

## Minutes of the Council meeting at Plas Dolerw on Saturday, 11 November 2017

Present: Anne Brenchley (invited), Richard Facey, Mick Green, Bob Haycock, Julian Hughes, Kelvin Jones, Keith Noble, Carlton Parry, Giles Pepler, Rhion Pritchard, Dan Rouse (invited), Ian Spence, Steve Sutcliffe, Alan Williams.

Apologies for absence: Heather Crump, Steve Stansfield, Iolo Williams.

<b>17.36</b>	<b>Minutes of meeting on 15 July 2017</b>	
	Accepted.	
<b>17.37</b>	<b>Matters arising</b>	
<b>16.10</b>	<b>Consultation about the banning of shooting of Greenland White-fronted Geese</b>	
	With Tony Fox, MG has written to the African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement to say that the Welsh Government had not taken appropriate action to protect this species.	
<b>16.44</b>	<b>Conservation strategy paper</b>	
	The paper was published in vol 14.1 of <i>Birds in Wales</i> . There is now a need for a table on the website showing the surveys that are currently known about and to add others as they become known. There should be a plea for additions.	
<b>17.20</b>	<b>Treasurer's Report</b>	
	<b>To find out more details from GoCardLess and make a recommendation.</b>	<b>SS</b>
<b>17.23</b>	<b>Succession planning</b>	
	Katie-Jo Luxton wishes to continue for the RSPB to have a presence at WOS Council meetings. Reg Thorpe's replacement has now been appointed – Neil Lambert. JH has been appointed to the role just for this one meeting.	
	<b>To contact Neil Lambert and explain his role on WOS Council.</b>	<b>JH</b>
<b>17.27</b>	<b>Grants</b>	
	Reiteration of the crucial deadline dates: Conservation small grants – 28 February Nominations for Lifetime Achievement Award – 15 September Derek Moore Student Research Award – 15 September Student bursaries – no deadline	
	<b>To put these as recurring events on the calendar on the website.</b>	<b>CP</b>

17.28	<p><b>Lifetime Achievement Award</b></p> <p>IMS apologised to the meeting for his error in not inviting Jerry Lewis to the conference. IMS has emailed Jerry to explain the error and has apologised to him. IMS also explained that he will be presented with the award at a Gwent OS meeting that is due to take place this evening.</p>	
17.30	<p><b>NRW seabird census</b></p> <p>RF has been appointed as Ornithologist for NRW from 1 Jan 2018. He was congratulated.</p>	
17.38	<p><b>Chair's Report</b></p> <p>There was nothing to report since the conference last week.</p>	
17.39	<p><b>Treasurers' Report</b></p> <p>SS supplied papers with the latest figures. Sponsorship of Manx Shearwater cost c£459.</p> <p>Conference 2017 is likely to lose c £450 when all is accounted for. AW informed the meeting that he sent an anonymous donation of £500 that will help defray this loss.</p> <p>The Society is likely to break even at the end of the year.</p>	
17.40	<p><b>Membership Secretary's Report</b></p> <p>The new database in Wordpress is working though there are still a few inconsistencies compared with the previous database that are to be resolved. AW is entering membership data on both databases until he feels confident that the new one is working correctly. The Wordpress database is not as easy to use, eg to identify gift aid subscriptions, of standing order payers (though there are other overall benefits).</p> <p>A new member has refused to use PayPal and it is known that others do not like it. After discussion it was agreed that implementation of Direct Debits would be beneficial and should be done as soon as possible.</p> <p>Alison Noble (Keith's wife) has expressed willingness to take over the role of Membership Secretary though she may not wish to be a member of Council. The post is written into the constitution.</p>	
	<p><b>To check if Alison is willing to join Council.</b></p>	<p><b>KN</b></p>
	<p>There was further discussion about the use of PayPal and Direct Debits. AW is proposing to hand over to Alison about the time of the March 2018 meeting which is the anniversary of the new database system.</p> <p>There was some concern that the membership is still only 290 (not the 350 the strategy had targeted), but AW pointed out this was the year that subscriptions had been increased.</p>	
	<p><b>To put recruitment of members on the agenda for the next meeting.</b></p>	<p><b>IMS</b></p>

17.41		<p><b>Editor's Report</b></p> <p>RP was disappointed that issues with the font MindBlue caused a delay to the printing of the last edition of <i>Birds in Wales</i>. MG is pleased with the revised appearance of <i>Birds in Wales</i>. IMS was thanked for typesetting it and KJ was thanked for sourcing photographs. The new format has not met any criticism.</p>	
		<p><b>To inform KJ of the technical requirements of photos, especially for the front cover, for use in <i>Birds in Wales</i>.</b></p>	IMS
		<p>To date there are just two papers for the next edition and RP made a plea for more. After discussion it is anticipated that there will be more forthcoming.</p>	
		<p><b>To contact Ben Porter about a report on his studies of Manx Shearwater that was supported by a conservation grant.</b></p>	RP
		<p>The Welsh Bird Report is being prepared, though sadly without a contribution from Gower. It is anticipated that most contributions will be prepared by the end of this weekend. It is expected that the report will be ready during January 2018. We understand that Mark Hipkin is no longer the Recorder for Gower and we do not know of his replacement.</p>	
17.42		<p><b>Conference 2017 debrief (AB)</b></p> <p>AB had emailed a report to all prior to the meeting. The conference had been reasonably successful – though the Survey Monkey results are awaited. There were several problems with the booking system relating to PayPal and there were some difficulties receiving payments from some delegates. AB thought too many members leave booking until it is too late and to their disadvantage in that they may not have been able to have a lunch. Catering was an issue as it was very expensive (double last year's costs) and was limited to just 120 people when the hall can hold 150.</p>	
		<p><b>For future conferences to inform members that booking is open two weeks before it is open to the general public.</b></p>	KN, DR
		<p>For costing the conference it needs to be remembered that 14 places bring in no income (6 students, speakers, the President and the winner of the Derek Moore Student Award).</p> <p>Feedback from IW about the quality of the speakers was discussed. There was discussion about quality of speakers, their costs, sponsorship (or the lack of it) etc. Many people had said how much they enjoyed Steve Roberts' contribution and that it was not a 'talk' but more of a workshop. The audience engagement was well received.</p>	
		<p><b>To seek advice from Daniel Jenkins-Jones about RSPB speakers.</b></p>	KN
		<p><b>To consider the brief given to potential speakers to focus on Wales and the possibility of a workshop approach when possible.</b></p>	KN

	<p>A program, EventBrite, for events management was brought to the attention of Council as it may assist organisation of the conference in future. There was further discussion and it was agreed that we need to improve our 'corporate image' by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- having a new large banner with our new logo</li> <li>- having information boards about what we do (awards, etc)</li> <li>- acquire table cloths with banners dropping in front of the table</li> <li>- having two copies of information boards for use in the south and north of the country.</li> </ul>	
<b>17.43</b>	<p><b>Conference 2018</b></p> <p>KN informed Council of his investigations in Bangor and proposed that one of the options should be used – Reichel Hall. There was discussion about the costs and what would be included.</p>	
	<p><b>To investigate the full costs of Reichel.</b></p>	<b>KN</b>
	<p><b>To investigate different options for food.</b></p>	<b>KN</b>
	<p>There was discussion about a theme and possible speakers. The theme 'Woodland Birds' seemed to emerge and possible speaker s or topics included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Jez Smith, Pied Flycatchers</li> <li>- George Peterken or Clifton Bain, ecology of woodlands</li> <li>- Wood Warblers</li> <li>- Hawfinch</li> <li>- Steve Roberts to conclude, or continue, what he started at Monmouth.</li> </ul>	
<b>17.44</b>	<p><b>Conference 2019</b></p> <p>Steve Stansfield has offered to talk about bird observatories but the conference would need to be one week later. It was agreed that the conference should be booked for 10 November.</p>	
<b>17.45</b>	<p><b>BirdFair 2017 debrief (AB)</b></p> <p>AB had emailed a report to all prior to the meeting. The key issue was whether we should go again and if so, for just one or more times. It was agreed that we need to seek some sponsorship or other income to help defray the costs. There was discussion about how to improve on our performance this year.</p> <p>Suggestions included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A Twitter storm to inform people of our presence.</li> <li>- To prepare and book announcements over the tannoy.</li> <li>- To seek support from IW who has said he will attend for Friday and Saturday in 2018.</li> <li>- To seek volunteers to man the stand to spread the load.</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>To ask IW if he is willing to give a talk about birding in Wales, be on the stand and perhaps to book-signing at the stand in 2018.</b></p>	<b>MG</b>
	<p>Possible sources of sponsorship funds included Opticron, Discover Cymru and Penderyn (Welsh Whisky). The dates of the next BirdFair are 17/18/19 August.</p>	

		<b>To approach hotels etc in the vicinity of the selected bird reserves shown on the map of Wales, to seek sponsorship.</b>	<b>SS</b>
		<b>To approach Opticron to ask for some financial support towards the cost of the stand.</b>	<b>DR</b>
		<b>To book a stand at BirdFair 2018.</b>	<b>MG</b>
<b>17.46</b>		<b>Digitising WOS publications</b>  JH has received a complete set of publications from IW and has been in touch with the Biodiversity Heritage Library about a licence agreement.	
		<b>To check how the BHL will deal with Scarce and Rare Birds which is published online.</b>	<b>JH</b>
		<b>To reconsider archiving our website with the British Library.</b>	<b>All</b>
		There was some discussion about how best to access papers from our website.	
<b>17.47</b>		<b>e-Media</b>	
		<b>To publish the next e-Newsletter.</b>	<b>JH</b>
		<p>HC was not able to provide details from Google analytics for this meeting but plans to do so in future. However, she reported some details:</p> <p>Facebook: posts reaching a maximum of 1058 people with a conference post asking others to follow it on Twitter reaching 872 and the BBC link to the cormorant talk reaching 951. The WOS page is now followed by 113 people.</p> <p>Twitter: we now have 2522 followers and a total of 8581 tweets to date a we follow 544 people/organisations.</p> <p>HC thanked all who had sent her articles relevant to birds in Wales to post and asked for that to continue.</p> <p>GP reported that he has been struggling with Google analytics too, so there are no stats for the website for this meeting. There has been no progress towards developing any of a Welsh medium website.</p>	
<b>17.48</b>		<b>Revised <i>Birds in Wales</i> format</b>  There was some discussion about decisions made in some years past. It was agreed that all the publications: the papers edition, Scarce and Rare Birds and the Welsh Bird Report should be numbered editions of Birds in Wales, each using the front cover, as published, with minor additions for the Scarce and Rare Birds and Welsh Bird Report editions. All will be numbered by annual volume with: Papers edition as 1 Scarce and Rare Birds as 2 Welsh Bird Report as 3.	

		<b>To contact Steve Stansfield to bring back Scarce and Rare Birds in the numbering system and with the same format for the cover, font, etc.</b>	<b>JH</b>
<b>17.49</b>		<p><b>BTO Cymru</b></p> <p>KJ had been sent some data about BirdTrack usage in Wales and the number of users seems to have dropped dramatically. He will check with Stephen Mcavoy at the BTO to see if this is an error.</p> <p>As there will be a national meeting for Regional Representatives in Bristol on 18 November and most Welsh RRs will be attending there will not be a meeting in Wales in February 2018.</p>	
<b>17.50</b>		<p><b>BirdTrack</b></p> <p>IMS briefly reported back on a recent strategy meeting. The minutes will be circulated when ready.</p>	
<b>17.51</b>		<p><b>WOS sales items</b></p> <p>We do wish to be able to sell WOS branded clothing but we need to arrange this with a company where we lodge the design and customers order directly, with no involvement of WOS members or officers. One such company, Red Bubble, was mentioned.</p> <p>A new car sticker was discussed and it was agreed that we should have one based on the long form of the logo with the Society name in full. We would order 500 initially.</p>	
		<b>To investigate costs from a printer for car stickers and a membership form.</b>	<b>DR</b>
		<b>To email the logo to DR.</b>	<b>IMS</b>
<b>17.52</b>		<p><b>Welsh Records Panel</b></p> <p>An email from StSt was circulated to all. 2017 records are now being sent around the panel, which hopes to meet early in 2018. The Google drive system implemented a few years ago seems to be working well and helping with speeding the circulation times.</p>	
<b>17.53</b>		<b>Any other business</b>	
	<b>17.53.1</b>	<p><b>Re-election of President</b></p> <p>This should have happened this year so must be on the agenda for next year's AGM.</p>	
	<b>17.53.2</b>	<p><b>Banning Driven Grouse Shooting</b></p> <p>As this is not an issue that applies to Wales, this is not an issue for WOS.</p>	

	<b>17.53.3 Pat Lindley, NRW</b>	
	<b>To write to NRW about the fish-eating birds issue and the lack of evidence for issuing licences to kill such birds.</b>	<b>MG</b>
	<b>17.53.4 Affiliate members</b>  We now have 10 Affiliate members including the Deeside Naturalists' Society.	
	<b>17.53.5 Dates of next meetings</b>  Council meetings at Plas Dolerw, starting at 10.30: 3 March 2018 14 July 2018 17 November 2018 Conference: 3 November 2018	
	<b>17.53.6 Bird course at Plas y Brenin</b>  After the successful course this year, JH has been asked to repeat it next year, with the fee coming to WOS.	
	<b>To run the course again in May 2018.</b>	<b>JH</b>
	<b>17.53.7 Possible sharing of stand at Welsh Spring Show</b>  There was brief discussion about whether WOS could share the BTO stand at the next Spring show.	
	<b>To check with Fred Slater if this would be possible.</b>	<b>KJ</b>
	<b>17.53.8 Seabird monitoring and meeting with Pat Lindley</b>  There was brief discussion about the contents of Pat's email of the situation to date and what still needs to be done.	
	<b>To meet with PL to discuss his email and future seabird counts.</b>	<b>BH, SS, MG</b>
	<b>To arrange the meeting.</b>	<b>BH</b>
	Ian M Spence	
	13 November 2017	