

## **Minutes of Lincs Bird Club committee at Coach & Horses – Feb 11, 2020**

### **Present**

Phil Espin, Phil Hyde, John Watt, Bill Sterling, Mike Harrison, Jim Wright, Andrew Chick; also Colin Casey

### **Chairman**

PE welcomed attendees

### **2. Apologies for absence:**

Ian Newton, Nick Tribe

### **3. Minutes of the November 2019 meeting (as posted on website)**

These were confirmed as a true record

### **4. Any matters arising**

- i) Motus radar-tracking of migrants

PE updated on this joint initiative between Hull University and the Bird Observatories Council and on his conversation with Kev Wilson of Gibraltar Point about its potential involvement. Subject to concerns (for instance, from Ofcom) being resolved, it is hoped that grant-funding might become available to cover part of the costs of a UK-wide project. PE has indicated that the club is mindful to contribute to the cost of installation/management of any receiver masts in Lincolnshire but especially the first one at Gib.

- ii) PE said that county interest/ members' take-up in the proposed nationwide Willow Tit survey had so far been slow.
- iii) PE reported that LBC member, Steve Bartlett of Hessle, had agreed to become auditor of the club's accounts.
- iv) JWa provided an update on arrangements for the county council-funded scheme to replace barn owl nestboxes at the coastal country park. AC is liaising with landowner James Mowbray on their installation.

### **5. Feedback from LBC/LNU meeting, Whisby - Jan 11**

Members agreed that Barrie Wilkinson's illustrated presentation on the history of Gibraltar Point had been very interesting. PH expressed disappointment that the pub at Gib had not survived. In a written comment, Nick Tribe, secretary of LNU said: "It was a very good talk and an excellent turn out; I wish the other LNU talks were as well attended. Thanks to those who took the time to organise it, chaired the event, etc. I have no ideas for next year's event – assuming that LBC wants another joint meeting."

Members were unclear whether the club or LNU had been responsible for the cost of hiring the meeting room at Whisby. In the absence of AC from this part of the meeting, PH suggested waiting to see if an invoice was forthcoming.

## **6. Progress update on 2018 annual report**

PH reported that this was now being compiled at the printers, Cupits of Horncastle. AC suggested vigilance was required because the work was being processed by someone (Andrew) with less experience than his predecessor (David) who had retired. PE expressed gratitude to PH who has overseen the project and written much of the content. PH said it had been a team effort and thanks were due to all including John and Nicky Clarkson who had read the proofs.

## **7. Data recording/ publication arrangements for future reports**

- i) CC maintained the latest version of *Wildlife Recorder* was "really good" and superior to competitor software such as *Birdtrack* and *eBird*, but inputting the full county records was a "monstrous job". He was happy to continue with the work as long as he was able, but did not want to find himself in a position of letting the club down. More capable data-handlers are required. The cost of WR is £97.50 but he thought he would be able to get a discount from its creator, Jack Levene for multiple purchases. If sufficient interest is forthcoming, he would be willing to hold a training session. PH suggested that Matthew Harrison might be interested in some involvement.
- ii) CC described recent editions of the county bird report as "fantastic" but queried whether the data was more comprehensive than necessary, given that much of the content was available from online sources such as BTO WeBS. "It is hell to produce," he claimed. PH, who has edited the past two annual reports, said the chief bugbear was chasing up

contributors for copy. It was agreed that the option of producing a slimmer version would be considered for future editions in tandem with re-directing energies to producing an updated version of *The Birds of Lincolnshire and South Humberside* which has long been out of print.

## **8. County bird atlas**

CC reported the project was nearing completion but currently on hold because of other priorities. The atlas will mostly be available on pdf, with a few printed copies for distribution to organisations such as sponsors Lincolnshire County Council and national libraries. In due course, a sub-committee will be required to proofread the completed text.

## **9. AGM - March 24**

Arrangements were confirmed for the talk by Prof Tim Birkhead and the annual meeting afterwards. AC will distribute the outline agenda by email to members. JWr stated our President Prof Newton had indicated he would like to attend the AGM to listen to the talk by his old friend Prof Birkhead and PE indicated he would make the arrangement and AC offered to drive him to and from the venue.

## **10. Update on LBC assets**

In response to a question from JWr, it was noted that the club has one laptop, currently held by CC, but no other equipment such as pop-up banners or stands for exhibitions. PE said the club had car windscreen stickers and MH said membership leaflets were available.

## **11. GLNP Forum position statements re a) Being Well with Nature and b) Enjoying Nature**

PE was authorised to sign off both documents.

## **12. Open Day: Rewilding a Lost Landscape - Lincolnshire's Ancholme Valley**

BS and JWr will attend this event at the Buttercross, Brigg, between 9.15-2.15pm on February 22. AC agreed to supply a relevant report he has compiled on behalf of the Environment Agency to interested committee members.

## **13. International Dawn Chorus Day (May 5)**

No interest at this stage by members in leading an event proposed for Broughton Woods, near Brigg, on May 5.

#### **14. Officers' reports**

Chairman:

- i) PE said he will attend a GLNP workshop at Horncastle on March 4 where the discussion will be about a new nature conservation strategy document to replace the Biodiversity Action Plan which expires at the end of 2020.
- ii) PE said the club had been presented with a signed copy of Smith and
- iii) Cornwallis' *Birds of Lincolnshire* 1955 by David Speed who had come across it while overseeing the estate of Mary Brocklesby. It was agreed this should be loaned to CC to further his research of historic records.
- iv) Committee agreed with PE's suggestion that pdfs should be made available of copies of past county reports which were no longer available in print form.
- v) PE confirmed that the Club's WhatsApp rarities-reporting group now had 48 members. However, it needed to be confirmed that all were club members.

Secretary:

No further updates.

Treasurer:

JWa noted that the new auditor would need to be formally appointed at the AGM. He said he was responding to a questionnaire from HSBC for contact information about our account's cheque signatories.

Membership secretary:

MH updated committee on recent cheque payments and a few instances where subscription issues had needed to be resolved. JWa agreed to email/phone a longstanding member who has experienced difficulties

with renewal/ inadvertent overpayment. In discussion, noted that about 100 of the club's 332 members had not yet registered to use the website since its relaunch.

Sales secretary:

No reports sold since last meeting but one free copy sent to Natural History Museum, London.

County recorder:

No further updates.

IT/ newsletter officer:

No further updates.

## **15. Any other business**

JWa said he had been contacted by Wellingore parish council about its barn owl nestbox project. AC agreed to follow this up.

## **16. Date, time, place of next meeting**

This was provisionally set for 7.30pm on July 21 at The Coach & Horses, Hemingby

There being no further business, the chairman closed the meeting at 10.10pm.