

Herefordshire Ornithological Club

Minutes of a Committee Meeting held on 20th April 2017 at Holmer Parish Centre

~~(unapproved)~~

Present: Gerald Wells Chairman; Vice President Gareth Morgan; Mick Colquhoun, Norman Fincham, Una Morgan, Chris Robinson, Jim Wilkinson.

1 Apologies: John Pullen, Tom Weale, Nicky Davies, Mervyn Davies, Susanna Grunsell, Rachel Jenkins, Robert Taylor

2 Minutes of meeting on 16th February; these were approved and signed.

3 Matters arising

3) Burley Gate project: The Chairman reported for Robert that the group had unanimously agreed not to start the project until there was enough volunteers and time. They are proposing a trial winter survey, with the main one starting in Spring 2018. They will continue to recruit and Robert will do an article for the Newsletter later.

6) Rook Survey: no surveys have been conducted in recent years and there are no plans to do a survey. The rook information provided by Mervyn has gone to Northampton.

9:4) Curlew Survey: Chris Robinson has identified 11-12 potential sites from the last 2 year's information. His team (including him) will check these sites. Notices requesting that dogs be kept on lead have now been erected at Lugg Meadows and Hampton Meadows with HWT help and at Sink Green site (although cattle grazing has limited positioning there)

4 Treasurer's Report

The Report has been distributed to the Committee.

He will now give £10,000 as agreed to HWT as the hide is now erected. He advised that more volunteers would be needed for the ground works, as HWT had had some staff reductions in hours. He reported that 4 members had not rejoined.

Bodenham Fun day plans for Saturday 6th May were underway (Susanna and Mary) and there is also a HWT meeting to find out about volunteer opportunities and training on Friday 19th May.

5 Correspondence

1) The House of Commons Speaker had invited the Club to participate in Parliament Week. The Secretary will download the information to see if it is relevant to us. *(Decided not to pursue)*

2) Request for survey work on Broadmoor Common; we will contact members in the area.

3) Croft Castle had invited HOC to a specific event on 27th April: Nick Smith will represent the Club. The NT have invited HOC representation to visit on another date in future.

4) We had a request to publicise an historical publication on Shropshire Birds: the information is on the website and will go in a newsletter.

5) HARC (Herefordshire Archives and Records Centre) want to put a display on Woodpeckers up for H-Art week and are asking for HOC involvement. The Chairman will contact Elizabeth Semper O'Keefe suggesting that they liaise initially with Nicky Davies who did the woodpecker project. Nicky will keep us informed of requirements for wider membership involvement.

6 Members' Survey

Modifications to the website have been completed to enable easier navigation with a bird of the week depicted on the home page.

If bird distribution mapping was to be part of the website, it would be a new plane of expertise and involve costs. It was suggested that, out with the website, we explore progressive annual distribution mapping for certain species and any major changes could then be published in the Annual Report.

Bird Track training is being planned and comments on the newsletter and annual report have been considered by the appropriate sub committee.

A brief note would go in the newsletter to inform members that it was still work in progress.

The new site guides may be able to go in the website. Robert had requested that more guides should be planned.

7 Formation of Committee and sub committees

The membership of the sub committees was confirmed as previously.

The Executive Sub Committee is Chairman, Vice Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary.

The Rarities Sub Committee: Mick Colquhoun, Steve Coney, Tony Eveleigh, Nick Pegler and John Tilby

The Education Sub Committee: Susanna Grunsell, Rachel Jenkins and Mary Roberts

The Editorial Committee: Mervyn Davies, Gerald Wells, Mick Colquhoun, Chris Robinson, Tony Eveleigh, Nicky Davies, Jim Wilkinson and Una Morgan (ex officio)

Chris Robinson is an appointed Ordinary member of the main committee

8 Sub Committee Business

Rarities: report of 2016 rarities for the Annual Report almost complete

Editorial: Chris Robinson awaiting BBS data. Hope to have annual report ready for the first indoor meeting in January.

Education: Family Fun day as in Treasurer's report.

Records Working Group: Gerald is planning a meeting to see if the HOC Garden Birdwatch data can be extracted for use more widely in the Systematic List of the Annual Report, particularly with respect to species distribution. As previously discussed Chris reported that amalgamation of BTO Garden Birdwatch data with HOC data is not feasible.

9 Any Other Business

1) Swifts Survey and Churches: an appeal for help in surveying swifts in the county has gone into the Newsletter. Mick Colquhoun wants us to help the Mammal Group survey (which has been directed more specifically at churches) and will be asking for volunteers to look for Swifts. The hope is to establish enough information this year on sites to help decide where to concentrate future efforts involving nest boxes and sound attractions. There is a concern that we are losing swifts with repair work on churches. As interest had been expressed after Nick Smith's talk to Ledbury Civic Society, it

Formatted: Font: (Default) +Body
(Calibri)

may be worth getting some local publicity for HOC and swifts. As previously proposed, in addition to requesting all records of swifts, a more intensive survey of one large town should be undertaken. A member living near Ross has expressed interest to be involved and has been referred to Mick..

2) Outdoor meeting organiser. This post is still vacant, but it was suggested that we ask members for sites where they would like to go and where there is access.

3) Indoor meetings are set up for 2017 -8 and if we can't find an organiser, we may have to repeat this year's process where Rachel contacted speakers suggested by the Committee.

4) Norman queried HOC's policy on planning objections especially for Breinton and the Hereford By-Pass. The chairman explained that HOC would only object if it was an important breeding location for an endangered (red or amber listed) species: if we opposed every new development we would not be taken seriously. It may be worth consulting Herefordshire Biological Records Office for details of breeding records and asking if HWT have been consulted on this proposal.

10 Date of next meeting

Thursday 15th June 2017

UM 4th May 2017