



## Welsh Ornithological Society

### Minutes of the Council meeting at Plas Dolerw on Saturday, 28 November 2009

**Present:** Anne Brenchley, Mick Green, Derek Moore, Ian Spence, Steph Tyler, Alan Williams

**Apologies:** Julian Hughes, Pete Jennings, John Lloyd, Iolo Williams

#### 09-21 Minutes of the meeting of 4 July 2009

Accepted

#### 09-22 Matters arising

##### 08-24.6 WOS President

We were all pleased that IW was elected to be President at the AGM and sorry that he could not attend the meeting.

<b>To send a card on behalf of the Council to express our condolences on the death of IW's father.</b>	<b>DM</b>
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JH had reported by email before the meeting that the Press release about IW's election had been run in The Daily Post, the Western Mail and on the BBC website. It may also appear in some birding press that has not been published yet.

##### 09-13 Treasurer's report

<b>To arrange to have accounts as a downloadable pdf file on the website.</b>	<b>AW</b>
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##### 09-17 Newsletter for Affiliated Members

<b>At the end of the year to send a bill for renewal to all Affiliate Members, with a letter about progress.</b>	<b>AW, DM</b>
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##### 09-19 BTO Cymru update

DM met with Andy Clements at the BirdFair and has had further discussions with Graham Appleton.

##### 09-20.1 OPAL grant scheme

AB informed the meeting that the OPAL scheme only applies in England. She encouraged us to join the Welsh Voluntary Council at £15.00 per annum to find out about grants.

<b>To explore other sources of funds.</b>	<b>All</b>
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##### 09-20.2 Letter from WOS member (re Maelienydd Common)

The Wildlife Trust in Radnor (with assistance from PJ) is negotiating with CCW for the Trust to be involved in management of the site.

##### 09-20.4 Corporate members

<b>To discuss with AW and MG the appropriate wording for a flier to invite organisations to take up corporate membership of the WOS.</b>	<b>DM, MG</b>
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#### 09-23 Conference debrief

IMS had circulated correspondence about the bill for Glasdir prior to the meeting. The verbal agreement IMS had made was for £180 for the day, but the bill requested £738. There was

discussion about the situation and an agreement.

<b>To redraft the letter to Karen Owen (Manager at Glasdir) to say that we will pay the amount IMS agreed verbally but as a gesture of goodwill we will pay another £70 so that the conference makes no surplus.</b>	<b>IMS</b>
<b>To pay for the conference and food, as agreed above.</b>	<b>AW</b>

Other points covered were:

- Ensure the organiser gets written confirmation of the cost of the venue.
- Get all powerpoints in advance so they can be tested.
- The RSPB help with bookings worked very well. What caused a problem at reception was the number of birdwatchers who turned up and had not booked.
- In future to charge £5 extra for those who just turn up on the day.
- Need to provide those who book with tickets and demand them on admission to the conference in exchange for the name badge for the day.
- We must offer expenses to all speakers and factor that into the ticket price.
- Ensure the conference is reported on the website (already done).
- An email had been sent to all speakers to thank them for their contributions.
- We must supply tea and coffee on arrival in future.

<b>To add these points to the conference planning sheets and circulate to all.</b>	<b>IMS</b>
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#### 09-24 Treasurer's report

AW had circulated a sheet prior to the meeting that showed the WOS is likely to make a small surplus at the end of the year. About 225 subscriptions have been paid (thus at least 225 people are members as some are family memberships).

JH had emailed all with some notes that included an observation about membership income that did not take account of Gift Aid (which should be considered along with subscription income). He also raised the issue of how best to attract more members.

<b>Discussion of the issue of increasing the numbers of members deferred until the next meeting.</b>	<b>All</b>
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JH has made great progress with improving the website and it is hoped it may attract some new members. We need to consider what it is that is distinctive that the WOS offers birdwatchers in general.

#### 09-25 Editor's report

ST was not sure if the change of the Society's journal to 'Birds in Wales, agreed at the last AGM, would have an implication for the ISBN number.

<b>To continue with the same number but for the volume number to be consecutive from the current number and to be a new volume each calendar year.</b>	<b>ST</b>
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The next edition of the journal has several papers nearly ready for publication. Ideas for other articles were discussed.

ST reported that Jon Green is not happy about the idea of joining the Rare and Scarce Birds and the Welsh Bird Report into one report. He said that the Rare and Scarce Birds replaced the autumn newsletter. Subsequent discussion was about a range of issues about the bird report, the issue of rarities and the need for the extra layer of record adjudication – the Welsh Records Panel.

<b>To email Jon Green again offering assistance with the editing of the Welsh Bird Report from DM and Russell Jones.</b>	<b>DM</b>
<b>To obtain a quote for a Welsh Bird Report from the printer of the North-East Wales Bird Report – with two specs – as the WBR is currently produced, and if prepared print ready as a high quality pdf.</b>	<b>IMS</b>
<b>To check the specification that is currently used for the Welsh Bird Report with ST.</b>	<b>IMS</b>

<b>To consider reintroducing a newsletter – with an offer to help editing one by AB.</b>	<b>All</b>
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**09-26 CCW Grant Aid**

Council was grateful for the comments from Siân Whitehead about the suggestions made for possible grant aid.

Our discussions centred around 'capacity building' and what a package that might assist with this would include. The suggestions for immediate assistance were:

- The Recorders' Forum
- A revised membership leaflet
- A short paper describing what WOS does to be made widely available
- A car sticker

At a later date:

- Scanning past volumes of Welsh Birds to make them available from the website.

<b>To email all Recorder, known Report Editors and Local Record Centres to invite them to the forthcoming Recorders's Forum with the issue of Bird Indicators in Wales on the agenda and to seek ideas of any issues they would wish to discuss together.</b>	<b>IMS</b>
<b>To contact David Cromack so that the correct entry can be put in the next Birdwatcher's Yearbook about the WOS.</b>	<b>IMS</b>
<b>To discuss with JH the possibility of putting together a first stage bid for capacity building, involving support for the Recorders' Forum (with travel expenses and lunch covered) and the membership leaflets.</b>	<b>DM</b>

Concern was expressed about the very poor attendance at the Recorders's Forum in February 2009. It was thought that we need to engage the commitment from all Recorders in Wales and from the editor of the Welsh Bird Report, though there was uncertainty exactly how to do that.

**09-27 Planning for the conference in 2010**

There was discussion about the theme and possible content of the next conference on 6 November 2010. It was agreed the theme should be 'Wetlands in Wales' with the draft programme being:

- Scene setting (IW) – 15 min
- Wetlands for birds (BTO) – 40 m
- Wetland habitat issues and flooding (Env Agency) – 40 m
  
- Newport wetlands (CCW?) – 30 m
- Malltraeth wetlands (RSPB) – 30 m
- Declines of breeding waders in Wales (RSPB)
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- Little Ringed Plovers in the Tywi Valley (DM) – 20 m
- Goosanders (Carl Mitchell, WWT) – 20 m
- River birds in Wales (ST) – 20 m
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- Raffle
- Close of conference

A quiz would be on during the day with pictures around the conference venue.

Possible future conference themes include: Uplands, Coasts and estuaries.

<b>Inform the RSPB and IW of the date of the next conference.</b>	<b>IMS</b>
<b>To check Coleg Powys/Theatr Hafren and the Carno Community Centre as possible venues in January 2010</b>	<b>MG, IMS</b>
<b>To invite Katie-Jo Luxton to the next Council meeting to discuss RSPB/WOS issues.</b>	<b>IMS</b>

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**09-28 WOS subgroups**

The Council would welcome the WRSG becoming a subgroup of the WOS, especially with a name like the 'Specialist Species Monitoring Group'.

There was discussion about establishing common rules/expectations for each subgroup in relation to the WOS constitution.

<b>To email Reg Thorpe and Kelvin Jones with copies of the constitution with a request for what each would like as appropriate wording for their group, clarifying how they would like to relate with the Council of WOS.</b>	<b>IMS</b>
<b>In future, to email minutes of Council meetings to the Chairs of subgroups.</b>	<b>IMS</b>
<b>To have the idea of a 'Specialist Species Monitoring Group' on the agenda of the next Recorders' Forum to forge links with Recorders.</b>	<b>IMS</b>

**09-29 Recorders' Forum, February 2010**

See actions for items 09-26 and 09-28 above.

**09-30 BTO Cymru update**

Council was informed about the discussions between DM, Andy Clements and Graham Appleton. Concern was expressed about the BTO decision to have their office in Bangor. We hope there will be better communications between the BTO and WOS in the future.

**09-31 Any other business**

**09-31.1 WOS website**

Council is grateful for the work JH has put into redesigning the website. Suggestions to add to the features were:

- To establish more useful links on the website, eg all programmes of events from all Affiliate Member societies.
- To have a means of tracking any records submitted to the WRP to check on progress.

It was agreed that Wallcreeper become the new website host.

**09-32 Dates of next meetings**

Please clearly mark your diaries with these dates for Council meetings:

**6 March 2010**  
**10 July 2010**  
**20 November 2010**

All will be at Plas Dolerw, Newtown, on Saturdays, starting at 10.30 to finish by 14.30

The next Recorders' Forum is on Saturday, **27 February 2010**