

Minutes of the Council meeting at Plas Dolerw on Saturday, 23 November 2019

Present: Anne Brenchley, Mick Green, Alison Noble, Keith Noble, Carlton Parry, Rhion Pritchard, Dan Rouse, Jez Smith, Ian Spence, Steve Sutcliffe

Apologies for absence: Heather Crump, Kelvin Jones, Neil Lambert, Giles Pepler, Iolo Williams

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| 19.35 | Minutes of meeting on 13 July 2019 | |
| | IMS apologised that some changes had not been incorporated. The proposed changes were discussed and clarified. With the amendments the minutes were accepted. | |
| 19.36 | Matters arising | |
| | None. | |
| 19.37 | Chair's report | |
| | MG thanked KN and AN for organising the successful conference. He welcomed AB and JS to Council. AB was nominated as Vice Chair, proposed by MG, seconded by JS. Accepted nem con. | |
| 19.38 | Council succession | |
| | There will be a major change to Council in November 2020 if all those whose terms end choose to leave Council. IMS will also leave Council when he resigns as Secretary. Those whose terms will end are: MG, KN, GP, RP, SSut. Of these, MG and KN will not stand for re-election and RP, SSut and GP (by text after the meeting) have indicated that they are likely to seek re-election. At the conference IMS was approached by Clare Ryland who expressed interest in becoming Secretary. | |
| | To confirm invitation to March and April 2020 Council meetings for Clare to get a feel for WOS. | IMS |
| | When IMS does resign there will be a need to find someone to look after the WOS PA system. DR volunteered to do this. Council will need to identify who should continue to liaise with the BTO and attend BirdTrack Steering Group meetings. If nobody is found on Council, IMS has volunteered to continue and report to Council. There was discussion about who may be invited to join Council and fill the two places that will definitely become vacant. AB expressed concern about the loss of conservation knowledge and expertise that has happened and will be | |

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| | complete with MG's departure. It was agreed that several people would be checked to find out if they may be interested. | |
| | To put Council succession on the agenda for the next meeting. | IMS |
| | JS agreed to look after the Derek Moore Student Award and Student Bursary. | |
| 19.39 | Treasurer's report SSut reported on accounts he had circulated prior to the meeting. The conference is likely to have a surplus, helped by the sponsorship from Beryl Moore. The BirdFair may break even. There was some discussion about sponsorship for <i>Birds of Wales</i> . From the moneys received so far and other money in the bank, we will definitely be able to pay our half of the publication cost. | |
| | To amend details of the current trustees with the Charity Commission. | SSut |
| 19.40 | Membership Secretary's report AN has been searching for a new membership database. She has found out about a program, 'Subscriber' from Dataware (http://www.subscriber.co.uk/), a British company. | |
| | To discuss with Dataware about 'Subscriber' and linking with the WOS website. | GP |
| | The likely costs are: £750 one off licence (for up to 500 records), £650 per day, for installation and training and £650 for importing initial data. AN would be willing to type in the current data so the last cost would not be incurred. So conversion from Memberpress will cost about £1400 and ongoing annual costs will be about £250. In March 2020 Memberpress charges will increase to \$200 pa, so would not be much different, but it doesn't work! | |
| | To investigate further use of 'Subscriber'. | AN, GP |
| | If all is well, in principle, to organise installation. | AN |
| 19.41 | Editor's report RP had sent out a report prior to the meeting. He reported on progress with <i>Birds in Wales</i> and the 2018 Welsh Bird Report. The latter is largely in hand and is expected to be published by late January 2020. For <i>Birds in Wales</i> there are just three papers currently in the pipeline. Several other contributions were mentioned. There was discussion about the papers in <i>Birds in Wales</i> and getting those papers recognised by Google Scholar. | |
| | After publication of <i>Birds in Wales</i>, to prepare an index with hyperlinks to separate files with author names, contact email address and abstracts for each paper, separately, to be available on the WOS website. | IMS, GP |

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| | | To prepare index, etc, as above for the last issue to test that Google Scholar does find the abstracts. | IMS, GP |
| | | If successful, to prepare other earlier editions. | IMS, GP |
| | | It was agreed to change the Derek Moore Student Award so that all applicants may seek to publish a paper about their results in <i>Birds in Wales</i> and the winner of the award will be expected to prepare such a paper. There was discussion about other possible contributions and two possible obituaries. | |
| 19.42 | | <p><i>Birds of Wales</i></p> <p>RP had sent out a report prior to the meeting. Good progress is being made with writing the species accounts. These will be grouped and sent out for independent proof-reading. The foreword is likely to be written by IW and Graham Williams.</p> <p>Ben Porter has agreed to be photo editor. Philip Snow has agreed to prepare artwork for the front and back covers. The front will be a Manx Shearwater against a Pembrokeshire island and the back will be a Curlew on moorland.</p> <p>Sponsorship is proceeding well.</p> | |
| | | To contact Gwynt y Mor about corporate sponsorship. | MG |
| | | To investigate https://ceoemail.com/ for the names of appropriate personnel in offshore wind or alternative energy companies to seek corporate sponsorship. | JS |
| | | For a spreadsheet of all species to be made available on the website, showing those species that have already been sponsored and those waiting. | GP |
| | | To consider using Zoom for editors and other remote meetings. | GP |
| | | It was agreed that for each corporate sponsorship of at least £1,000 the sponsor will receive a free copy of the book. | |
| 19.43 | | <p>BirdFair 2019</p> <p>Despite the wet weather and mud, it went well. KN and AN were thanked for their major contributions.</p> <p>There was discussion about whether the BirdFair was useful to increase membership and the evidence suggests that it is of little use for that but is useful for advertising Wales as a place for birdwatchers to visit. In that light, the lack of support from Visit Wales, the Welsh Government tourist agency is galling. It was suggested that a WOS stand may be more appropriate at the Smallholding and Countryside Festival at the Builth Wells showground. In 2020 it will take place on 16 to 18 May 2020.</p> | |
| | | To ask KJ about the possibility of sharing the BTO stand at the spring fair. | CP |
| | | To register for BirdFair 2020. | MG |

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| 19.44 | <p>Conference 2019</p> <p>Congratulations were given to KN and AN for an excellent conference.</p> <p>There has been good feedback about the talks and the panel discussion. All speakers and panel members have been thanked by MG.</p> <p>The birding trip on the Sunday was attended by five non-Council members and seven Council members. The meeting with Dave Anning at RSPB Ynyshir was very interesting and informative.</p> | |
| 19.45 | <p>Conference 2020</p> <p>KN reported on his enquiries about possible conference venues. Of those, the preference was for a venue in Carmarthen, then Swansea.</p> | |
| | <p>To choose a suitable venue.</p> | KN |
| | <p>There was a discussion about possible themes and Farmland Birds seemed to be most popular. There was discussion about potential speakers and the possibility of involving farmers with a visit to a farm on the Sunday to see the birds that are present.</p> | |
| | <p>To think about possible speakers and inform KN.</p> | All |
| 19.46 | <p>Willow Tit survey 2020</p> <p>AB has sent out a summary of the results from last year, as supplied by Simon Wotton, RSPB. The survey continues for a second year in 2020. The methods regarding the timing of visits will be relaxed taking on board lessons from this year. Observers will be requested to take photos of habitat where Willow Tits have and have not been found. In 2020 it may be worth visiting squares where no Willow Tits were found in 2019 but at the later dates possible in the 2020 version of the survey.</p> <p>AB was thanked for coordinating observer effort across Wales.</p> | |
| 19.47 | <p>WOS five-year plan</p> | |
| | <p>To circulate final copy of the first strategic plan to all.</p> | AB |
| | <p>To review the plan and suggest changes.</p> | All |
| 19.48 | <p>MOU with Bardsey BFO</p> <p>Bardsey is not able to become an Affiliate Member of WOS. There have been discussions between MG and Steve Stansfield about WOS and Bardsey supporting and promoting each other.</p> | |
| | <p>To draft a MOU for BBBFO that may also be used for Skokholm.</p> | MG |

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| 19.49 | Membership strategy AN spoke about a virtual meeting that had taken place between AN, MG and GP. | |
| | To send details of contacts for Affiliate Members to all to seek invitations to speak about <i>Birds of Wales</i>. | AN |
| | CP reported that Affiliate Members have not been sending him details of meetings, etc, to post in the calendar on the WOS website. | |
| | To set up a calendar@birdsin.wales email directed to CP. | GP |
| | To send details of Affiliate Members who have looked at the eNewsletter to encourage better coverage to GP. | DR |
| | To draft a questionnaire to seek why a person has become a member of WOS and what they seek to get from that membership. | MG, IMS |
| | AN wishes to renew the membership leaflet to emphasise what WOS does or what it has done recently. She plans to do short print runs so that it can be updated regularly. | |
| | To send ideas of what WOS has done for birds in Wales to AN. | All |
| | To create a poster based on what has been sent to AN. | DR |
| | To email Steve Stansfield that WOS will provide free membership for one year for each young birder attending the week in August on Bardsey. | MG |
| | To create a poster to attract young people and to have QR codes with links to appropriate pages on the WOS website (eg the Derek Moore Student Award of the student bursary). | DR |
| 19.50 | Small conservation awards The group to check applications for grants will be: AB, IW, MG, SSut, Steph Tyler, JS. | |
| 19.51 | Archives IMS and AB met with Sian Bowyer at the National Library of Wales. The Library will be happy to accommodate our paper archive, but not a digital archive. The form to deposit the archive has some questions that needed Council decisions. It was agreed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The 'owner' of the archive will be the Secretary at the time. - If the Library wishes to no longer retain the material it should 'arrange transfer of the material to another appropriate institution'. | |
| | To arrange a Dropbox for the WOS archive of minutes and other papers. | IMS |
| | AN asked what should be done about unsold copies of <i>Birds in Wales</i> or the Welsh Bird Report. CP offered to store spare copies. | |

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| | | To bring spare copies of <i>Birds in Wales</i> to give to CP for storage. | All |
| 19.52 | | Lifetime Achievement Awards AB offered to coordinate and promote the award. | |
| | | To send ideas about possible recipients to AB. | All |
| 19.53 | | eMedia DR apologised for missing an eNewsletter. She reported that it seems that Affiliate Member recipients of the eNewsletter are not forwarding the eNewsletter to their own members. | |
| | | To write an article, initially for the Deeside Naturalists' Society to inform members of the DNS about the eNewsletter and what it contains to encourage them to read it. | AB |
| | | The eNewsletter needs to have different content from the front page of the website. The recent opening rate for the eNewsletter has been 70+%. | |
| | | To write short articles (200 to 400 words) to include in the eNewsletter and submit them to DR. | All |
| | | DR requested help from another person to help with social media (especially Facebook). JS volunteered to help. | |
| | | To discuss emedia responsibility sharing. | DR, JS |
| 19.54 | | RSPB Cymru NL had sent a report to all prior to the meeting. | |
| 19.55 | | WRP The group is now to be called the 'Welsh Birds Rarities Committee (WBRC)'. The minutes of the recent AGM had been circulated. The WBRC needs new members. | |
| 19.56 | | Any other business | |
| | 19.56.1 | Car stickers After brief discussion it was agreed to provide one for each new member and to include a sticker in each delegate pack for the 2020 conference. | |
| | | Ian M Spence 24 November 2019 | |
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