



**Minutes of the 29th Annual General Meeting of the Welsh Ornithological Society
16 November 2019, Aberystwyth**

1. Present

69 members were present at the meeting.

2. Apologies for absence

Carlton Parry, Dan Rose, Keith Roylance

3. Minutes of the last AGM on 3 November 2018, Bangor

Proposed as accurate by Iolo Williams, seconded by Bob Haycock. Accepted.

4. Chairman's report

As is usual this report covers the 12 months since our last AGM rather than the financial year which runs until December.

WOS has had another busy year. We attended Birdfair again in 2019, where we spoke to many people about WOS, birding and bird conservation in Wales. We are still failing to attract any support from Visit Wales, despite being major ambassadors for attracting visitors to Wales. Our new 'pin badges' were very successful, and we have updated the website to allow more services to members. The e-newsletter continues to update members on all aspects of Birds in Wales and the website is updated with news as often as possible. If you have any items you'd like to share please let us know.

We are now nearly at the end of our 5 year strategy ((published on the website). We are meeting all the targets we set ourselves, except significantly increasing the membership. Our new membership leaflet did not recruit many people, but the facility to pay by Direct Debit has proved popular and we would ask all members to migrate to this method of payment. We would ask all our members to do their utmost to recruit at least one new member this year. More members gives us greater clout with government, and greater funds for our grant schemes.

WOS has been active helping champion birds in Wales in many ways:

The small grant scheme supports worthwhile projects A new application window opens in the New Year and all members and affiliates are eligible to apply. The Derek Moore Young Conservationist Bursary, and the Derek Moore Student Research Award also continue. Details of all of these are on the website.

President: Iolo Williams

WOS continues as a core partner of Birdtrack and we look forward to helping develop the partnership further. We are delighted with the number of records going into Birdtrack from Wales, and these are now incorporated into our Welsh Bird Report

WOS Council works very hard behind the scenes which is not always obvious to members. Council tries to respond to relevant Government consultations and although we have very limited resources we try and campaign for specifically Welsh bird issues where we can and continue to support national campaigns and publications such the Birds of Conservation Concern. In the last year we have engaged with Welsh Government and NRW over various issues of licencing, including shooting of fish-eating birds, other specific licences which we did not think appropriate or had a robust evidence base and over General Licences. We also reacted to the increasing numbers of hedges that were being 'netted' to prevent birds from breeding. This led to advice from Welsh Government to planning authorities that this practice was not acceptable. We are also working on the production of the new book "Birds of Wales" and species sponsorship options are still open – see our website.

WOS remains an entirely voluntary organisation and I'd like to thank members for support and the many members who have contributed records to the Welsh Bird Report, have produced papers for 'Birds in Wales' and to Council for the many hours they contribute to our many projects.

5. Treasurer's report

Year to 31 December 2018

Now well out of date the accounts for the year show a very healthy surplus largely down to some significant donations from a Trust and a member who emigrated and gave us a tidy sum to use in whatever way we felt useful.

The income is predominantly subscriptions with the two generous gifts with some from Birdfair sales and other small sales plus of course the conference.

The conference made a small surplus and our second year at Birdfair saw a reduced loss of £295 as we learn from the process – several new members came on board as a result and this year we have made a small surplus. Sadly to date we have attracted very little in sponsorship for this event and notably Wales Tourist Board will not support us.

Publications costs are about the same as the previous year but the Birds in Wales annual report comes out around the end of the year or beginning of the following year so the bills get paid in either December or January – the next year. So at times the accounts don't look sensible.

The grants we provide for projects and for the students award have been very valuable to their recipients and to Welsh Ornithology but we still fail to attract many good quality focussed applications.

WOS is in good shape. Our fund raising for the new Birds in Wales book has reached about 70% of its target but the remaining seven thousand or so may be quite a challenge although we have reserves which may be used – so I think we can be pretty certain that the book will appear – in early 2021??

6. Election of Council members

The Chairman thanked the three outgoing Council members for their efforts: Julian Hughes, Bob Haycock and Richard Facey.

Anne Brenchley was proposed by Keith Noble, seconded by Giles Pepler. Agreed nem con.

Jez Smith was proposed by Richard Facey, seconded by Iolo Williams. Agreed nem con.

7. Change to the constitution

The change of item 4.1.1 to **“individuals of up to and including 25 years of age, at a discounted rate, to have access to electronic versions of publications only;”**

Proposed by Ian Spence, seconded by Kelvin Jones. Accepted nem con.

8. Date of next meeting

17 November 2019 at a venue to be decided in SW Wales.

End of AGM