Berkshire Ornithological Club

Minutes of Committee Meeting

Thursday 24th October 2024

via Zoom

Present: Sally Wearing (SW, Chair), Jane Campbell (JC, Secretary), Iain Oldcorn (IO), Elaine Charlson (EC), Neil Bucknell (NB), Peter Driver (PD), Edwin Bruce-Gardiner (EB-G, Treasurer), Robin Dryden (RD), Bob Lyle (BL) Robert Godden (RG) and Sue Charnley (SC)

1. **Apologies for Absence:** Debby Reynolds (DR, President), Marek Walford (MW) and Anna Mortimer
2. **Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on 4th July 2024**

   The minutes were approved and will be signed by **SW**.
3. **Matters Arising and Review of Actions not covered elsewhere:** none
4. **Formal record of items agreed by email or actioned since the last meeting:** none
5. **Treasurer's Report**. The report was circulated before the meeting.

   Notable events included the transfer of £50,000 to the Shawbrook accounts; £1,100 Gift Aid received and a donation of £1,500 for survey work on the Sulham Estate for which **NB** thanked Andrew Taylor for his help.

   SW requested a larger font for slides to be shown at the AGM.

   EB-G confirmed our accounts are with our independent examiner, Martin Newell.
6. **Membership Secretary's Report.** The report was circulated before the meeting.

   IO reported that several standing order renewals are outstanding and that he is actively chasing those who pay by other methods. **IO** predicts we will lose 4-5 members.

   IO now understands the limitations of how our website interacts with CAF Donate. Some changes to wording were made to be more consistent with CAF but underlying technical issues mean that we must accept nothing more can be done at present.

   The deadline for newsletter articles is the end of November.

   QMR permits: SW outlined what has happened so far and asked the committee:

   1. What do we want to include on the application form?
   2. What process is needed to implement it?

   To ensure decisions were taken **SW** asked Committee members to vote on stages of the application as follows:

   1. Are ID checks required – YES
   2. How many visits should be made each year – AGREED at least TWO

   BL suggested we implement an administrative charge for any new key issued, to be repaid when a key is returned. This was agreed to be set at £20. **SW** will check with our license with Thames Water that we can do this.

   IO agreed to redraft the process to both simplify it and to incorporate the decisions taken.
7. **Programme Report.** The reports were circulated before the meeting.

   1. **Indoor Programme**

SC has started to book speakers for the 2025/2026 season and agreed to complete that before standing down. **SW** thanked **SC** for remaining in post for an additional season. **JC** will speak to a couple of new members to ask if they would be willing to take on this position, possibly working with **SC** to gain an understanding of the role.

The committee agreed to invite Derek Gale back to judge the 2025 photographic competition.

PD has produced timely publicity material and **SC** thanked him for this.

2. **Outdoor Programme**

   RG is grateful to **PD** and **BL** for leading so many walks. **BL** will soon provide his schedule for the first quarter of 2025.

   The coach trip to Slimbridge in January is well-booked. **PD** has offered to drive the minibus to Birdfair.

   RG has tidied the trip reports on our website and will add reports extracted from newsletters.

   A replacement for **RG** is still needed.

8. **Publicity and Advertising** The report was circulated before the meeting

Our presence at the Earley Green Fair was a success and will be repeated. **SW**, **JC** and **SC** volunteered to help **PD** with the Wild Tilehurst event on Saturday January 11th.

PD can now add our events to the 'What's on Reading' website.

The new publicity leaflet is available. **IO** indicated some incorrectly formatted text which will be amended before the next print run.

9. **Strategy and Planning**

SW had proposed five points for discussion. The following decisions were taken:

1. It was agreed that **PD** will redesign our programme card.
2. **PD** will devise an event that can be offered to new members and make a proposal to the committee.
3. **SW** will review the Welcome Pack
4. To engage with the public, we would like to organise an event at Dinton pastures next Spring. **JCC** will check that **LWT** do not object*. (update post meeting: LWT have no objections).* If OK, **SW** will contact WBC to discuss.
5. How to publicise the Conversation Fund. **NS** reported he had promoted it at the recent TVERC recorders day and that he will discuss further with the Conservation Committee.

   SW suggested we document and publicise case studies.

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

Surveys generated a £1,500 donation.

NS will distribute the LNRS reports when he can. It is currently in draft.

11. **Editorial Board Report** -The report was circulated before the meeting.

The 2020 report will be delivered within the next week.

Most species accounts for 2021 have been submitted. Articles are needed including an obituary for Peter Standley. Including **NB's** report on surveys was suggested.

The cover of the 2020 report is the last to use Robert Gillmor's work. It is of Tufted Ducks and acts as a suitable end to the wonderful covers he provided us. The editorial board have decided to seek a new artist for future covers. **SC** suggested Geoff Emmett, **NS** proposed John Gale and Richard Allen. **RG** suggested we invite club members to display their work at the Christmas social event. **SC** will publicise this.

12. **Administration**

1. **Website responsibilities:** some members confirmed they had checked their webpages. **JC** is grateful to **PD** and **EC** who offered to take responsibility for certain areas of the site.
2. **AGM: JC** will provide **IO** with an email to remind members of the AGM. Ken Moore may stand as a committee member **– RG** will follow this up. *(Update post meeting: Ken is willing to stand.)* **SW** asked for officer reports for the AGM by 30th October. **SW** will forward to **JC** who will complete the slide pack for the meeting.

13. AOB

SW was approached by a member who is involved in promoting the Climate and Nature Bill. As not all committee members held the same opinion, it was decided that time is required to consider it more fully. Committee members should inform **SW** of their thoughts.

SW thanked **BL** and **AM** for their time on the committee.

14. Date of Next Meeting

AGM: Wednesday November 20th, 7.30

The next committee meeting will be on **Thursday January 16th 2025, at 7.30pm**, to be held on Zoom.

Jane Campbell, 3rd November 2024