

LINCOLNSHIRE BIRD CLUB COMMITTEE MEETING 23 JULY 2014
MINUTES

Present: Phil Espin, John Badley, Andrew Chick, Robert Carr, Graham Hopwood, John Watt, Mike Harrison, John Clarkson, Phil Hyde and Ian Macalpine-Leny.

Apologies for absence: Bill Sterling, Anne Goodall.

Minutes of previous meeting: Lack of clarity as Roy Harvey's name had been left out of the section on the Rarities Committee, the title of which was also spelt incorrectly. The corrected version had been posted on the web-site. The discrepancy between the sales figures for publications between Bill Sterling and John Watt had been resolved. Otherwise agreed to be a true record.

Matters arising: dealt with in the various items below.

Officers' reports:

Treasurer: A copy of the current position was circulated. John Watt mentioned the difficulties he was having in getting payment for some data searches. It is a time-consuming process, and could result in his having to seek redress through the County court. The interest received from Barclays is the final payment and no alternative accounts are available. John proposed to close our accounts with them and put all the money in our HSBC account. Our subscription income does not fully cover the cost of the report and there was some discussion on how we might increase the membership.

Secretary: Nothing to report.

Sales secretary: A full spreadsheet had been sent to the secretary; in Bill's absence Robert reported that there had been 14 publications sold and £128 had been passed to the Treasurer (subject to the usual discrepancy).

Membership secretary: We have 328 names on our records. Of these, 200 have paid the correct subscription for the current year. There are 10 honorary members; 58 paid last year but not this; 53 paid neither the previous two years nor the current and 6 are lapsed from 2011 and 2010. There was an extensive discussion as to why members did not re-join. Public criticism on the web-site is known to be a factor in some cases but it was felt that this unavoidable on the Forum, which is otherwise seen as one of the strengths of the club. It was agreed that the lapsed members would not receive a report until they paid the current year's subscription and Mike would send a reminder to this effect.

County recorder North: has continued to deal with a range of enquiries and to respond appropriately. There was another discussion about access (or not) to Bardney pits.

County recorder South: echoed the comments above. There had been some confusion over which species are on the current BBRC list and guidance may be given to those concerned.

Webmaster: There are fewer records on the Forum and this may be because some members are using Twitter. This raises the issue of how such records are collected and verified if need be. Bird Track is having the same effect but this is felt to be a good development and may be useful in a number of ways. It is possible that a portal may be put on our web-site. Andrew Chick has had a number of discussions with Nick Moran and these will continue as the system develops. The issue of recording sightings also has a bearing on the data we submit to GLNP, who use a 1km square.

Thanks are due to Andrew Henderson who has done an enormous amount of work for the current and previous Bird Reports. The current report is at the printer and only requires one small section to be completed. The Rare and Scarce report will follow immediately after the annual report so that both can be sent at the same time.

The 2013 report cannot start until data from large sites has been submitted and there are a number of these outstanding.

Chairman: To prevent publication of the annual report being stalled in future years, Phil proposed that he work alongside Andrew Chick and take over when necessary.

A representative is needed to sit on the committee of the LNU; Andrew Chick is happy to continue. The joint meeting in the winter is well-received. See below for further details of the next meeting.

GNLP agreement has been signed and the secretary will file this.

LBC data for 1998 has been passed to GLNP and they are using it to test and refine the data transfer and input process. As soon as we hear they have been successful the rest of our data will be transferred and once 2012 data has been input by GLNP all future external data requests will be passed to GLNP rather than Janet. This raises the question of the fate of her laptop which was funded by the LBC. She will keep it until verification has been completed.

An article appeared in BB earlier in the year which incorporated over 600 scarce bird records provided by LBC for 2008 to 2010. Unfortunately data was provided which included rejected records and records for which LBRC did not receive any evidence. Matthew Harrison has kindly agreed to check the records in BB against our published reports which are the definitive record. The BB article will then be corrected. The LBRC are taking steps to ensure such an error cannot be repeated.

University birdwatch challenge: We have been contacted by this organisation, which wants to raise the profile of birdwatching amongst undergraduates. We have agreed to help when we know what's involved; we might consider a small grant.

AOB:

GLNP: we need formally to agree to participate and this should be sent to Fran Hitchinson. Phil Espin will do this.

LNU: We will do the talk at the next joint meeting in January 2015; Phil Espin will talk on rare breeding birds in the county.

Correspondence had been received by Andrew Chick from a member in Kent who had not received his Atlas refund: John Watt will look into the matter.

RAF Woodhall: LWT has almost completed the purchase and are undertaking baseline surveys. There do not seem to be any problems of trespass by birders.

Report writing: problems arise when trying to estimate maximum numbers from different sources relating to the same area; there is no simple answer and experience and local knowledge are often the only guide. There have also been some problems with different authors using different formats for tables and dates: Andrew Chick and John Badley will issue some guidance on this.

Rare bird sightings: the verification process does not always seem to work as comments from a source can be ignored unintentionally by others on the panel; Andrew Chick will look at ways to alert the entire panel when important comments are made.

Date of next meeting: November 19th, at the same venue, assuming the new landlord is agreeable.

Meeting closed at 21:40.