

## **MINUTES FOR Lincs BIRD CLUB COMMITTEE MEETING AT 7.30pm ON JANUARY 12, 2021, VIA ZOOM**

1. Chairman Phil Espin welcomed attendees including new committee member Joy Croot plus Andrew Chick, John Watt, Phil Hyde, Mike Harrison, Nick Tribe and Jim Wright

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

Bill Sterling

### **3. Minutes of November meeting confirmed as previously circulated by email/ posted on website.**

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

a) Update on joint 'virtual' conference with BTO on Saturday January 30. So far there have been 33 bookings, but more expected over the next few days. AC to send out a special 'reminder' newsletter within the next 10 days.

b) Grantham Church peregrine monitoring project

PE & AC provided update. The former commended Bob Sheppard and thanked Cromer Peregrine group for installing the equipment at no cost. Once a couple of technical hitches have been resolved, it is hoped to publicise the initiative in local print/ broadcasting media and in social media - perhaps as soon as mid-February by when breeding activity is likely to have begun. It is thought neither listed building consent/planning permission nor insurance will be required. PH expressed confidence the project would be protected from "on high". The equipment is expected have a five-year lifespan. PE observed that LBC owns the equipment, but St Wulfram's Church owns the project.

c) Update on Louth Church peregrine monitoring project

PE said local electrical contractors were scheduled for week commencing January 21, and the equipment should be installed by end of first week of February.

### **5. Update on proposed publication of *Birds of Lincolnshire***

PE noted this was now in its final stage of production and sales/ distribution arrangements will be finalised in due course, possibly at the next committee meeting. Likely retail cost is about £30 per copy but there will be a cheaper offer for members. This will hopefully be done by members ordering by paypal. AC agreed this would be feasible and he would look into it. PE indicated the system for distributing free atlas copies to members had worked well but the difficulty in distributing books during the lockdown is obvious and while the book would probably be available by the end of March for direct order from Lulu.com at full price, members paying a reduced rate and saving postage (a combined saving of up to £20) might have to wait an indeterminate time for their copy. This problem would need to be made absolutely clear to those ordering a members copy. Another possibility would be to charge members postage and post copies out but this would create a lot of work and post office visits for the Sales Secretary who unfortunately could not attend tonight.

### **6. 2019 Lincs Bird Report**

Phil Hyde (county bird recorder) provided progress report and particularly thanked Vin Fleming and Chris Grimshaw for their speedy write-ups on individual species. The hope is that this will be ready for printing (by Swallowtail Print of Norwich) by the end of this month or soon thereafter. Swallowtail will also oversee distribution to paid-up members from a list to

be supplied by AC. The preface on this 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition has been written by LBC president Prof Ian Newton.

### **7. Discount deals for LBC members**

JWr confirmed discount arrangements (as previously publicised in The Heron newsletter and in the website forum) with

a) Whittles Publishing and b) Fred Olsen Cruise Holidays. Two other offers are set to be confirmed shortly - the first with Wader Quest, the other with Bloomsbury/Helm publishing. JC suggested approaches be made to Zeiss (!) and Swarovski (!) for similar discounts. JWr noted some organisations may seek a membership card number as proof of LBC membership.

### **8. Website**

AC reported on enhancements to the website. The home page had also been refreshed. Further improvements are planned including, at the suggestion of PH, a link providing access to a page for those wishing to contribute records of species where descriptions are required. AC expressed thanks to Chris Grimshaw for continuing to maintain a daily log of county bird sightings. JWa queried the website's emphasis on membership renewals via Paypal when two-thirds of members preferred to pay by other means, notably standing order. AC agreed to amend this.

### **9. Update on *The Heron* monthly newsletter**

AC provided update on distribution (at no cost) by Mailchimp, revealing that 67 per cent of those on distribution list had opened their copies - one member on no fewer than 19 occasions. He thanked contributors and, following comments from PH and JWr, agreed to update/clarify access arrangements via Google Docs for new content.

### **10. Honorary life membership**

Neil Smith has emailed a note of thanks for being awarded hon life membership. PE noted that he had been helpful to the club on many occasions, most notably in providing species artwork.

### **11. Update on arrangements for 2021 AGM**

This will be held via Zoom at 7.30pm on March 23. Although there will be no guest speaker, proceedings will enable the club to fulfil its constitutional obligations. The format of the meeting may include a short photo-presentation and Q&A session but these arrangements will be finalised at the next committee meeting. AC agreed to circulate notice of meeting and agenda by February 23.

### **12. Officers' reports (if any) on items not previously covered on agenda**

a) Chairman

i) PE noted that Colin Casey wishes to give up his database management role but was willing to help his successor. 'Feelers' have been out to Charlie Barnes at Lincolnshire Environmental Records Committee (part of Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership) who is skilled at data management to see if he might be willing to take over. It may be that the commercial terms of our current data-sharing arrangements with GLNP need to be revised. Further discussions to be held by PE with CB on both topics, with an update at the next committee meeting.

ii) Cut End Hide. The hide is currently closed as it is in a dangerous state and repairs are being funded by the Environment Agency. JWa reported that payment had been made by EA and received. It is understood that staff at RSPB Frampton Marsh will be installing appropriate signage.

- iii) PE described efforts to encourage speedier reporting of rare breeding bird records in order that data can be put into the database before it goes to report-writers. He said the RSPB breeding survey on Willow Tits had been stymied by lockdown but hoped that a similar survey on breeding Turtle Doves from April/May onwards might fare better.
- iv) A Zoom account has been opened in the name of LBC to facilitate meetings. Any ideas for its use will be welcome. One option would be to have monthly members' meetings for small presentations or to discuss issues of interest. JC thought this would prove popular based on her experience of other birding meetings held via Zoom.

b) Treasurer

JWa's report on finances had been provided to committee members in advance of the meeting. The total costs of producing and distributing the county bird atlas amounted to £2743.01.

c) Secretary

JWr asked about the debut Big Bird Day on January 1. PE and AC reported that it had been well supported. A preliminary report had been posted on the website and a fuller report is due to feature in the February newsletter.

d) Membership secretary

None

e) Sales secretary

A report had been circulated to committee members by BS in advance of the meeting

f) County recorder

A report had been circulated to committee members by BS in advance of the meeting.

g) IT officer

Nothing further to report

**13. Any other business**

PH asked for past LBC annual reports and publications to be available online. NT described his experiences with the Lincolnshire Naturalists' Union which had successfully had copies of its *Transactions* scanned from hard copies by the Natural History Museum in London for freely-available circulation accessible via the Biodiversity Heritage Library. This to be considered further at a future committee meeting.

**14. Date and time of next meeting**

March 9 at 7.30pm via Zoom.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.10pm.