

**Hampshire Ornithological Society
Meeting of the Management Committee
4 July 2023, 7.30 pm (by Zoom)**

MINUTES

Present:	Initials	Present:	Initials
Keith Betton (Chair)	KB	Martin Pitt	MP
David Brookes (Treasurer)	DB	Carol Rawlings	CR
Dave Palmer (Secretary)	DP	Helen Schneider	HS
Janice Beck	JB	Kay Shillitoe	KS
Michael Chalmers	MC	Marcus Ward	MW
Jayne Chapman	JC	Di Warner	DW
Andy Lester	AL		

1. Apologies

Andrew Colenutt	AC	Tommy Saunders	TS
Barry Page	BP		

2. Matters arising from minutes of 28 February 2023

KB welcomed MP, DW and DP to their first Management Committee meeting as Trustees.

Minutes of the Meeting of 28th February 2023 were approved with one correction: to note that CR was in attendance at the meeting.

There were three actions from the February meeting (see attached Action Tracker), two of which related to the AGM and one to the Redstart productivity project. All have been completed and closed.

3. Treasurer's Report

DB presented the Accounts (to end June 2023) and Treasurer's Report. The accounts are in surplus and this is expected to remain and subsequently reduce, being partially offset by charges for the Bird Report and Kingfisher, which arrive in the second part of the year. Donations are up at £1,701 year to date and equipment costs are also up at £1,327. DB suggested more funds could be put on deposit, dependant on the expected scale of grants to be issued, noting also that the deposit for the 2024 AGM has not yet been paid. KB noted that Tara Dempsey has agreed the loan position with the endoscope (i.e. belonging to HOS); it is available for use (and has been used) by others when her project does not require it.

KB noted the financial position does allow HOS to support a large project under the right circumstances and enquired whether Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust (HWT) would be seeking funding for Titchfield Haven. JC noted this is not yet known and will depend on Hampshire County Council's (HCC) chosen option. AL noted the key issues are around infrastructure and site management and the website is updated regularly. JC will advise as soon as an update from HWT is available. Given the next Committee Meeting isn't until October, an extraordinary meeting will be convened if the issue materialises before then.

Action 1: JC to advise if the position with Titchfield Haven changes significantly.

Action 2: KB to convene an extraordinary Management Committee Meeting if a decision on funding Titchfield Haven is required ahead of the next regular meeting.

4. Review of Members Day/AGM 2023

KB noted highlights from the Members' Day survey, which were generally very positive. Comments received were also very positive, with a few more critical ones around parking space available, number and length of breaks (particularly relating to making time available to see exhibitors' stands), coffee and food availability, exhibitor information and the mix and nature of the talks. Parking is known to be tight and the school holding

a sporting event the same day exacerbated this. On coffee it was suggested having two baristas next time would reduce waiting times (again exacerbated by non AGM attendees using the facility) and it was agreed a list of exhibitors could be published.

KB asked for Committee members' views and feedback. Key points noted were:

- DB – very positive. Need to consider how to keep the high calibre of this year's speakers next time. Suggested a mix with inclusion of a "patch" expert.
- AL – excellent day and went smoothly. All issues were out of HOS control. Agreed need to mix local and big name speakers.
- CR – audience reaction was positive and big name speakers were appreciated. Suggested a "Question Time" type panel session at the end of the day.
- HS – agreed and supported more interactivity and/or a panel session. Suggested seeking more HOS specific feedback.
- JB – good speakers. Suggested a photo of speakers and HOS Management Committee together. Noted the food issue isn't going away and asked whether the school would allow basic provisions. KB stated this was unlikely, but worth asking. Noted also late arrival of two campervans caused parking issues.

Action 3: BP to enquire whether the school would allow HOS to provide basic food at the next AGM.

- JC – lovely day. Suggested involving local groups such as HWT to present on behind the scenes management and volunteer effort (e.g. Chris Lycett or Jamie Marsh?).
- KS – front desk went well. Suggested enabling raffle ticket sales at Reception, particularly during lunch.
- MW – good and busier this year with better attendance. Supports ideas of local patch and/or management speakers. Having second exhibitors' room was good.
- MC – wasn't there but supports comments.
- DP – feedback received has been very positive. Suggested some way of celebrating long serving HOS members. KS noted longest members don't have recorded start dates (287 members from before 1998).
- DW – supports comments and suggested a cake van.
- MP – supports comments and noted parking is a known issue.

KB noted the date for next years' AGM/Members Day is set at 6th April. All please hold availability for that date. KB noted that BP will be able to plan the event, but unfortunately can't be there on the day, so a project manager/co-ordinator will be required. For speakers, Debbie Tann (HWT) and Iolo Williams have been suggested; KB noted Iolo Williams fees are high (c. £1,000). CR suggested getting major reserves to exhibit. JC noted it might be more practicable to have one of the reserve managers on a stand. HS suggested getting estate managers involved as well. JC also suggested a cluster farm manager (e.g. Matthew Norris-Hill).

5. Membership update

KS noted HOS has 79 new members so far this year; this is slightly down from this time last year. KS noted 60 more members have signed up to have the digital version of Kingfisher (total now 96). However, there are 168 members with no recorded email address (some still paying £12 subscription and won't get Kingfisher anyway), who can't be issued with the digital version until that is resolved. KB stated a project to address this is required and asked for volunteers to work with Nicola Whitmarsh. DW and JB agreed to support this project. CR noted that touch points, such as the walks, could be used to ask if those present have an email address lodged with HOS. KB noted the last New Members Day was 25th June and the one after 3rd September. MP confirmed he can be there to support and DB stated he might be able to also.

Kingfisher

KB noted the good progress with the digital version of Kingfisher. CR stated the new version now works with phones, tablets and PCs, but the design has to differ from the printed version. Analytic data can also be accessed from the website (no of views, etc.). MC supported the new version, noting similarity to publication proofs. MP likes the version as an interim, but noted text size is an issue requiring constant zooming and suggested the kindle approach that allows the user to change text size to personal settings. MP suggested a shift to the online version being the default and the printed version being the option. KS stated a bulk e-mailer would be required. HS noted it can be read landscape on a phone and liked the links to websites or addresses. It also provides more space for pictures, etc. KB stated a plan is needed to migrate Kingfisher to digital, starting with a mail (by Nicola) strongly encouraging members to switch to digital. Aim is 50% uptake in next

year and digital as default version for new members. MP suggested new members should be digital by default now. KS stated a paper copy is part of the new members' pack, but this could be changed to an email link. JC noted that HWT found it hard to get members to opt into digital. KS noted all the Management Committee currently get the paper version; all present agreed to go digital. CR suggested the digital version would have to be hosted in the members area of the HOS website, as members pay for it. It was noted members can print their own copies.

Action 4: KS to change all committee members' preferences to receiving Kingfisher digitally.

Young Members

JB noted two more good quality telescopes have been donated to the Young Members group. AL stated he has one to donate too (KB will collect). The new programme of walks with Andy Packer filled up within 24 hours, so more leaders and ringing sessions are needed. JC noted the reserves team are willing to support; JB will contact them. AL also volunteered to lead and noted that safeguarding rules are changing. All leaders' DBS checks need to be up to date.

Post Meeting Note: Action 9: DP will investigate getting necessary DBS checks arranged.

Ladybirders

JB noted the Ladybirders Group is recognised as a very friendly group and they are holding lots of midweek walks. JB stated that on the back of a magazine article, there has been a big influx in requests to join. Given membership of HOS is a prerequisite, this is likely to lead to a significant number of new members.

6. Sales Update

DP noted the report on sales from Nicola Whitmarsh. Total of £2,799.87 to date in 2023 (exclusive of sales fees), of which c. 30% was for clothing/DVDs, 20% for publications and 50% for Rare Birds of Hampshire (RBOH). £633.38 of purchases (clothing) was also noted. Since the last Committee meeting, there have been £1,956 worth of sales (£1308 at the AGM, £462 online/bookshop sales and £186 at new members events).

KB noted the history of stock purchasing for RBOH, noting John Clark still retains 150 copies. Only one copy has been sold since the AGM and 46 of the original 600 copies procured by HOS remain in stock. John Clark's stock won't be procured by HOS until the bulk of the remaining HOS stock is sold and sales are in profit.

7. Scientific Sub-committee

MW reported little movement on grants at present. Current deadline for applications is 21st August, with adverts going out in the next week. Some emails have already been sent to known interests, but no applications have been received yet.

MW reported that the Marsh Tit survey is now complete. Data so far is looking good and comparable with Tony Davis's results, though fewer records. The Dartford Warbler survey is concluding. KB noted the number on the coast is down, but MP noted the Thames Basin is up from last year. KS asked if bird flu is an impact? KB noted this is unlikely, as to date there has been little impact on passerines.

MW noted the Scientific Committee would not meet until the end of July, as there's a lot of fieldwork underway at present.

MC noted the 2022 Bird Report is c. 80% in first draft form, so broadly on track. As usual it is waiting on the BTO ringing report. MP (as new County Recorder) noted there are no issues to date, but is likely to need an additional handover meeting and meetings with local representatives to consolidate the position.

8. Conservation Liaison

See Section 3 above for note on Titchfield Haven. AL noted the position for Titchfield is quiet at present, however the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities fund application has been approved in full, which provides peer pressure onto HCC.

AL has been looking at forthcoming planning applications where there is a risk to birds. BP processes these and shortlists them for attention, but these are few (6 in last 12 months). Given the high volume overall, AL questioned whether this is the right approach. Currently records arrive every 2-3 weeks. MP noted monthly

should suffice, as notice period is 8 weeks. Local applications addressed at county level are a problem. Also things like hedgerow reduction prior to environmental surveys mask the impact.

KB noted that he had asked Nigel Matthews to attend the recent coastal erosion meeting and has advised that there are plans to protect certain areas. They are still in consultation, so no decisions have been made yet. Position is unlikely to be clear for 1-2 more years.

AL enquired if there was any further news on Tipner. JC will ask for feedback and an update; primarily to understand concerns.

Action 5: JC to obtain feedback and an update on Tipner.

AL noted this has been a challenging season for rare breeds such as the Wood Warblers in the New Forest, with photographic disturbance in two of the three breeding areas; there's a similar position for Nightingales. KB noted the issue stems from social media and online platforms as they bypass control measures.

9. Succession planning

AL noted he would be stepping down at the end of the year as he is moving to Carlisle. JB also noted she would be stepping down in March by rotation. JC asked if she is still wanted as a trustee; KB confirmed she is. KB stated that this will leave two vacant trustee positions for the 2024/25 year and noted that Grant Mintram (CV previously circulated) is willing to consider taking a role. He will be invited as a guest to the next meeting. AL asked if there were any candidates for the Conservation Liaison role after his departure. Several names were suggested, and KB will see if they are interested.

Action 6: KB to sound out possible candidates for Conservation Liaison role.

10. Any Other Business

HS stated she has recently joined Sway Parish Council, noting that both the environment and sustainable travel are key issues for them, so there could be a link for HOS. HS has also joined the planning committee.

HS had suggested that trustees be given a generic calling card that they can give to potential new members. All agreed this would be a good move.

Action 7: DP to investigate calling card options.

11. Forthcoming meetings

KB noted the next meeting would be in person and suggested October. MP stated he would be away the first half of the month. KB confirmed a date would be arranged in the second half of October.

Action 8: DP to identify a date and make the necessary arrangements for the October meeting, and invite Grant Mintram.

Action Tracker

No	Action	Owner	Due	Update	Status
Meeting July 2023					
A23/7-1	Advise if the position with Titchfield Haven changes significantly.	JC	-		Open
A23/7-2	Convene an extraordinary Management Committee Meeting if a decision on funding Titchfield Haven is required ahead of the next regular meeting.	KB	-		Open
A23/7-3	Enquire whether the school would allow HOS to provide basic food at the next AGM.	BP	6/4/24		Open
A23/7-4	Change all committee members' preferences to receiving Kingfisher digitally.	KS	31/8/23		Open
A23/7-5	Obtain feedback and an update on Tipner.	JC	-		Open
A23/7-6	Sound out possible candidates for Conservation Liaison role.	KB	31/3/24		
A23/7-7	Investigate calling card options	DP	30/9/23		
A23/7-8	Identify a date and make the necessary arrangements for the October meeting, and invite Grant Mintram.	DP	31/8/23		Open
A23/7-9	Investigate getting necessary DBS checks arranged.	DP	31/7/23		Open
Meeting February 2023					
A23/2-1	Announce the HOS £5,000 donation to the BTO Bird Flu Appeal at the Members Day.	KB	1/4/23	Completed at AGM	Closed
A23/2-2	Brief Members Day volunteers by Zoom before the day.	BP	1/4/23	Completed prior to AGM	Closed
A23/2-3	Advise Tara Dempsey that HOS will purchase an endoscope and loan it to her, on condition it be returned at the end of the project and the resultant data be supplied to HOS.	MW	-	MW has spoken to Tara Dempsey and the conditions have been accepted.	Closed