



Welsh Ornithological Society

Minutes of the Council meeting at Plas Dolerw on Saturday, 9 March 2013

**Present:** Anne Brenchley, Richard Facey, Mick Green, Bob Haycock, Derek Moore, Carlton Parry, Ian Spence, Steph Tyler, Alan Williams, Iolo Williams

**Apologies:** Julian Hughes, Kelvin Jones, Rhion Pritchard, Reg Thorpe

**13.01 Minutes of meeting on 17 November 2012**

Accepted

**13.02 Matters arising**

**12.13 WOS e-media**

Still outstanding action.

<b>To ask National Library of Wales how they expect us to deal with issue of gaining permission from each photographer to have website archived.</b>	<b>IMS</b>
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**12.17 Treasurer's report**

The Bangor Bird Club did send a cheque so that we now have all possible clubs as Affiliate Members.

**12.42 Succession planning for Council**

DM has been in touch with Ben West who is a Solicitor and birder but who is not able to help us until at least July.

**12.43 Small grants / awards**

As part of a short discussion it was reiterated that nominations for Lifetime Achievement Awards need to be resubmitted for this year.

**12.51.1 Hedge-cutting**

There was discussion and concern that the ripping out of hedges is still ongoing. There seems to be a lack of knowledge of the law affecting hedgerows, which is a last semi-natural habitat. A suggestion was made that we start a campaign, with other NGOs, to protect hedges and to make very clear the lack of action to support biodiversity in Wales.

<b>To write to RSPB Cymru and Wildlife Trusts Wales to initiate some action to protect hedges.</b>	<b>DM</b>
<b>To seek assistance of Solicitor colleague to clarify the laws affecting hedgerows.</b>	<b>DM</b>
<b>To meet to discuss preparation of a report about lack of action to support biodiversity in Wales.</b>	<b>IW, MG, ST, BH?, DM</b>

**13.03 Treasurer's report**

The financial report presented to the meeting is very encouraging. After some discussion it was clarified that Standing Orders for subscriptions are preferable to PayPal payments. Members are to be encouraged to set up Standing Orders using their internet banking facilities.

There was brief discussion about why the membership is still only around 220 members. There are still some subscriptions to come in, so actual membership is currently about 250.

<b>To contact Daniel Jenkins-Jones to ask if a WOS membership leaflet could be sent out with the next Y Barcud.</b>	<b>IMS</b>
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We have now reached an amount of income that means we have to submit more detailed accounts to the Charity Commission and we will have to prepare an Annual Report.

**13.04 Conference 2013**

There was discussion about which speakers should have which slot in the programme – see separate file with our plan.

<b>To contact Nick Moran to ask if he would mind postponing his contribution to another year as we are over committed.</b>	<b>IMS</b>
<b>To tidy up the spreadsheet version of the programme and email to all.</b>	<b>IMS</b>

The venue is booked and AW is thinking of asking the caterers of the Abergavenny conference to do the food this time. All agreed. The dining room will be outside the main conference hall at the Monmouth venue.

<b>If there is no response from Swarovski, to contact Alan Davies to see if Leica may be interested in sponsoring the conference.</b>	<b>IMS</b>
<b>To deal with all the bookings for this conference.</b>	<b>AW</b>
<b>To invite the local MP, AM, Katie-Jo Luxton and Sian Whitehead to the conference.</b>	<b>AW, ST</b>

**13.05 Conference 2014**

This will be on 8 November 2014.

<b>To visit a potential venue at Glyndwr University in Wrexham on Tuesday, 12 March.</b>	<b>IMS</b>
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There was brief discussion about the need for a theme and a possible speaker was named.

**13.06 Succession planning for officers**

To discuss at the July 2013 meeting (hopefully with the Solicitor present).

**13.07 Letter from John Lawton Roberts**

John had written a long letter objecting to the change of the Society's journal from 'Welsh Birds' to 'Birds in Wales'. There was discussion of the issues and we agreed an action.

<b>To reply to John with the outcome of the discussion.</b>	<b>DM</b>
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**13.08 WOS small grants**

ST expressed disappointment that there had been no applications for small grants this year. AB informed her that there would be a late application from a student at Bangor to do with Twite.

There have been no reports from Jon Rowe, North Wales WT, about progress with his project and he has not responded to any emails.

<b>To contact the Director of the NWWT about Jon's not meeting the conditions of his grant. (Frances Cattenach was contacted during the meeting and she will discuss the issue with Jon).</b>	<b>ITW</b>
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13.09

**WOS merchandise**

There was some information about what is needed and it was agreed that WOS should pay for an appropriate combination of logo and text (the name of the society in English and Welsh in a circle around the logo). Then members could order anything in the catalogue with that 'logo'.

<b>To send a good quality logo to MG with the necessary words.</b>	<b>IMS</b>
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13.10

**Proposal for reciprocal advertising with British Birds**

There was short discussion and it was agreed to enter this reciprocal agreement. WOS will circulate a BB leaflet to members and BB will carry an advert for WOS and its conference, preferably in the September issue.

<b>To contact British Birds and make the necessary arrangements.</b>	<b>ST</b>
<b>To contact Natur Cymru for a reciprocal distribution of leaflets.</b>	<b>IMS</b>

13.11

**Report from the Bird Conservation Forum**

A discussion paper had been circulated prior to the meeting and the main concern was that this is about process not about action for the benefit of biodiversity. The key is to make it clear that the Welsh Government has responsibility for biodiversity actions (or not) and it cannot escape that responsibility.

IMS expressed concern that the Welsh Government is going to lead a discussion about data sharing at a workshop when it is not a good exemplar of the practice.

AB reported on attendance at a meeting about a LIFE funded review of Natura 2000 sites. The Welsh Government is apparently in support of this project and may be starting to recognise that it has not done well with conserving biodiversity over the last 20 years. AB is willing to continue to represent the WOS at further meetings.

<b>To represent the WOS at meetings about Natura 2000 sites.</b>	<b>AB</b>
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13.12

**Publications**

RP had submitted a proposal for an update of the book 'Birds in Wales'. There was some discussion about various issues and IMS reminded Council of the work he was about to start on – pulling together all the tetrad map information from the last Atlas to publish the best all-Wales maps possible to date. At the moment it is envisaged that these maps will be made available on the website with space for members from, say, four regions of Wales (ie North, Central, South-West and South-East) to add interpretive text beside the maps.

It was agreed that the WOS needs to be involved with updating information about birds across Wales and this should be done in a format that can be updated regularly. If this information were to be made available on a website, it would supersede the need for a book at this time.

<b>To send reply to RP.</b>	<b>IMS</b>
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13.13

**Surveys**

AB raised an issue arising from a recent paper in British Birds 'Population estimates of birds in the UK'. It talked about the possibility of doing local area surveys to estimate populations of some species. AB suggested that the WOS should promote such surveys of single species, eg Rock Pipit.

<b>To contact Roger Riddington to ask if WOS could circulate a PDF of the article to all Council members.</b>	<b>AB</b>
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**13.14 BirdTrack**

IMS reported that there did not appear to be a spike in the graph of new users of BirdTrack in Wales towards the end of 2012. There was some discussion about the need to encourage more people to use it.

It was suggested that the WOS should organise a workshop to show people how to use BirdTrack but there was no firm agreement to arrange this immediately.

**13.15 BTO Cymru**

AB had emailed a report from KJ last night and gave a brief run through the items in the report. She also gave out copies of the latest Welsh Newsletter. Clearly there is much going on.

**13.16 Subgroup reports**

WRP – no report

WRBBRSG – the report from KJ had touched on this issue and IMS gave a brief report of the meeting in early February at Aberystwyth. There is a desire to have a group with an overview of raptor work in Wales but there is a need to clarify the roles of the Welsh Kite Trust and the WOS/WRBBRSG. There is also a desire to have a shorter name for the subgroup.

**13.17 WOS e-media**

IMS apologised for not forwarding a report from JH and not having it at the meeting.

<b>To forward the report to all.</b>	<b>IMS</b>
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Council thanks JH for all his efforts with the website and e-media which are extremely helpful for the WOS.

**13.18 Any other business**

**13.18.1 Pledge to Fledge**

DM recommended that we adopt a system from America to try to engage more, new birders in bird watching and recording . There was some discussion.

<b>To forward to all the webpage with the pledge for us to consider.</b>	<b>DM</b>
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DM suggested that we consider introducing a school bird ID competition to encourage young people.

**13.18.2 Cardiff University OS**

RF informed us that he had formed a group at the University to introduce students to bird watching and learning some basic identification skills. He sought support from other members.

<b>To give a talk about basic bird identification. To be arranged with RF.</b>	<b>DM</b>
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**13.18.3 Birds in Wales**

ST asked for all to cajole others into submitting papers for the next Birds in Wales.

**13.18.4 Calendar on the WOS website**

CP explained that he had been unsuccessful in trying to contact JH about the calendar and what was required. It was explained that JH has been very busy recently.

<b>To attempt to contact JH again.</b>	<b>CP</b>
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**13.18.5 Consultation about banning the shooting of Greenland White-fronted Geese**

MG had prepared a response on behalf of WOS with some assistance from Tony Fox. He was thanked for this.

<b>To send the response to the Welsh Government.</b>	<b>MS</b>
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Ian M Spence  
10 March 2013