the next newsletter. **DR** has a box of donated reports.

**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. He noted that the balance of last season's hall-hire plus the deposit for the coming season have both been paid. Contingency planning documentation and our Gift-Aid claim are both in progress.

Dot Lincoln's family requested that donations made in her memory are 'put to good use'. **IO's** suggestion that an already planned conservation project is completed 'in memory of Dot Lincoln' and that her family is informed was agreed. **NB to assign a suitable project.**

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

**IO** noted that the downward trend of membership continues. He is unsure how to upload newsletters to the website, **SW will upload missing newsletters and document the procedure.**

**Newsletter articles were requested for the end of July to be included in the August publication.**

**7. Programme Report**

**Indoor Programme:** The report was circulated before the meeting.

**SC** will add next season's programme to the web site. Ideas for the Christmas social evening were requested, and suggestions included a member's poetry and a best of Gordon Langsbury Cup winners' mini competition. **NB was asked to write a quiz.**

**NB** suggested a speaker for the University/BOC lecture but as **SC** has already booked Kevin Cox this will be investigated for the next season.

Better and earlier advertisement of events is needed, **SC will ask speakers for photos which can be used. SC will write an article for the newsletter to include notification of the earlier start time.**

It was noted **SW** will be absent for the AGM.

**Outdoor Programme:** The report was circulated before the meeting.

**RG** has struggled to provide a full programme as the pool of leaders is small and many find it difficult to commit to a future date. The suite of events run by Peter Driver and **BL** has helped and we are grateful for their inclusion in our programme.

The draft programme includes mini-bus trips but without leaders these are difficult to arrange. Dates for Birdfair 2024 are unknown, it is hoped a minibus trip will be possible.

It was agreed to advertise all events, including Peter Driver's and **BL's** in our programme.

**DR** offered to lead a joint NDOC walk in January to Combe. **EC** offered to lead a walk to a site she knows. **IO suggested RG contacts an ex-leader (Marcus). A plea for leaders will be made in the next newsletter.**

**BL will provide a digital copy of the ICE (in case of emergency) card used by NDOC. JC will edit it for use by BOC.**

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

**NB** asked if **BL** has any further information regarding Lower Farm. **BL** reported Newbury Racecourse is purchasing the farm and that **BL** will update **NB** after he meets with its CEO.

**Dorney Wetlands/Jubilee River site:** **IO** is disappointed with the deterioration at this site. As no local conservation groups want to be involved, he asked if BOC could take a lead to stimulate interest. **AT** asked what responsibility the EA has as they delivered the reserve. It was suggested that Berkshire Conservation Volunteers could also help. **NB will contact Graham Scoley to discuss.**

**NB was asked to write an article for the newsletter on conservation grants.**

**NB** reported that BOC will input into the developing Local Nature Reserve Strategy for Berkshire.

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

1. The draft Strategy Statement was adopted by the committee. A longer-term plan will be developed, and **SW will request suggestions for actions and then determine how long these will require.**

**The Strategy Statement will be made more visually appealing (SW) and sent to members (JC) with the August mailing.**

2. The Strategy Group will be disbanded, and its work absorbed by the committee.

3. Ongoing/Outstanding actions:

It was agreed more photos are needed to advertise our events. **RG** suggested accounts of walks should be published in our newsletter and on social media.

**SC and JC offered to post to Facebook if they are sent content.**

**SC and JC will produce a standard post to be sent to all new FB members.**

4. Bird Club Survey:

The committee considered other clubs' ideas. A 'guide in a hide' with a telescope was thought to be worth pursuing. A welcome walk with flasks of coffee was popular with some.

**SW will review our welcome pack and include various ideas in our plan.**

The lack of new volunteers is a problem for most bird clubs, but no solutions were suggested. **BL** wondered if gathering information on members' professions would help us target suitable people.

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

**11. Notification of Elections to the Committee**

Two committee members' (**AT** and **MW**) terms of office end at the next AGM. **MW** will remain as a non-elected committee officer. Two elected officers are required. **SC** is willing to stand for one post. **BL will ask if Peter Driver is willing to stand** and **RG** suggested Magnus Cooper. **JC will post on FB asking for volunteers. All other elected members are willing to continue.**

**12. Arrangements for Annual member mailing in August**

This will be sent in mid-August. The edited Strategy Statement (**SW**) and details of the programme (**SC and RG**) are required a couple of weeks earlier for **JC** to produce the necessary documents.

### **13. AOB**

- a. **NB will collect publications from JC for use at a Bioblitz event.**
- b. **DR has submitted Renton's booklet for the BOC Marsh Awards.**

### **14. Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be on **Tuesday October 17<sup>th</sup> 2023, at 7.30pm**, to be held online via Zoom.

**Jane Campbell, 12<sup>th</sup> July 2023**