



Registered Charity No. 1068608
www.herefordshirebirds.org

Minutes of a Committee Meeting held on 18th January 2018 at Holmer Parish Centre
(unapproved)

Present: Gerald Wells, Chairman; John Pullen, President; Gareth Morgan & Tom Weale, Vice Presidents; Mervyn Davies; Norman Fincham; Susanna Grunsell; Rachel Jenkins; Una Morgan; Chris Robinson; Robert Taylor; Jim Wilkinson

1 Apologies: Mick Colquhoun and Nicky Davies

2 Minutes of the meeting held on 16th November. These were agreed and signed and the 21st September minutes were also signed.

3 Matters arising:

3) 3.3 **Burley Gate update:** 4 monthly winter counts have been completed with 2 more to do. The findings will be in the next newsletter. Gavin Siriwardena will be shown round the survey site the morning after his indoor meeting talk and Rupert Marshall has also been invited but has not yet replied. The Group will do a review in March to make a decision on doing breeding bird counts. There has been no response from the previous plea in the Newsletter and Birmingham University have not replied to the Chairman's letter. Chris may be able to interest some BTO volunteers and will liaise with Robert using the article and the proposal to see if BTO are interested. Robert will send Gavin an update before he comes.

Actions: Chris and Robert

5) **Indoor programme 2018-19:** one speaker still to be confirmed. Rachel will check with Dominic Couzens. Tim Birkhead will give the Dr Walker Memorial lecture in February 2019: we may need to find a bigger venue and to market it with good publicity (Rachel and Robert to investigate and liaise with Jim). The topic will be Francis Willughby the first true ornithologist- the subject of his latest book.

Action: Rachel

11) **Curlew Survey meeting** still to be arranged. Prospective work offers the opportunity to work more closely with HWT.

Action: Chris

4 Treasurers Report.

The report has been circulated. The annual accounts have been audited and will go out with the newsletter. There were 16 new members and we lost 21 last year which is fairly typical. County Birding Sites leaflets: so far 10 done or in the pipeline. Chris asked about a loose-leaf booklet similar to that produced by HWT:

It was agreed we need more site accounts before we consider this but the existing ones should go on the website. New accounts need to include Wellington and Brockhall.

Action: Robert to request from "regulars" at these sites.

Newsletter deadline; Secretary will send out reminders at various intervals to the committee and likely contributors to help Nicky.

Action: Una

Garden Birdwatch: new forms are not yet out. Mervyn will follow up.

Action: Mervyn

5 Website

Robert spoke to his paper already circulated and urged Committee members to look at the features of other county club websites, particularly those of Berkshire and Cornwall. Several queries on costs, website life span and availability of the website designer were raised but it was agreed in principle that we should proceed with a detailed project plan to agree the structure. Robert, Chris and Mick will investigate further and report with the project plan to the February meeting.. Chris's preliminary estimate from the designer is £4,000 - £6,000 plus some ongoing

maintenance. Gwent Ornithological Club (GOS) may be interested in commissioning the same basic website structure which will reduce the costs to each club. The Committee agreed we need to do something preferably before the end of the calendar year. The present website is on an obsolete platform and cannot be maintained long term, requiring new software and IT hardware. Robert will write a piece for the Feb. Newsletter asking for creative volunteers with IT skills to join a group to take the project forward.

Actions: Robert, Chris and Mick to produce Project Plan and Gerald to update GOS

6 Membership Survey action plan

Robert's report had been circulated. One area still being planned is Bird ID: Gerald and Chris are investigating BTO training; John reported that a May outdoor meeting will concentrate on sound ID only for a specific small number of birds at Wormelow.

Action: Chris & Gerald

7 Charity Status

Chris's paper has been circulated. It was agreed in principle that it would be beneficial to change to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation which means trustees would have limited liability and HOC could own land and enter into contractual agreement.

It would involve setting up a new organisation and the transferring of assets to that when set up.

We would need legal advice. The Secretary will check on exactly what is involved and whether we can amend our Objects.

Action: Una

8 Correspondence

- Mick has passed on correspondence about a survey of Lesser spotted woodpeckers in the Malverns, which was discussed by the committee. While it was considered worthwhile to carry out survey work for the species in the county it was not considered feasible to engage formally in the project.
- The Holmer Vicar has told us about the defibrillator and first aid record at Holmer Parish Centre.
- Mrs Page has written to explain she will no longer send in records because of failing eye sight; Una has responded thanking her for all her past records.

9 Sub Committee Business

Editorial: Mervyn showed a proof copy of 2016 Annual Report. He will ask for better printing of the black and white photos which will cost an extra £100. This was agreed and Mervyn was congratulated for his work. The report should be ready to distribute at the February indoor meeting.

10 AGM and Committee posts

Una listed the posts that will need to be appointed at the AGM in March and asked members to bring the nominations to the February committee meeting having secured agreement of the candidates.

11 Any Other Business

- The nest boxes Mick has made for Brockhall are ready and we now need to find someone to monitor these when in place. The Duchy does not want owl boxes so these will be used at Bodenham. It was suggested that Gerald Parker might wish to be involved in the nest box monitoring at Brockhall. The Chairman will ask him.
Action: Gerald
- Outdoor Meetings Organiser; John explained that he will not be organising/co-ordinating the programme after April. A new organiser or team is needed. Some walks planned till August. The Chairman has put a plea in his Notes from the Chair in the Newsletter for both the Field meeting organiser and an Indoor meeting co-ordinator.

The next Committee meeting (an additional meeting) is 25th January at 7pm. when Andrew Strong has been invited to present his ideas on encouraging young birders.

The next Committee meeting is on Thursday 15th February.

Una Morgan Jan18