

Minutes of AGM of Lincolnshire Bird Club held at Whisby Education Centre on April 1, 2023

Attendees: Sally Prescott, Robert Oates, Ian Newton, Ian Misselbrook, Andy Sims, Chris Grimshaw, Stuart Britton, Peter Haywood, Jacque Harrison, John Margetts, Andrew Brewitt, Alison Baldwin, David Coker, Barrie Hunt, Steve Lovell, Nick Tribe, Terry Whalin, Gary Fenwick, Phil Hyde, Mike Harrison, Jonathan Cooper, John Watt, Phil Espin and Jim Wright. (Note-about 12 others attended the preceding presentation by guest speaker but did not stay for the formal business of the AGM.)

1. Apologies

These were received from: Andrew Chick, Bill Sterling, Pete Locking, Gary Steele, Ian Gordon

2. Minutes of the previous AGM and Matters arising from the Minutes

These were confirmed, as posted online, with no amendments and no matters arising.

3 a) Address by Hon Chairman Phil Espin

Welcome everyone to our 2023 AGM here at Whisby for the first time and on a Saturday afternoon too. A break with our traditional Tuesday night AGMs in the centre of the county and its great to see the boost in turnout as a result. It's good to see old faces and new. Thank you all for being here this afternoon and special thanks to our Honorary President Professor, Ian Newton, who we are all delighted is with us today.

So what has the club been up to over the last year?

Well, for the first time in many years, in 2022 we had a good programme of winter Zoom meetings and field meetings from May to October which proved popular and included a pelagic trip out of Grimsby and summer barbecue at Frampton. Thanks to Chris Gunn who organised the events and everyone who spoke, led and attended them. Unfortunately Chris took the role on for one year and so far despite requests no one has come forward to replace her as Events Organiser so the question of a programme for this year is in the balance. We rely on volunteers and our active resource on the committee is stretched. If anyone would like to volunteer for this role please speak up this afternoon.

The main business of the club is producing our annual Bird Report. For several past years the report has been printed within 15 months of the year end. 2021 is still not completed though hopefully it will be finished in the next week and off to our printers Swallowtail of Norwich by the end of April. The production of the report is a team effort and unfortunately the team is getting smaller putting more pressure on fewer people mainly Phil Hyde our County Recorder, Andrew Chick our IT Officer and myself. We need more support from the membership in all aspects of report production but especially writing up individual species accounts, so if anyone would like to help please volunteer to Phil Hyde.

I should mention that Phil who does a sterling job has decided to move to Northumberland to be closer to family. He will not give up his county recorder role immediately but it will be difficult for him to do it remotely from Northumberland and we will eventually need a new

county based recorder. So new blood is essential and it would be great to have someone to work side by side with Phil for a few months later this year on the 2022 report to ease into the job. The committee will approach who we think are suitable candidates but there is no denying it's a time consuming role and some good candidates may be too busy to take it on. We will be happy to look at a volunteer so have a think about it. If no good replacement is found we may have to look at radically cutting back the style of report we have produced since 2007.

It would be good to take time to consult members on their views about this but we don't have time to do it!

What else have we been up to, in no particular order?

Sales of *Birds of Lincolnshire* have continued to go well and we have now disposed of seven eighths of the books printed and made a profit for the Club. Difficult to believe its now two years since it was published.

Toby Collett's idea about a Lincolnshire Bird Trail was taken to the county council tourism team Visit Lincolnshire after an introduction by GLNP and after a lot of work in collaboration with Lincs Wildlife Trust and club volunteers including Toby, Graham Catley, Owen Beaumont, Jim Wright and myself, the website was launched last July featuring the Lincolnshire Coastal Bird Trail. We promoted it at the Rutland Bird Fair, the first time the club has had a stand there with the cost underwritten by Visit Lincolnshire. It was a valuable exercise for them and us. The next step is to produce a Wolds birding trail and if anyone has an interest in the Wolds and would like to take part in that please speak to me afterwards.

As you see from the accounts we have a lot of cash in the bank and we would like to spend it on conservation projects in the county. We have put cash in to help the start of a new Motus bird tracking aerial network in the county with the first at Gibraltar Point which should go up this year. Other aerals are being planned, and we will help with those too.

We have been talking with the BTO about potential research projects and that coalesced with concerns expressed from our members about taking curlew eggs from Lincolnshire airfields, headstarting them and releasing them in other parts of England. We want to know more about the county Curlew breeding population and whether head started Curlews can be released in Lincs. More about that as it develops. I have a meeting with Gill Fisher who works on the headstarting project next week to discuss how we can get involved.

Another issue that has just come up is the potential calamity of building a barrage across The Wash. We will be supporting all efforts to bury that proposal as soon as possible and will keep you abreast of developments through The Heron.

Our newsletter *The Heron* has proved to be a great success and a useful way of keeping in touch with members. Thank you to everyone who supports it especially Andrew Chick and Chris Grimshaw who do most of the leg work of bringing it together.

Another issue that keeps me busy is preparing the county annual report to the Rare Breeding Birds Panel. This years report was submitted a couple of months late in February this year. I've been doing this role since 2010 when I took it over from the late Steve Keightley. Its an interesting job requiring contact with many birders around the county and requiring

sensitivity about confidential information shared with us. If there is anyone who'd like to assist with that role, please speak with me afterwards.

I mentioned Phil Hyde is moving to Northumberland, following Andrew Chick moving to the Lake District last year. Another big change for us is that John Watt our Treasurer is retiring today after serving the club in that role for over 15 years. His meticulous record keeping and astute control of our cash has put us in the healthy financial position we are currently in. So we all owe him great thanks for his contribution. As a small token of appreciation for his service I asked him what he would like as a retirement gift and he chose a selection of items from Vine House Farm to aid his long term contribution to Garden Bird Watch. So John could you please step up so we can present this gift to recognise in a small way the great good you have done the club.

I am pleased to say my requests for volunteers don't always fall on deaf ears and Jon Cooper has volunteered to take on the role of Treasurer and has worked with John over the last couple of months to see what's involved. He is the committee's candidate to replace John and we'll be formally voting on that later in the meeting.

I should add that all other existing officers and committee members have indicated they are happy to continue in their current roles.

One last issue I should mention is that it has been proposed that the committee should look at raising membership rates which we haven't done in many years. We'll be doing that this summer and if we do decide to raise them we are constitutionally obliged to bring that before you at a vote at next year's AGM before any rise is implemented.

Finally, can I thank everybody who has helped the Club in anyway in the last year and not been mentioned and also I'd be happy to take questions on any aspect of the running of the Club now.

Can I ask when asking a question if you would state your name and where you are from and then your question.

3b) Questions from members

None.

4. Presentation of the Audited Accounts

Retiring treasurer John Watt detailed the significant income/ expenditure statistics and confirmed that the finances of the club were healthy. The balance as of December 31, 2022, was 346,329.68 (2021: £48,227.53)

He went on to report that there were 425 subscriptions (renewals or new memberships) during 2022. This compared with 412 the previous year. The breakdown was as follows:

- * 224 ordinary
- * 46 family
- * 153 senior citizen
- * 1 junior

Of these, 208 pay by direct debit, 208 pay by PayPal and nine by cheque or standing order.

Most of the club's income derives from sales of our data, via the Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership, to a wide range of organisations such as ecological consultancies acting as agents for planning applications.

5. Re-appointment of Auditor

Steve Bartlett was re-appointed.

6. Reports from other officers

- a) County recorder Phil Hyde appealed for someone with Excel or other software expertise to assist with processing of records. There were no reports from other officers.
- b) Membership secretary Mike Harrison said he liaised regularly with committee colleagues, notably Andrew Chick (plus Michelle Tyson at Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust), on membership data. It was impossible to be specific about membership figures because the situation was in constant flux. However, he confirmed that it was growing. "We cater for all," he declared.

7. Election of Officers and Committee Members

- a) Jon Cooper was formally elected honorary treasurer in succession to John Watt
- b) The rest of the committee was re-elected en bloc

8. Any other motions previously notified in writing or via email

None

9. Any other business

None

There being no further business, the chairman closed the meeting at 4.30pm.

A copy of the financial statement for the year ended 31st December 2022 is appended overleaf

LINCOLNSHIRE BIRD CLUB
 RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS ACCOUNT for the year ended 31st DECEMBER 2022

2021	2021		2022	2022
£	£		£	£
6,805.32		01-Jan Cash at Bank	HSBC Community A/c	5,448.12
20,185.09			HSBC Business Money Mgr A/c	20,187.11
<u>432.30</u>	27,423.71		PayPal A/c	<u>2,390.10</u>
				28,025.33
Receipts				
5,722.90		Subscriptions		5,876.30
106.38		Donations		57.59
489.51		Sales: Publications		510.81
4,465.00		Data		6,710.66
383.00		Misc.		491.90
418.72		BBQ		350.38
9,216.29		BoL Sales		2,417.93
0.00		Boat Trip		916.76
0.00		Less Card Commission		-7.92
0.00		Heritage Grant		950.00
2.02	20,803.82	Bank Interest		29.94
				<u>18,304.35</u>
	<u>48,227.53</u>			<u>46,329.68</u>
Payments				
0.00		Printing & Stationery		5.60
1,418.05		Postage		370.54
5,150.92		Bird Report		6,373.46
191.00		Miscellaneous		226.70
115.10		Meetings		143.88
0.00		Insurance		375.00
510.00		IT Costs		588.00
300.00		LWT Subs. Admin.		370.33
4,008.81		Sponsorship etc.		2,183.99
8,072.04		BoL		0.00
0.00		Boat Trip		865.00
0.00		Bird Fair		683.28
430.48		BBQ		341.48
5.80	20,202.20	Bank charges		89.40
				<u>12,616.66</u>
5,448.12		31-Dec Cash at Bank	HSBC Community A/c	20,217.05
20,187.11			HSBC Business Money Mgr A/c	10,766.80
<u>2,390.10</u>	28,025.33		PayPal A/c	<u>2,729.17</u>
				33,713.02
	<u>48,227.53</u>			<u>46,329.68</u>