

## **Minutes of meeting of Lincs Bird Club committee held via Zoom at 19.30 on November 21, 2023**

**1** Chairman Phil Espin welcomed Sally Prescott, Jon Cooper, Mike Harrison, Bill Sterling, Andrew Chick, Phil Hyde, Kev Wilson Phil Porter and Jim Wright.

**2** There were no apologies.

**3** The minutes of the meeting held on July 18, 2023 were approved, and it was agreed that they should be posted online forthwith.

**4** Matters arising:

a) It was confirmed that grant payment of £2,500 had been made to Lincs Wildlife Trust to subsidise engagement of contract worker to process Gibraltar Point records. The payment had been acknowledged with thanks.

b) PE confirmed that financial arrangements with GLNP have been concluded. Henceforth the club will receive 10 per cent (rather than 12.5 per cent) of turnover as part of the data sharing agreement.

c) Treasurer transition. Banking mandate change has been sought to reflect that JC is now club treasurer.

**5** Committee membership

The committee includes on formal/informal basis John Badley (Frampton, RSPB), Kev Wilson (Gib, LWT) and Grahame Hopwood (Whisby, LWT) - but no one representing Tetney Marshes, RSPB/ the Humber. It was agreed that an invitation should be extended to Pete Short to establish whether he or any of his colleagues might wish to represent RSPB Humber on the committee.

**6** Peregrine webcams

a) St Wulfram's, Grantham - although individual birds occasionally visit the site, no breeding has occurred during 2023

b) St James, Louth - It was formally agreed to proceed with subsidising installation of new camera equipment. The cost to the club is likely to be c £1,500. It is hoped the project will be completed by Christmas.

## 7 Recent Events

### a) Frampton Marsh (September 3)

Sally Prescott was thanked for organising the highly successful barbecue.

### b) Doddington Hall, Wilder Lincolnshire Festival (September 23/24)

Mike Harrison, Bill Sterling, Chris Grimshaw, Andy Sims and Jacqui Harrison were thanked for manning the stand which attracted plenty of interest from attendees. "It was a very successful event," said MH. Among those who was grateful to receive surplus LBC reports for distribution was Isobel Wright, rewilding manager at Doddington Hall and a senior lecturer at Lincoln University.

### c) Saltfleetby/ Theddlethorpe field walk (October 14)

Thanks were expressed to Owen Beaumont for leading the event.

JW asked for photographs to be taken at corresponding LBC events in future years. These would be useful in *The Heron*, on the club's website and in other publicity.

## 8 Future Events

### a) South Ormsby estate invitation

Sally Prescott has arranged a winter event at South Ormsby Estate at their invitation and the date proposed is Saturday 20th January, 2024 (8.30-11.30 am). So far 15 have booked - the maximum will be 30.

### b) Annual joint meeting with LNU.

PP reported that the LNU had not been able to arrange a speaker, so, at his suggestion, it was reluctantly agreed that no event would not be held in January 2024 though the option remains to hold it later in the year.

### c) Annual meeting of LBC

It was agreed that this will be held at Whisby Education Centre at 2pm on Saturday March 23, 2024, when raptor expert Tim Mackrill, of the Roy Dennis Foundation, will give a presentation.

### d) Cairngorms break (May 1-5, 2024)

JW confirmed that, in liaison with Grimsby RSPB, it was intended that between May 1-5 next year, the Lincs Bird Club would repeat the four-night trip of April 2023 to the Cairngorms. Booking (£300 per person) is direct with coach company Cairngorm Travel (01405 761334).

## 9 Membership subscriptions

Following a lengthy discussion, it was agreed to increase subscription rates - the first for many years - subject to approval at the AGM. The proposed new rates as from April 1, 2024 are: Corporate £30, family £20, ordinary £17, senior citizen £14, under-21 £5.

## **10 Covenham Reservoir Water Sports Association**

It was agreed that LBC should seek representation on this association to represent the interests of birders and the welfare of birds which are regularly prone to disturbance, especially from jet-skiers. LWT's previous involvement lapsed many years ago. PE/ AC to approach the association.

## **11 Curlew nests on/near RAF airfields in Lincolnshire**

PE reported that the Ministry of Defence has agreed to fund a 2024 survey of nesting sites. This has been initiated by the LBC (five of whose members have volunteered to participate), Natural England and the RAF Ornithological Society whose members will have access to the airfields. It is hoped the £6,000 funding will be sufficient to cover the travel/subsistence costs of the RAFOS members, most of whom will probably come from outside the county.

AC congratulated PE and said this was an excellent project to be involved with.

MH suggested the club needed to make itself aware of any other nesting sites at private airfields.

PE said he had been advised that breeding had been reported from the airfield in Wickenby and said was feasible that they might also breed at Humberside Airport in Kirmington.

BS noted that many farmers in Lincolnshire had their own private airstrips where Curlew-breeding was possible.

## **12 BTO WinGS (Gulls) survey 2024/2025**

PE reported that the BTO was seeking volunteers to count gulls at roosts and randomly selected sites for a survey in January 2024.

## **13 Reports from officers**

### **a) Chairman**

i) PE noted that many LBC members had attended the funeral of John Clarkson. He suggested there should be a memorial to John and asked for committee members to come up with suggestions. PE further advised that Andy Sims had taken over as 'listmaster' for recording and sharing the Lincolnshire lists of interested birders (as reported in the November edition of *The Heron*).

ii) PE reported on his joint attendance with JW at a Zoom meeting for the country's meeting county bird clubs organised by Keith Betton of Hampshire Ornithological Society. This provided some useful insights - for instance, on how other clubs seek to attract more female/ young members.

iii) PE said he had attended the annual conference on November 1 of the Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership which had discussed the Nature Recovery Strategy for Lincolnshire. PE has agreed to join a Species

Recovery Group for the county. This has been set up by Nick Tribe of Natural England.

iv) PE noted that Gibraltar Point's Motus project, part-funded by LBC, had achieved its first 'hit' - a Yellow-browed Warbler.

b) Treasurer

JC updated members on income and expenditure, noting that the club seemed to be paying a significant sum to a website maintenance company for "not a lot". AC said he would be happy to discuss this with JC in a telephone conversation in early December.

MH said he thought the club was paying an excessive premium for public liability insurance. JW said he would provide JC with contact details of another insurance provider which might offer a lower quote.

c) Secretary

None

d) IT manager/ webmaster/ newsletter editor

AC reported that assistance would be welcome on updating the website. JW asked if the club should seek commercial support. AC felt this was unnecessary and would appeal for voluntary support in a future edition of the newsletter.

e) Sales Secretary

BSDs written report stated:

"Sales for 2023 – It has been an average year with Birds of Lincolnshire still holding up though now showing signs of slowing down.

Latest Annual Report 2021 – only 1 sold (so far) - poor but may be reflective of a larger membership.

Publications sold: 39

Sales - monies received: £802.10

Publications free gratis: 299 (mostly given out at events or hand collected)

Postage for free gratis: £28.89

I would like to review the Free Gratis list presently in use to see if it is still relevant – any takers?

Note: These numbers are not the complete Sales generated by the club, as sales by LWT, RSPB, direct from LULU website, Wild Sounds and by other means are reported elsewhere and captured by the Treasurer?

A total 257 of the older publications have been given away Free of Charge to the general public at various events and to anyone requesting them, as per our aim of trying to enthuse the wider none birding community and to stimulate visitors from outside the county to visit."

PE thanked BS for his report, and said the club needed to chase up the Lincs Wildlife Trust and the RSPB to ascertain the sales (if any) of copies of Birds of Lincolnshire of which they hold stocks.

f) Membership secretary

MH said 15 new members had joined since the last meeting.

He expressed disquiet that the Lincs Wildlife Trust, which processes most of our membership data, had not responded to his request for up-to-date list. JC responded that he had received this list within the past 24 hours and would forward a copy to MH.

MH suggested that more members might be attracted if, at a future event such as the Lincolnshire Showground springtime event, we had an interactive stand featuring a hide with rotating images of birds. Members agreed to consider options ahead of the next committee meeting.

g) County recorder's report

Report from PH:

Update on the 2021 report: All copies successfully distributed.

LBC Records Committee: Nothing substantial to report, continues successfully.

Scarce migrants report 2022: I have forwarded the Lincs records to Steve White and Chris Kehoe who publish this annual report in British Birds.

Montagu's Harrier review: I have sent a truncated version of the Lincs records of Montagu's Harriers from 2013-2022 in answer to a request for UK records to be reviewed by BBRC.

LBC Database: JC has compiled a successful summary of the 2022 data which is on a Google sheet for myself, PE and any other writers to access. Well done!

The majority of LBRC records for 2023 have been assessed and archived, and most of the 2023 BBRC records to date have been submitted. Missing BBRC submissions are being chased.

Lincs List website – update of records: 2022 records accepted by LBRC and BBRC have been added, for the most part.

BBRC progress: Louise Bacon, the new secretary, is organising a Zoom meeting for county recorders some time in December or January to canvass opinions and to share any issues we all have. Good idea!

**14 Any other urgent business**

None.

**15 Date, time and place of next meeting.**

It was agreed that this should be held at 7.30pm on Tuesday February 13 via Microsoft teams (not Zoom).

**16** Prior to closing the meeting at 9.18pm, PE wished all committee/LBC members good cheer (and good birding) for the forthcoming festive season and beyond.