

HAMPSHIRE ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Minutes of a meeting of the Management Committee held on 10 May 2022 at Littleton Village Hall at 7.30pm

1. Present	Initials	Present	Initials
Keith Betton (Chair)	KFB	Andrew Colenutt	ACo
Andy Mitchelmore (Treasurer)	AM	Barry Page	BP
David Brookes (Secretary)	DB	Kay Shillitoe	KS
Annette Clayson	ACL	Jayne Chapman	JC
Mike Chalmers	MLC	Helen Schneider	HS
Nicola Whitmarsh	NW	Tony Sztypuljak	TS
Marcus Ward	MW		
Carol Rawlings	CR		

2. Apologies	
Andy Lester	AL
Janice Beck	JB

KFB welcomed HS and TS to their first MC meeting. HS and TS both gave brief talks on their backgrounds. HS lives in the New Forest and works for Flora and Fauna International. She is also part of the Wild New Forest team. TS is a Civil Structural Chartered Engineer specialising in promoting new products and services, kick starting new organisation and sorting out problem companies.

The other MC members then introduced themselves to HS and TS.

3. Minutes of previous meeting (3 February 2022) – Approved

4. Matters arising

KFB reported on the Rare Birds of Hampshire book. The launch took place at Littleton Village Hall on 5 May and there were c.70 attendees. 300-350 copies had been pre-ordered, 600 have been printed and John Clark has paid for a further 150 copies. If HOS run out will buy from John Clark at cost. JC will not compete with HOS. Eco Support and Hampshire Ecological have both sponsored £500 in addition to HBIC (£300) and Andrew Welch (£500). Sale or return deals have been agreed with Wild Sounds, NHBS and several bookshops. It is expected to breakeven but maybe in 2023/2024.

5. Treasurer's Report (AM)

AM reported that cash funds as at 8 May were £139,390 of which £90,000 is held in bonds or term deposits. Membership income to date was £20,671 which was only c.£3,000 less than for the whole of 2021. Receipts from sales of Rare Birds of Hampshire were £9,313 so far which is on course for breakeven in maybe two years.. Survey and data sales to date were £2,760, it is expected that 2022 income in this respect will fall short of 2021 (£12,520). Member's Day / AGM income includes a £1,100 refund from St Swithun's School.

The first grant payment for 2021 was paid on 9 May (£3,400), 2 more grants will hopefully be paid this year but the applicants have not yet made claims.

AM will check the insurance cover in respect of the storage of Rare Birds of Hampshire books.

(Action: AM)

KFB reported that Chris Packham had suggested that HOS use an ethical bank.

It was agreed that opening an account with Starling Bank would be looked into.

Post meeting note – Starling Bank only offer accounts to charities that are limited companies.

AM will look for other ethical banks. **(Action: AM)**

AM asked whether the mileage rate for travel on HOS business should be increased given the significant increase in fuel costs. It was agreed that the mileage rate be increased to 45p per mile with immediate effect.

AM reported that a SumUp card machine had been purchased. Member's subscriptions cannot be taken through the card.

KFB pointed out that HOS has a high level of cash funds and suggested 1 year's expenditure as a reserves policy (say £40,000). This was agreed by the MC. Consideration to be given to expenditure on equipment and grants will the possibility of a large donation (say £20,000) towards the purchase of a reserve or hide. JC mentioned that Blashford need a hide and will look into. MW suggested a standardised form for grant applications.

6. Feedback on Members' Day / AGM 2022 (BS/KFB)

KFB thanked BP and Claire Levee for their hard work in organising the day.

BP reported that there were 200-250 attendees (not all registered). The post meeting survey sent out by Claire produced 134 responses including 54 from new members. There was a lot of positive feedback with the overall score being 4.7 out of 5.

No negative feedback on parking and only a minority thought lack of refreshments was a problem, 87% were happy to bring their own food and drink.

Feedback - considerations for next year

- Improved signage.
- Capture all attendees at registration (some skipped registration by entering through the side door after parking).
- Signage for toilets.
- More breakout areas requested (the area behind the main hall was not noticed by a number of members). Plan B for bad weather.
- More opportunities to meet the HOS team (e.g. Scientific Committee and Membership Committee tables).
- Start time / length of day.
- Theatre heating. The theatre was cold, particularly upstairs.
- Better / more raffle prizes. Some members missed out of purchasing raffle tickets because they could not find the sellers.
- Quiet area requested.
- External Barista / sandwiches.

Speakers

- Excellent feedback received for the young members speakers.
- Praise for all the other speakers (including KFB and Chris Packham), although the primary focus on wildlife crime did concern some members.

Exhibitors

- Positive feedback other than the lack of bird food sellers.

Feedback from exhibitors

- Alan Snook (bookseller) reported that competing with HOS booksellers had reduced his sales.

MC feedback

- Better signage next year (BP / KS / CR)
- Produce a video (KFB)
- Topics to include other wildlife (AM)
- More structured networking (HS)
- More HOS team on sales stall and members to register prior to visiting the stall (NW)
- Young members were brilliant (excellent reaction from the audience)
- Very good from an exhibitors perspective (MW)
- Some good news stories from next year's speakers

Suggestions for next year's speakers

- David Lindo (The Urban Birder)
- James Aldred (Goshawks)
- Juliet Vickery (CEO, BTO)
- Beccy Speight (CEO, RSPB)
- Iolo Williams
- Andy Page
- Roy Dennis
- Megan McCubbin
- Young Members – Izzy / Mia
- Knepp White Storks

7. Membership Sub Committee

Subscriptions / recruitment update (KB)

KS reported that there were 68 new members so far in 2022. 85 members have not yet paid for this year and 25 are still paying £12.

There are 41 Cameron Bespolka Trust (CBT) young members.

Female membership is up 5% on 2020.

How are new members recruited was discussed, suggestions:

- Word of mouth
- Zoom talks / Whats App groups
- Leaflets at sites
- Recruit a friend initiative
- Attending events (e.g. New Forest Show)

Young member activity (KFB on behalf of JB)

80 Young members. Some families have joined as a result of encouraging new young members.

20 going to Tidgrove Warren to watch Stone Curlews and 12 going to see Peregrine Falcon ringing.

HOS new member's events

The next new member's event is at Keyhaven on 12 June. KFB, Tom Jordan and Nigel Matthews leading with BP and NW supporting. Other MC members encouraged to support.

Electronic copies of Kingfisher

To date only 57 members have asked for electronic copies of Kingfisher, although a show of hands at the AGM indicated that around 50% would be willing to take Kingfisher electronically. CR to investigate how to design Kingfisher for better online viewing (**Action: CR**)

Talks (BP)

Will be relaunched in the Autumn (**Action: BP**)

8. **Scientific Sub-Committee (MW)**

Grants (3)

GWCT - £3,400 Redshank tagging – to date the money has not been claimed (**Action: MW to follow up**)

Trevor Codlin - £3,000 Ringed Plover project on Hayling Island. The funding for fencing was achieved without claiming on HOS. Alternatively a separate application may be received for tagging (post breeding dispersal)

Selborne Farm Cluster – Lapwing project. The land being affected has reduced in size so a reduced grant will be paid. Was £1,500 now likely to be £1,000.

Fieldworkers' Meeting

Over 60 attendees. The day went well. MW questioned whether this should be an annual event. Consider holding every other year (**Action: MW**)

Surveys and Meetings

Ongoing surveys – Ringed Plover, Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, Sand Martin and Little Ringed Plover. It is too early to report on findings at this stage.

Hampshire Bird Report (MC)

Records have been issued to writers (26).

Slack has been built into the programme to meet the deadline for publication (November 2022).

Conservation Liaison (KFB)

Not many planning applications to look at recently.

Tipner West project – 16 hectares of which 13 to be used for housing and 3 for nature.

HIOWWT are leading the campaign against this project. Meeting planned at Tipner on 12 June.

Casbrook Common (Nightingales)

This site has been bulldozed again recently. KFB took pictures of the site and contributed to an article in the Romsey Advertiser which criticised the destruction of the habitat.

KFB and AL have been in contact with Caroline Dibden of CPRE to develop a process for intervening in development projects in advance of plans being submitted. KFB has introduced TS to Caroline Dibden. The plan is for TS to develop a process for HOS to obtain early knowledge of plans and then influence those plans whilst they are being thought through.

TS will prepare a paper on this and a small team (TS, KFB, AL and Caroline Dibden) will then look to influence projects at an early stage. (**Action: TS**).

Any members who are local Councillors will be sought via an advertisement in Kingfisher. (**Action: CR**)

9. **Strategy**

KFB reported that a request had been received for the minutes of the MC Meetings be published on the HOS website. This was agreed by MC (**Action: DB**).

KFB then requested each member of the MC speak for a few minutes on their roles in the Committee.

DB (Secretary)

The main tasks are organising MC meetings and minute taking, updating the HOS rules as necessary, updating the Charity Commission website for changes in Trustees, submitting the Annual Return, Trustee's Annual Report and Accounts to the Charity Commission, record keeping and dealing with correspondence received at the HOS business address and email address. In addition to this, DB volunteers for surveys and some HOS events. The role of Secretary is not demanding although of late his work and personal demands have caused delays in delivering the MC Meeting minutes.

AM (Treasurer)

The role of the Treasurer is not too onerous. AM suggested that HOS consider low cost grants to schools / young members (e.g. bird boxes at schools).

BP (Membership)

Challenges – growing the membership, providing value to members, what do we do in addition to providing core offering.

Suggestions – Zoom licence (increase attendees at talks), more speakers at talks, membership meetings, new team of volunteers (Whats App group), attend more external meetings / clubs.

TS

Coaching and supporting young members to become leaders.

Recruitment of young members.

E-bulletins for young members with links to articles.

Consider the challenges arising as the membership becomes more diverse, finding the time to provide something of interest to all members.

Consider a different name for the young members group within HOS.

AC

Monitoring attendees (and non-attendees) at walks and obtaining feedback.

More female leaders.

Consider other locations (Middle and North Hampshire). Should numbers on walks be restricted?

CR (Kingfisher)

Challenge to keep Kingfisher relevant. Articles for urban dwellers.

Young members page or another publication which CR would edit or assist a young member to edit.

KS (Membership)

Busy early in January – otherwise workload OK.

KFB – write to members not paying by standing order.

AM – use Stripe for first payment.

NW

Very good handover from Bryan Coates.

New embroiderer for baseball caps (Titchfield Haven)

AGM sales good, £700 clothing, £250 books.

Suggestions – more promotions (e.g. bumper stickers or pin badges).

Selling Rare Birds of Hampshire on Amazon.

MW (Scientific)

10 year survey plan.

Management of surveys, delegate more (Sub-Committee).

Produce a checklist .

Use the website more.

Update in Kingfisher (CR to speak to ACo for content).

Making it easier for members to get involved with surveys.

Consideration of urban surveys. What should be looked at (e.g. how to manage your garden).

MW has been Chair of the Scientific Committee for 5 years. Decision to be made on the timing of the appointment of a successor.

MLC (Hampshire Bird Report)

Consider digital copies in the future. Significant cost savings. Review digital copy of Kingfisher first, HBR sometime later.

50 copies sold each year. Plentiful source of papers for inclusion.

KFB (Chair / County Recorder)

KFB has 4 helpers.

Much still to do and needs to delegate more. Successor for Alan Cox to be sought in the medium term and Alan to be asked to train.

Online meetings – Scientific Committee Meetings are better online (MW).

MC meetings held February, May, September and November. The September meeting to be face to face, thereafter consider which meetings to be face to face or online.

Research into ethnic groups within HOS. KFB has written to a parent and will report back. Look for ethnic members to lead groups. **(Action: KFB)**

AL and JB will cover conservation liaison and young members at the next MC Meeting.

JC

Increase working together with HIOWWT. JC to develop the relationship. **(Action: JC)**

ACo

Consider bird illustrations and poetry for Kingfisher. (CR launching 'Gallery').

HS

Strategy for teenagers.

10. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

Next meeting

The next meeting will be at Littleton Village Hall.

Date to be arranged **(Action: DB)**