

## Minutes of the Council meeting via Zoom on Monday, 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Present: Steve Sutcliffe, Anthony Caravaggi, Alison Noble, Mike Shrewring, Clare Ryland, Giles Pepler, Jez Smith, Dan Rouse, Daniel Jenkins-Jones

Apologies for absence: Anne Brenchley, Iolo Williams, Rhion Pritchard, Carlton Parry

21.01	<p><b>Photographic Competition</b></p> <p>Update from GP</p> <p>Entries have been received from 24 different photographers, 20 male and 4 female.</p> <p>A total of 59 entries have been submitted, 54 in the adult category and 5 in the humorous category. To date there have been no entries in the under-16 category.</p> <p>GP suggested this should become an annual event, potentially with more generous prizes.</p> <p>AN suggested if sufficient high-quality photographs were received WOS could use them to produce a calendar.</p> <p>AC suggested in addition to using the winning photograph as the cover for <i>Birds in Wales</i>, there could be a selection of photographs in the journal.</p> <p>SSu recommended the timing of future competitions be altered so that the winner could be announced at the annual conference and prizes be awarded in person.</p> <p>All agreed that holding an annual competition with the winner announced at the conference was a good idea.</p>	
	<p><b>GP to contact the judges to check they have all been receiving the entries, which should be going to them directly.</b></p>	<p><b>GP</b></p>
21.02	<p><b>Birds in Wales – raising awareness</b></p> <p>AC had circulated an email with ideas aimed at increasing accessibility and promotion of the journal – see below:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>The Proposals</b></p> <p>Birds in Wales represents an important “shop window” for the Welsh Ornithological Society (WOS); it demonstrates the Society’s commitment to producing peer-reviewed evidence that not only increases our understanding of birds in Wales but also aids their conservation. It acts an important repository for such evidence and as such should be of value to the wider</p>	

	<p>scientific community, site managers, amateur and professional ecologist/ornithologists a like, and policy makers.</p> <p>There is no doubt that Birds in Wales is a good journal, with a lot of potential, but remains little known and used beyond WOS's membership. The journal suffers from many of the same issues that afflict other national ornithological journals, for example Irish Birds, the most notable being inaccessibility, invisibility, and a lack of promotion compared to other scientific journals.</p> <p>Overcoming these issues could lead to a substantial increase in the number of submissions received by the journal, a growing appreciation for the journal and its contents, a greater dissemination and use of the evidence published within it - which is ultimately the purpose of scientific publishing – and increased awareness of and membership to the Society.</p> <p>Below I have made a number of suggestions aimed at achieving these goals, as well as updating other aspects of the journal. These suggestions are based on my own experiences as Assistant Editor of Remote Sensing in Ecology and Conservation, and as an author and reviewer of scientific papers.</p> <p><b>02.01 Article Types</b></p> <p>The two article types currently considered are excellent, but I'd like to try to widen the scope of the journal, somewhat. Hence, I propose the following Article types, from here on:</p> <p>Original Research. No more than 5,000 words. Structure as per current guidelines.</p> <p>Short Note. No more than 1,500 words. Brief reports of data from original research, including novel behaviour, species identification, etc.</p> <p>Review. No more than 6,000 words. A comprehensive summary on a topic of relevance to Welsh birds and associated conservation, management and policy (e.g. Rhion's recent paper).</p> <p>Commentary. No more than 3,000 words. Discusses specific issues of relevance to Welsh birds and associated conservation, management and policy (e.g. recent 'reserves' articles). Includes commentary on recent papers in Birds in Wales and factually-based opinion pieces. Commentaries could also be commissioned by the Editor based on requests from Council or recognised experts in a field.</p> <p><b>02.02 Submission requirements</b></p> <p>References do not need to be formatted correctly until a paper is accepted for publication.</p> <p>Figures must be supplied as png or tiff files, at a minimum of 300 dpi. They can be embedded in initial submissions but must be provided as discrete files after acceptance. Excel sheets will no longer be part of the submission process.</p> <p><b>02.03 Peer review</b></p> <p>All papers will be subject to review by at least two relevant experts.</p> <p>A call to reviewers will be conducted, building a database of knowledge and experience across Council and members. Additional, external reviewers will be contacted when identified and as necessary.</p> <p>A guide for reviewers will be produced and supplied to reviewers in each instance.</p> <p>Reviews will be double-blind.</p> <p><b>02.04 Journal archiving and accessibility</b></p>
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	<p>One of the biggest challenges facing the journal is making previous material visible and accessible. At present, the journal content is not indexed and searchable from search engines and content is not searchable on the WOS website in a way that is efficient and user friendly to the majority of end users – e.g. researchers and policy makers. Moreover, while the British Library is a useful archiving service, generally, it is not useful for the journal from a wider perspective as the content is not searchable. For a person to find a specific paper, they need to know the title, issue, number and year in which it was published. I have certainly failed to find old BiW papers that must exist because I was unable to search by species or keyword. There is a pressing need to embrace modern archiving and searching methods. Hence, the following are suggested:</p> <p>BiW should be entirely accessible on the WOS site, as a discrete sub-entity. Articles can still be paywalled but the content needs to be known and accessible, with free to read abstracts for all papers.</p> <p>Free or low-cost, high-quality publishing tools are available, e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <a href="https://libero.pub/products/libero-publisher/">https://libero.pub/products/libero-publisher/</a></li> <li>- <a href="https://pkp.sfu.ca/ojs/">https://pkp.sfu.ca/ojs/</a> (extremely popular and widely-used)</li> <li>- <a href="https://janeway.systems/index">https://janeway.systems/index</a></li> </ul> <p>The web content could be developed and deployed by a short-term intern with the relevant skills, paid from existing WOS funds. Alternatively, the Society could use hosting options offered by providers such as Janeway, above.</p> <p>Journal content should be searchable via Google, indexed on Scholar, Web of Science, etc.</p> <p>Journal content (title, keywords, abstract) should be listed and searchable on the BiW website.</p> <p>One paper per issue should be available as Open Access to generate readership and engagement.</p> <p>One key paper will be highlighted, per issue. This is not necessarily the OA paper.</p>	
02.05	<p><b>Aesthetics</b></p> <p>The cover of the journal (not the logo!) will be subject to redesign, updating the aesthetics.</p> <p>Submitting authors will be asked to submit one image as a potential cover piece.</p> <p>Alternatively, the winner of the photo competition could be the cover image.</p>	
02.06	<p><b>Outreach</b></p> <p>To Universities, NGOs, etc. to generate papers for the next issue. Emphasise the new article types and breadth of scope.</p> <p>More use of the WOS Twitter account to promote the journal and facilitate links with other journals and organisations.</p> <p>Conduct a survey of members to gain feedback on journal.</p>	
	<b>Discussing the proposals</b>	
	AC thanked everyone for attending the meeting.	
02.01	<p>GP requested clarity over the distinction between ‘review’ and ‘commentary’.</p> <p>AC explained that a review synergizes knowledge of a certain topic e.g threats to Hen Harriers, but does not make recommendations. A commentary is less comprehensive and less thoroughly referenced, more of a factually based</p>	

	opinion piece.	
02.03	GP to circulate finalised database listing experience and expertise of Council members.	GP
	JS suggested this could be used as a template to send to potential reviewers.	
	GP to send template to affiliates.	GP
	AC re-iterated that all reviews would be double-blind, with reviewers unaware who had written the papers they are reviewing, and authors unaware who had conducted the reviews.	
02.04	<p>AC stressed his proposals did not detract from the excellent work which has gone into the journal to date but he had some ideas which come from his experience in publishing.</p> <p>He stated the biggest issue was the lack of accessibility of previous content. Only WOS members can view this content on the WOS website. Although the journals are stored on the Biodiversity Heritage Library website <a href="http://Biodiversity Heritage Library (biodiversitylibrary.org)">Biodiversity Heritage Library (biodiversitylibrary.org)</a> it is not possible to search by keyword or species.</p> <p>He suggested the BHL is an insufficient platform to promote the journal and that WOS needed a link for <i>Birds in Wales</i> on the main page of the website, with searchable content available to members and non-members alike.</p> <p>SSu mentioned that the topic of accessibility had come up at previous Council meetings, and improvements had been made so that the content was now available on the website but he agreed it was not easily accessible.</p> <p>GP asked whether AC had been in touch with JH who set up the link with BHL, AC said he had exchanged emails with JH about this.</p> <p>The link to <i>Birds in Wales</i> could be built into the website or a hosting option could be used.</p> <p>SSu asked about the costing options for using a hosting service such as Janeway or PKP. AC said the basic PKP package which had some limitations was \$850 per journal annually.</p> <p>GP said that if a link to an external site was approved by Council, AC, GP and Glynne (Yellow Fly) would need to talk through the options.</p> <p>DJJ raised the question of what the main purpose of <i>Birds in Wales</i> was. He suggested that not all current WOS members would be interested in a scientific journal and that a 2-tier membership could be introduced with a higher subscription fee for those members who wanted to receive the journal. GP suggested this was debated at a future Council meeting.</p> <p>JS suggested that the speakers who had been lined up to talk at the online conference could be contacted to write a short piece for the first edition of the 'new look' journal. This approach could be continued in future years so that anyone who could not attend future conferences in person would still have access to the talks.</p>	

	AC said WOS needed to decide on the purpose of the journal – is it just a scientific journal or a community journal with a scientific subset?	
	GP said the journal should be a scientific journal, and that the E-newsletter should have more of a community feel.	
	DJJ agreed and added there was scope to achieve more with the E-newsletter. He said its present format did not reflect the large amount of work that DR puts in to producing it.	
	JS asked whether it would be worthwhile asking WOS members what they think about updating the journal. DJJ suggested Council came up with some ideas for the future format and then ask the membership to choose which format they prefer.	
	GP reminded Council that the previous Council agreed a 5-year strategy for WOS, which would be a good starting point.	
	SSu said that the E-newsletter is the best way to communicate with the general WOS membership. <i>Birds in Wales</i> is the only journal which deals just with Welsh birds. He would like more information about the cost of the new proposals but he was happy with all of them, it was important for the journal to achieve wider recognition in the scientific community.	
	AC to cost up various hosting possibilities and report back at the next Council meeting on 13 <sup>th</sup> March	AC
	AC and GP to discuss implications for the website	AC/G P
02.05	AC said he wanted to update the front cover of the journal, but not change the logo or the website. He agreed to come up with some variants to be produced at the next Council meeting for feedback.  He would also like to do some electronic flyers with the same aesthetics to help achieve consistent branding.	AC
02.06	AN asked whether students made use of university libraries as WOS currently does not send the journal to libraries. JS said he thought uptake would be better if the journal were sent directly to relevant lecturers.	
	AC suggested WOS could cultivate links with other journals e.g. Journal of Raptor Research.	
21.03	<b>Points raised by RP</b>  RP was unable to make the meeting, and sent in the following comments:  03.01 One key factor in raising awareness of Birds in Wales is having papers on open access on the web site. This means that they will be picked up by Google Scholar etc.. They will not be picked up if a login with password is required to access them. Apart from the issue of raising awareness of the journal, some authors are reluctant for their papers to be published in Birds in Wales because of this issue.  Council could, for example, consider putting all papers from Birds in Wales on	

		open access on the website 6 months after the publication of the journal.	
03.02		When an issue of Birds in Wales appears, it would be a good idea to take a few points from one of the papers - any interesting or unexpected results for example - and draw attention to them on social media.	
03.03		Blogs such as Graham Appleton's "Wader Tales" are very useful for drawing attention to papers which might otherwise have a limited audience. The author of any such blog could be informed if there is anything potentially relevant to the subject of the blog in the current Birds in Wales. Best of all would be a blog of this type specifically dedicated to bringing together information from all work done on birds in Wales or having relevance to Wales. This would be of value well beyond just raising the profile of Birds in Wales. However, this would be a big job.	
		<b>Comments</b>	
03.01		AC stated that all paid-for journals have a login and password system.	
03.03		It was agreed that the subject of blogs would be discussed at the next Council meeting	<b>CR</b>
		GP noted that significant changes to the journal were proposed, and it might not be possible to implement these before the next issue was published, due to be June 2021.	
		AC agreed, said it was important to start working on the accessibility issue now, the other changes would be implemented in 2022.	
		SSu asked whether any changes to the internal layout of the journal were planned and stressed the need for consistency for JH input into the annual bird report. AC said no changes to the internal layout were needed.	
		No objections were raised to the proposals which were all accepted by Council.	
21.04		<b>AOB</b>	
04.01		GP asked about the Council meeting scheduled for February 6 <sup>th</sup> . CR said that this meeting had originally been timetabled to discuss the virtual conference. As the conference had been cancelled, Council agreed to cancel the meeting.	
04.02		DJJ reported that IW, NL and KJ have all been contacted about the review of 2020. IW is currently busy filming Winterwatch but the talk has been scripted. KJ has been on field work but his talk is prepared. NL is looking for someone to report on behalf of RSPB Cymru, possibly JH.	
04.03		GP asked who was in charge of the Online Review project and was told DR was in charge. When the date of the February presentation has been fixed DR could send out publicity with the next E-newsletter. Feedback from the online event could be given at the March Council meeting.	<b>DR</b>
04.04		SSu said that the March Council meeting would be a good opportunity to discuss Birdfair 2021 (if going ahead). He reported that the Wildlife Trust was hoping to attend and that WOS and the WTSWW might consider a joint approach to Tourist Wales for sponsorship.	

04.05	DJJ reported that he and AN had started to discuss potential membership offers. GP said this could be further discussed at the July Council Meeting as that was when strategy was normally discussed.	
	<b>Next Council Meetings</b>	
	13 <sup>th</sup> March 2021 (Oriol Davies Gallery Newtown provisionally booked)	
	10 <sup>th</sup> July 2021 (venue TBA)	
	November 2021 (exact date and venue TBA)	
	Clare Ryland	
	19 <sup>th</sup> January 2021	