



Registered Charity No. 1068608
www.herefordshirebirds.org

Minutes of a Committee Meeting held on 16th November 2017 at Holmer Parish Centre

Present: Gerald Wells, Chairman; Mervyn Davies; Chris Robinson; Robert Taylor; Jim Wilkinson

1 Apologies: John Pullen, Tom Weale, Una & Gareth Morgan, Norman Fincham, Mick Colquhoun, Rachel Jenkins, Nicky Davies, Susanna Grunsell

2 Minutes of the meeting on 21st September: Approved but not signed

3 Matters arising:

3)3.3 Burley Gate update Robert had drafted a letter to Birmingham University Ornithology Dept which **Gerald W will sign and send**. Robert has also done an article for the next HWT Wildside magazine which may excite some more interest in the project. Copy of the article to be sent with letter to Birmingham University. It was decided to await publication before any further approach to HWT or University of Cardiff. The project is proceeding with initial site visits complete and documentation prepared. Robert will take Gavin Siriwardena from BTO round the site in February which may attract some more interest from BTO. Gerald Parker and Nick Smith have both offered to help next year.

5) Update on 2018-19 Indoor programme Jim queried the costs for the Tim Birkhead talk so Robert agreed to clarify with Rachel. Gerald will check that the 2018/19 programme is now complete. There was a brief discussion about the need for an Indoor Meeting Organiser which concluded that it would be highly desirable to find someone but that the current method has produced an excellent result.

Action: Robert & Gerald

5) 5.2 Brockhall GP Mick has had further correspondence with the Duchy regarding water levels. Local EA water table data (2002-2017) show marked fluctuations linked with rainfall. Currently the water table is low; the feeder stream at Brockhall has virtually dried up and there is concern about other streams/brooks in Hereford and some other rivers in the county. Further information is being sought on extraction. Mick will continue to monitor the situation.

11) Chris noted that progress re the Swallow Barn was still awaiting sale of the farm.

4 Treasurer's Report

This had been circulated. Jim proposed that, as LUP have no more Atlases in stock, the Atlas project should be formally closed having been a great success. Marketing of the Atlas via the website and at HOC events would cease. **Action: Jim to inform Mick to delete ad from Website**

Sophie Cowling (HWT) has received planning approval to remove the fallen tree from the island in Bodenham Lake. She has also confirmed that Tarmac will do some tree removal at Wellington GP (as requested by HOC) and a small work party will clear paths etc. on 9th December.

5 Charity status

Chris outlined his views on converting HOC to Incorporated status which, inter alia, would give HOC the ability to own property and other benefits. Chris agreed to prepare a discussion paper for the next meeting

Action: Chris

6 Field Meetings

John Pullen has developed a programme for the next few months (as per Newsletter) with some suggestions for later next year. He did this with help from Robbie Ledlie, Sue Griffin and partly Trevor Hulme. John wishes to step back from this role after the AGM in March.

7 Correspondence

Gerald has received three interesting propositions from newish member Andrew Strong

- Nest Finding
- Attracting younger members
- Sand martins.

Chris noted that the nest finding proposal is essentially a BTO initiative in which he is involved and for which observers have been secured. For the other two suggestions, it was agreed that Gerald would invite Andrew to address the committee, possibly at a special meeting.

Action: Gerald

8 Sub Committee Business

8.1 Editorial

Mervyn noted that a rough draft would be ready by end November but he is waiting on input from Garden Birdwatch. A specification for prospective printers would be ready in December – HOC will go out to tender for this report.

8.2 Records WG

Chris expected that GBW records would be incorporated, via BirdTrack, with main HOC database from Jan 2018.

8.3 Website

Mick, Chris and Robert had met to review website usage and design at various bird clubs. Two sites in particular have an unusually high hit rate – Cornwall and Berkshire. Chris will try to get some ball-park costings to develop a Berkshire equivalent site for HOC and add these into a Summary Paper. This can then be circulated to the committee and be a main agenda item at the January meeting

Action; Chris

9 Membership Survey

Robert had prepared a summary paper on actions from the Membership Survey but this had not been circulated. There was a discussion about the suggestion for a weekend membership gathering. Chris proposed that this might take the form of a local BTO conference and would make a proposal.

Action; Chris

The summary paper would be updated with some comments from the meeting and then sent out to the committee.

Action: Robert and Una

11 Any Other Business

Curlews:

Chris and Mervyn had attended a forum on curlews. Chris will convene a meeting of county birders who may assist in a curlew survey next year.

Action; Chris

Date of Next Meeting: 18th January 2018

Dates of future meetings to be determined

J Wilkinson & G Wells Nov 2017