



Minutes of Committee meeting (19th November 2020)

Held by Zoom Conference 7.00 – 9.00 pm

Present: Susanna Grunsell, Robert Taylor, Martin Winrow, Gareth Morgan, Gerald Wells, Mervyn Davies, Stephanie Greenwood, Rachel Jenkins, Mick Colquhoun, Chris Robinson, Frances Weeks, James Hitchcock.	
Governance:	Actions
1.	Apologies: Kerry Lloyd, Trevor Hulme (post-meeting)
2.	Conflicts of interest: Members to signal potential conflicts regarding agenda items – none declared.
3.	Minutes of previous meeting of 17th September: Approved.
4.	<p>Actions arising from meeting of 17th September 2020 (excluding those on 19th November agenda or completed): <i>Agenda items for email response/discussion only (document circulated and updated post meeting).</i> <i>Some outstanding actions on hold or not critical for action at present due to current circumstances and will be monitored and carried forward; others requiring action:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>From June 2020:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>8. Committee job descriptions (RT)</i> ○ <i>9. Document retention policy (MW) – no feedback received; MW to discuss with GW re archived materials</i> • <i>From September 2020:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>6. Tax refund claim (MW); Ideas for income sources (All); Investigate use of third-party booking agent for Zoom meetings (MW)</i> ○ <i>9. Explore improvements to Zoom procedures for Indoor meetings (RT)</i> ○ <i>16. Technical problems with website (RT)</i>
	<p>Robert to carry forward and monitor outstanding actions</p> <p>Martin/Robert/All</p>
5.	<p>Committee (and indoor) meeting dates, including AGM for 2021/22: In supporting materials dates for full Committee meeting cycle proposed to end of 2021/22 cycle to allow separation of workloads for Indoor and Committee meetings by more than one week. Indoor meeting dates previously circulated and AGM (second Thurs. of March) agreed 11th March 2021. Distribution of meetings in calendar discussed. Concluded that because of potential conflicts of commitments for HOC members, it is preferable to rearrange</p>

	Committee meetings – fourth Thurs of month agreed; revised dates to be circulated and put on website.	Robert
6.	<p>Committee Vacancies arising March 2021 – agree next steps: Supporting materials tabulate vacancies arising March 2021. Chair requested Robert to outline a proposal for the nomination of Chair for next year.</p> <p>A challenging but ambitious vision of the role for the future of HOC was presented. Areas for review included: the way the Committee operates, the pattern of meetings, greater discussion of strategic matters, greater authority for Sub-Committees, clarifying and strengthening the Executive role, greater involvement of non-Committee members, recruitment and collaboration with other organisations. Next steps to include leadership in the process of achieving nominations for vacant posts that would be presented at the January Committee meeting. An article in the February newsletter would outline the vision for the membership and seek their greater involvement in the Club (RT).</p> <p>Committee discussed the proposal in Robert’s absence and unanimously supported it, endorsing Robert’s vision and approving his nomination for the Chair. Discussion also generated several ideas to be communicated to Robert in development of future strategies.</p>	Robert
7.	<p>Treasurer’s report: Circulated with Agenda – net loss of members continues and there is understandably a projected loss in the budget for this year. Accounts for audit will be submitted early December.</p>	Martin
8.	<p>Recruitment drive for 2021: Agreed that in view of proposals for change a recruitment drive would be more appropriately implemented after plans are in place, offering a “climate” more attractive to joining the Club. Recruitment of young members also dependent on adopting appropriate communication technology. Also noted that a strategy for increasing resources needs to extend beyond increasing membership. Successfully acquiring donations relies to a large extent on the existence of one or more “flagship” conservation projects.</p> <p>Donations to Zoom meetings expected by many participants; agreed that we should seek donations to Zoom Indoor meetings and use the meetings flyer to include explanation that donations support key conservation projects and enable continuation of acquiring high quality speakers.</p> <p>Postponement of a recruitment drive agreed.</p>	Robert
9.	<p>Amazon Smile – charity donation: Introduced with Supporting materials. Agreed that support for this was neither beneficial nor appropriate for the Club.</p>	

Conservation:		
10.	<p>Wellington Gravel Pits – further discussion with Viv Quinn & Tarmac re. hide – agree next steps:</p> <p>Correspondence with Viv Quinn introduced in Supporting materials. It was agreed that in view of Tarmac’s failure to comply with the conditions of a previous planning application which included provision of a new hide, it was not appropriate that HOC should contribute to costs of moving/replacing the existing hide through a local arrangement with the site manager.</p> <p>Robert to draft a letter from the Chair (and shared with HWT) to Tarmac, disclosing local exchanges with the site manager and encouraging collaboration and fulfilment of original planning commitments. Agreed that failure to obtain a response will require initiation of a local campaign to publicise the continuing failings and obligations.</p>	Robert/Mick
Events:		
11.	<p>Indoor Meeting speakers 2021/22 – update:</p> <p>See Supporting materials for list of proposed speakers, priority ratings by Committee and final selection. Highlighted speakers approached and arrangements for the 2021/22 programme well advanced. Finalised programme to be reported to Committee shortly.</p>	Rachel
12.	<p>Field meetings – update and next steps following publication of details in November newsletter:</p> <p>Given current uncertainties as to the Covid-19 regulation that will be in place in the county in January it is impossible to predict whether planned meetings can proceed with or without restrictions. It seems that cancellation is the more likely outcome for at least the January meeting. Situation to be kept under review and updates published on the website. Text from Newsletter to be added to website and updated as required.</p>	Gerald Robert/Stephanie
Communication and Publicity		
13.	<p>Communications & Publication strategy 2021 and beyond:</p> <p>Supporting materials asks if a broader communications strategy for 2021 and beyond should be initiated at this time? Agreed to defer until a more appropriate opportunity in the implementation of proposed changes to Committee etc.</p>	
Records & Publications:		
14.	<p>Records working group – update:</p> <p>Points from meeting of 23 October 2020:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transfer of county bird records 2000-2013 (comprising 10,000- 	

	<p>16,000 records per annum) into BirdTrack considered a worthwhile exercise; formatting and reconciliation of anomalies in spreadsheet data being addressed (CR).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of distribution mapping of records (as in Atlas) for certain species may provide useful graphic information that is not available from statement of location as given in AR. Already employed in “Yellowhammer” article in 2019 AR. • Newsletter article proposed to give further guidance for observers on use of BirdTrack, particularly with respect to use of counts and breeding record codes (CR). • The potential long-term aim of a county avifauna considered but would require initiation of a major new project with a fresh editorial team. 	Chris
15.	<p>Rarities sub-committee – update: As given in revised Agenda, 2019 data on Scarce Migrants and RBBP reports have been submitted and the panel informed of the limitations in the data for Herefordshire.</p>	
16.	<p>Annual Report – update including consideration of impact of Covid-19 on next report: With more records on BirdTrack to date this year than the whole of last year any impact in relation to number of observations for the next AR is unlikely. A start on the 2020 AR is scheduled for next March. Review articles and authors will be sought over winter to help maintain the early publication date achieved this year. Congratulations from the Committee were expressed to Mervyn and all contributors for the excellent quality and timely publication of the 2019 AR.</p>	
Any other business:		
17.	<p>Update on “Swallow Barn” Chris appraised the Committee of some of the history of this issue, which included potential acquisition of the barn by the Club. The owner has kept the Club informed of developments and currently the arrangement with him is for inspection of the barn twice per year. A small team to be arranged.</p>	Chris
Date of next Committee meeting: Thursday 21st January 2021 at 7.00pm by Zoom conference call.		