Welsh Ornithological Society
Cymdeithas Adaryddol Cymru

Minutes of the Council Meeting
13th May 2026
Via Zoom

Present: Chair - Anne Brenchley (**AB**), Gwenan Williams (**GW**), Anya Wicikowski (**AW**), Mike Shewring (MS), Josh Pedley (JP), Simon Boyes (SB) and Alison Noble (**AN**)

The meeting was recorded on Zoom and AI minutes generated to become the basis for the final minutes. Thanks to MS and AB.

26.24 Apologies: Malcolm Smith (MSm), Rachel Taylor (RT) and Siôn Emlyn Davies (SED)

26.25 Minutes of the meeting held on 28th March

The minutes were agreed.
ACTION: GP to place on website.

26.14.4 Pricing of *Milvus* and outlets for external sales still to be investigated.
ACTION: AW, NL and ALL

26.26 Officer reports

26.26.1 **Chair's report** **AB** reported that she was still carrying out the duties of Secretary as well as those of Chair. This was unsustainable. Conference organisation was a bit behind schedule but the programme was almost complete. There was also quite a lot of Atlas activity and paperwork to read and disseminate. It was agreed to re-advertise the role of secretary on social media and other outlets.

ACTION: SED to circulate information about Secretary Role in social media

26.26.2 **Treasurer's Report** – circulated. **GW** now has authority of the WOS account at the bank and is learning the software. The income and expenditure clearly identifies the importance of the subscription income. The photographic competition and calendar are being run for 2026 but currently make a loss of about £500 so they will be reviewed for 2027. **AB** had found the format difficult to interpret and some of the headings were unclear. **GW** explained that the headings came from the accountancy package but that they could be altered. **AB** emphasised the need for detailed information on regular income and expenditure and **GW** suggested that a budget could be worked out in November, once she had experienced a whole year as Treasurer. Discussion on the need to set up an annual grants budget due to increased expenditure anticipated from the Atlas and new website.

ACTION: AB and GW to discuss outside the meeting.

26.26.3 Membership Report – circulated. **AN** reported that there was an increase in membership of 10 but that 21 people had not renewed their subscription. A letter had gone out to members, who had not increased their subscription rate (from £20 to £25), requesting the additional £5 and had got some positive response. Members not paying the additional £5 may not receive a hard copy of the next journal. This was flagged as a decision for

Council to make closer to the time. Membership losses were thought to be due to financial constraints for members and some members moving without updating their information.

It was noted that the formal procedure to co-opt Ian Spence as Acting Membership Secretary was agreed.

ACTION: AB to progress procedures to co-opt Ian Spence to Council.

ACTION: AB and Membership Secretary. Situation on non-payment of increased subscription to be put on future Council meeting agenda.

AB and **AN** discussed the difficulty of updating subscription rates on the website and the urgent need for a membership package to be linked to the new website. The importance of direct debit payments for subscriptions was stressed along with mentioning the formal Life Membership rate, set at 15 times the annual membership (for 2026 this would be £375). This should be promoted in the next newsletter.

26.27 Other standing reports

26.27.1 Comms Group JP reported on his fundraising challenge, raising £3500 for WOS and Wild Cymru. Some additional funds went to the Ceredigion Swift project. **JP** agreed to close the JustGiving account in the coming days and notify **GW** when this was completed. **JP** and **GW** would agree how the funds would be invoiced between WOS and Wild Cymru. It was agreed that the WOS portion of the funds would be split between the grant-giving fund and the Atlas fund for travel expenses. **JP** provided an update on the plans for the Summer newsletter and social media activities. An article on JP's fundraising activity would be included in the Summer newsletter.

ACTION: JP/GW to sort out getting monies to WOS/Wild Cymru and **JP** to write article for Summer newsletter.

26.27.2 Grants Panel No report as the next deadline for application is 30 June. No applications had been received so far.

26.28 Council Capacity and Governance

AB stressed the need for pushing the roles of Secretary and Membership Secretary.
ACTION: AN to prepare draft of advertisement to go to PAVO and other outlets. **ALL** Council members to continue to consider possible candidates.

The deadline for the Youth Member of council was end May. No applications so far.

26.29 Conservation Priorities for 2026

Fish Eating Birds Position Statement. MSm is working on a revised version and comments would be requested in due course.

26.30 Website Update (MS/GW/SED)

The need for an urgent meeting with the potential new website creators (Web Studio and Gwe Cambria) was discussed. The issue over the membership package was a priority. **AN** reiterated the cumbersome nature of running the membership spreadsheet at present.

ACTION: Meetings to discuss website requirements to be set up.

26.31 Conference 2026 - progress

AB reported that a draft programme had been produced and four speakers confirmed. There would be a special session for Young Birders in the afternoon coinciding with a long tea break.
MS raised the subject of asking recent grant recipients whether they wished the opportunity to present at conference or produce a poster.
ACTION: MS to check with grant recipients and report back to the conference group.
ACTION: AB to produce a detailed list of conference tasks would be produced and **AN** would document her past responsibilities on Reception.
AB emphasised the importance of early advertising and promotion through BTO, RSPB and other partners. There was a discussion about the balance between WOS and BTO Youth involvement and it was agreed that conference sessions should be jointly chaired with one person introducing speakers and the other managing the Q&A.

26.32 Strategic meeting with NRW

AB would set up strategic meeting with NRW with MSm offering to join in. Discussion items would include Sustainable Farming Scheme and Atlas support. Council members urged to suggest any other items for discussion. There was a need for a clear agenda and specific issues to be raised. Pat Lindley will be Invited to September Council meeting. It was important to maintain a good relationship with NRW ornithologists.
ACTION: AB to set up meeting with NRW, including MSm
ACTION: AB to invite Pat Lindley to September Council meeting once a date had been set

26.33 Future Meeting Dates:

18 July – Plas Dolerw, Newtown confirmed:

Future meeting dates would be confirmed in July. It is hoped that as many people as possible can attend this face-to-face meeting. AN said this would be her last meeting. She has plans to be more involved in the Brecon History Society and write a couple of booklets. AN was thanked for her contribution to WOS.

September – evening Zoom:

November Saturday Zoom (all day meeting post AGM and conference)

26.34 AOB

There was a discussion about what to do with the excess *Welsh Bird Reports* (five boxes) that AN had brought to the March meeting. Caxton Press had been contacted concerning unit price but had no response. If the reports could not be sold then they would be recycled. A quick piece of online market research by AW showed that NHBS sold similar reports for £8 plus P&P but finally £5 was agreed as a reasonable price and one box would be taken to conference.

Meeting ended at 21.30.

Summary of Actions:

Minute Number	Action to be taken	Who to action	Deadline
26.25	March minutes to be placed on website	GP	ASAP

	Pricing of *Milvus* and outlets for external sales still to be investigated.	AW, NL and ALL	ASAP
26.26.1	To circulate information about Secretary Role in social media	SED	ASAP
26.26.2	To discuss outside the meeting.	AB and GW	ASAP
26.26.3	To progress procedures to co-opt Ian Spence to Council.	AB	ASAP
26.26.3	Situation on non-payment of increased subscription to be put on future Council meeting agenda.	AB and Membership Secretary	July Council meeting
26.27.1	To sort out getting monies to WOS/Wild Cymru and JP to write article for Summer newsletter.	JP and GW	End June Mid-June
26.28	To prepare draft of advertisement for Secretary and Membership Secretary to go to PAVO and other outlets.	AN	ASAP
26.28	Everyone to consider candidates for the above two roles	ALL	ASAP
26.30	Meetings to discuss website requirements to be set up.	SED/GW/MS	No deadline given
26.31	To check with recent grant recipients and report back to the conference group.	MS	ASAP
26.31	To produce a detailed list of conference tasks AN would document her past responsibilities on Reception.	AB AN	Before next conference group meeting
26.32	Strategic meeting with NRW to be set up, including MSm.	AB/NRW	June/July
26.32	Pat Lindley (NRW) Snr Terrestrial Ornithologist at NRW to be invited to September Council meeting	AB	As soon as date is set at July Council