

## Minutes of Lincs Bird Club AGM Whisby 15 March 2025 at

1 Chairman Phil Espin welcomed the following members to the meeting:

Ian Newton, Phil Espin, Phil Hyde, Jim Wright, Jon Cooper, Mike Harrison, Sally Prescott, Pete Locking, Chris Grimshaw, Nicki Clarkson, Chris Gunn, Chris Hibbing, Pete Haywood, Mat Dineen, Denise Halborg, Julie Graham, Terry Whalin, Jon Thornes, Alison Baldwin, R M O'Conner, William Lawrence, Barbara James, Chris Simonds, P. Harland, Jane Stamp, Glen Stamp, John Watt

2 Apologies for absence were received from: Roger Parsons, Andy Chick, Trevor Kerry, Barrie Hunt, Clive Kent, Andy Sims, Bill Sterling, Garry Fenwick, Gill Brandon, Mark Brandon

3 The minutes of the 2024 AGM (as posted on the LBC website) were approved as a true record

4 There were no matters arising from the minutes.

5 The Hon Chairman's Address

Welcome everyone to our 2025 AGM here at Whisby for the third time.  
Thank you all for being here this afternoon.

I have now served as your chair for 11 years. That's a long time but I've enjoyed doing it and am happy to continue, unless someone is itching to replace me. Infusion of new talent is always welcome. Our Honorary Secretary Jim Wright has put in 8 years and has decided to stand down though he will continue to serve on the committee as an ordinary member. Thank you Jim for your service. I'm delighted to say that Pete Locking of North Somercotes has volunteered to take over and the committee co-opted him as Hon Sec at our last meeting in February.

All our other officers and committee members have agreed to stay in post.

So what has kept us busy this year? For me it's been four things I want to focus on.  
First our annual bird report. 2022 came out in May last year, as usual to critical acclaim. Thank you to our County Recorder Phil Hyde and all the contributors for your sterling work.

A special thank you to our Treasurer Jon Cooper who as well as managing our money, does a sterling job producing the data packages for each species that we use to write report entries. It is not clear yet when the 2023 report will be finished but it will be more likely summer than spring. As always we need to add to our team of report writers and if this is something you'd like to be a part of please speak to me or Phil Hyde.

Second our Breeding Curlew Survey the work for this took place in April to July and I'd like to thank our 15 or so members who took part giving us full coverage of our survey area. I'd also like to thank RAFOS who were able to gain access to closed military areas where the most important action was taking place. It's my job to write the full survey report up and I now have everything I need so apologies it hasn't been done yet. I've prioritised the county RBBP report which had to be completed by end of Feb and some personal holidays too! The bird report is my number one priority at the moment but the curlew report will be done as soon as LBR 2023 is put to bed.

Third Social media

Our newsletter The Heron which goes out monthly to all our 450 members is proving a most effective way of staying in touch with you all. I'd like to thank Andrew Chick the editor for making sure it comes out at the beginning of each month. The monthly reports section is one of the most read parts. Chris Grimshaw has compiled this for a number of years and has recently retired from the role. Jo Orchard has stepped up to take over and I am sure we are all very grateful to both of them for their diligent work.

Thank you Chris and Jo.

Another useful role of the Heron is announcing dates of our events and reports of how they went which Sally Prescott organises. Please read it for all news of what the club is up to and thank you Sally for developing this part of our activities.

As well as The Heron e newsletter we have a number of accounts you can follow to see what is going on in the county.

The oldest is the forum on our website which has been going over 20 years. Its heyday was 15 years ago but it is still used by a hard core of fewer than 30 older members. One of the difficulties is that it is members only and you have to sign in when you use it. We are looking at making it readable by non-members to promote its use.

Next up is our X feed formerly known as Twitter which is open to the public. We use it to share information about birds in the county and to promote what we do. It has 4300 followers but we don't know how many of those are dormant or bogus accounts, probably over 10%. James Hewson runs our X feed which is an increasingly difficult task. In the last couple years there has been increasing disenchantment with X,

Thank you for persisting with it James.

Many serious academics and birders have moved to Bluesky a new social platform though many birders are still on X. Matt Dineen has kindly agreed to build our following there and we now have 192 followers.

Thank you Matt.

We also have a Facebook presence: Lincolnshire birding page with 2000 members. That is a private group open to the public, anyone can join, we use it to promote the clubs activities and for those interested to share images of birds.

Finally, we have the Lincs Rare Bird WhatsApp group. Strictly for club members any of whom can join. It has 118 members and is news only, no chat.

It would be a fair criticism that we don't do Instagram or Snapchat or other channels that appeal to younger birders but if you'd like to volunteer to run them please speak up.

Overseeing that lot can blow up at any time but it is the Forum which traditionally raises the most thorny issues! Thank you to all who take part and help run and administer them creating the sense of community we have in the club.

#### 4 Birds of Louth

Many of you will remember John Clarkson our former County Recorder who died 18 months ago. It was his dying wish that a second much improved edition of Birds of Louth he originally wrote in 2007 would be published after his death. He wanted to showcase his excellent photographs and those of his friends. I am pleased to say that wish was fulfilled in May last year. The club published the book and the cost was underwritten jointly by Nicky Clarkson and myself. We printed 512 copies and only have 30 or so left which is a tremendous result.

All profits on the book are being donated to Brain Tumour Research. Readers are recognising the book's coverage is typical of most small towns and rural areas of the county and it has been well received. Which is pleasing to me as I wrote the text! The remaining copies are £12 it's available here today and if you still haven't got one buy now while stocks last. Nicky will be happy to take your cash.

Looking to the future the BTO have confirmed the next national BTO Atlas will start in November 2027 and finish in July 2031. I originally joined the LBC committee back in 2011 as the BTO representative as I was and still am the BTO regional organiser for East Lincs.

I was heavily involved in the last Atlas from 2008 to 2011 and hope to be in the next one.

The BTO Atlas is the biggest thing in British birding when it's on and I hope like me you are all looking forward to taking part in the next one.

At some point in the next year we will need to decide if the club will go for doing a complete tetrad atlas for the county and publishing the results in a book form. We haven't had a county atlas since the 1980s and that was published in 2020.

We need to be certain we will have full practical support from the membership before we commit. I'd like to hear any thoughts anyone has under any other business at the end of the meeting. Especially anyone keen on volunteering to take a lead role in the project.

That could involve the survey work as well as the write up which will be in book form: 12 years, hopefully not 40 years after Birds of Lincolnshire 2021.

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 under any other business.

6 Hon Treasurer Jon Cooper presented the audited accounts and provided a brief overview of income and expenditure. The state of the clubs finances remain healthy at £41,580.74p.

7 Steve Bartlett of Hessle was re-appointed as Auditor.

8 Reports from other officers(if any)

The only report was from the County Recorder who updated members on the progress of the 2022 report which he expected to be ready in June.

9 Pete Locking was elected unopposed as Honorary Secretary.

10 The remainder of the committee was elected en bloc.

11 There were no motions for debate from members.

12 There were no questions from members.

13 There was no other business.

14 Date and place of 2026 AGM to be confirmed at a later date. There being no further business, the chairman closed the meeting.