

MINUTES OF LBC COMMITTEE MEETING, 19 NOVEMBER 2014

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

Apologies for absence: Phil Hyde who is in Ethiopia

Minutes of previous meeting: Agreed to be a true record.

Matters arising: all will be dealt with in the sections below.

Officers' reports:

Treasurer: a copy of the current position was circulated. Sales income has risen by 11% due to Mike Harrison chasing up the non-payers. We have spent £3945 on the publication of 500 copies of the *2012 report* and £3587 on 400 copies of *the Rare and Scarce report*; postage of these two was £576. This last figure would have much higher if we did not have the use of the LWT franking machine. Data sales have continued to rise but this would soon end as Janet had retired and we send our data to the GLNP. When this transfer is complete, we will receive 15% of their income from data searches. John also told us that he had closed both accounts at Barclays and transferred the balance to the HSBC.

Secretary: nothing to report.

Sales secretary: a copy of sales accounts had been circulated prior to the meeting and 7 more copies had been sold subsequent to the accounts. The sales have raised £406 gross, which is £361 net of postage; there are other deductions for web-site sales postage and the costs associated with PayPal.

There was a long discussion about those who receive complimentary copies and it was agreed that the list be regularly monitored. It is often the case that some-one, who makes a large contribution to a particular report, is given a free copy of that report but not subsequent ones. Phil Espin would welcome nominations from any member. There have been some hitches with our PayPal account which Andrew Chick is resolving.

Membership secretary: had pursued a policy of writing to non-payers, with excellent results, and is to be commended for his efforts. 237 have paid for this year, including 221 on direct debit. 6 have even paid for next year and there are 11 honorary members who also receive a free copy of the report. 39 have not paid for a year and 25 have lapsed for two years. Mike was concerned that the steady flow of new members has slowed to a trickle and there was a discussion as to how we might try to recruit more.

There was also the gift of the nest-box camera which he had received: it was agreed that this might be raffled off at the next AGM with every paid-up member receiving a different number and the lucky winner would get the camera, but only if present at the AGM.

County recorder North: had received feedback about non-members on the rarities committee. It is felt that experience (of birds) and willingness (to give the time to the review process) are the key qualities and most are also members; one non-member adds independent verification which is an asset.

John also told us that he had received 35 Excel spreadsheets from Keith Robinson, with each covering a year's observations at Covenham reservoir. This is a tremendous amount of data and potentially valuable for tracking historical changes; John will pass the data to Colin and Sheila for incorporation in the LBC data bank and also to Charlie Barnes at the GLNP for their use. John would have a look with a view to writing a summary; any member wishing to become involved should contact John via the link on the web-site.

County recorder South: although John Badley had contacted Adrian Slater about the starling project, he had received no reply and would try again.

Webmaster: the number of postings on the forum continues to decline as other means of communication are used more. Nonetheless, it is still a valuable resource and we would encourage its use. There has been some recent discussion that we might allow non-members to post on the forum, perhaps only in the Sightings section and with certain restrictions – perhaps an application would need to be made, there would be no anonymity and their status as non-members would be evident, perhaps by an icon on the posting. This might increase the number of reports, to the benefit of all. This would however represent a change of policy following the original decision at an AGM. Members are asked to think about this; it will be mentioned in the AGM notice and discussed at the 2015 AGM.

He regretted the accidental omission of Stuart Britten as a contributor to the 2012 bird report and this note is to correct that.

The choice of speaker for the next AGM was discussed; Robert will contact Mark Cocker (well known author) to check availability and price. If there is no success there, John Badley will try for Andrew Rowland (chairman of the BBRC) and Phil Espin will look at the BTO list of speakers. The date of the AGM is likely to be the 24th or 31st of March.

Chairman: informed us of Anne Goodall's decision to retire from her involvement in the GBS and as the LBC biodiversity officer. This raises the issue of her replacement in these areas.

As Biodiversity officer, Anne attended 2 meetings a year for the urban and woodland BAP sub-committees. After some discussion it was agreed that LBC ought to take an interest in all Lincolnshire BAPs. John Badley would represent us on the coastal and marine sub-committee; Mike Harrison on the farmland one; Andrew Chick on the woodland one; John Badley has a possible candidate for the rivers and wetlands; we would seek a volunteer for the urban one. Andrew Chick would put the details on the web-site when they are agreed with GLNP. Phil will speak to Fran at the GLNP about these changes. In all cases, the attendee would have the status of observer.

The LBC GBS monitoring is important for the urban BAP. Phil will be meeting with the BTO shortly to see if there is some way we could merge our scheme with theirs and further how data could be shared with the GLNP who have recently developed an on-line version of our scheme. Anne is planning to produce a report on the 35 years of GBS data she has. She will ask LBC to assist with publication.

An issue of accuracy in our scarce bird records up to 2011, published in BB, has now been corrected. Phil would like to place on record our thanks to Matthew Harrison who did an in-depth analysis of errors to correct the 2011 data. Thanks are also due to Graham Catley for checking the accuracy of 2012 data. The precise methodology to avoid future errors is "work in progress".

All our data up to 2005 is now with the GLNP.

Bird report 2012 and Rare and scarce 2003-7 were published and distributed; thanks to all who helped.

Generally reception has been positive, but Andrew Chick accepted that had been issues with the small size of some of the photos as well as their number; the font size was an issue for some; the incorporation of ringing data in the body of the report had not pleased all; even the weight of the paper was significantly poorer for some of our members.

Andrew Chick and Andrew Henderson had met with Phil recently to discuss the 2013 report; the aim is to complete the writing of the species accounts by 31st January and complete the printing in time for the AGM.

Bardney Pits access: Phil had written to ABF who own British Sugar but no reply had been forthcoming.

AOB: John Watt asked for our agreement in making a donation of £20 to the LWT for the use of their room for the meeting; this was given. He also asked about the LSWP survey, in particular whether a report would be produced. This will be the case.

The date of the next committee was fixed for 25th February 2014 and we will investigate whether The Fighting Cocks can again be the venue.

Meeting closed at 22.14.