



Kent Ornithological Society

Executive Committee – 21st June 2023 (via zoom)

Draft Minutes

Present: Andre Farrar (Chair), Martin Collins, Mike Henty, Gary Howard, Murray Orchard, Kieron Palmer, Keith Privett, Brendan Ryan, Barry Wright

Apologies: Chris Roome, Robin Mace

1. Key matters for decision or discussion

1.1 Follow up and recommendations from Engagement Committee.

BR reported back on behalf of CR. The Committee endorsed the recommendations from the Engagement Committee as follows:

- Access for non members to the sightings pages should be limited to news over two weeks old rather than one week
- The KOS newsletter should only be accessible to KOS members but a sample newsletter should be viewable to non members with an invitation to join in order to see other newsletters.
- Free digital membership should be offered to people under 25 who reside in Kent or a contiguous county (Essex, Surrey, Sussex or London). This category of member will not receive a hard copy of the Kent Bird Report.
- The latest Kent Bird Report will be available to view by members on the KOS website. Only the latest KBR will be accessible. E.g. not back issues.
- The free membership for under 25s will be reviewed by the committee in two years time.
- MC is authorised to proceed with his proposals for merchandise as set out in his paper to the Engagement Committee
- The Executive Committee will consider at a separate meeting adopting a more positive stance on diversity and will consider lessons from other organisations like the BTO

1.2 Membership Survey

MC gave a short overview of the results of the recent survey and suggested that the next follow up survey would explore:

- The diversity of members' birding habits
- The use of the KOS website

- What members wanted or expected from KOS

1.3 Copyright issues relating to the newsletter and other KOS publications

Concerns had been raised about the potential implications for contributors of the rider about copyrighting, added recently to the newsletter e-mail. Apparently the rider was similar to one used by British Birds but may be a little more restrictive than intended. There were concerns that the originators of photographs or artwork would lose copyright and could have their works altered without their consent. The rider would be reviewed and toned down if possible. Where the cover art work on the KBR was labelled (traditionally on page 1), it will be made clear that the artwork is copyrighted to the artist.

Action:

KP and MC to amend access to the website for non members

MC to progress merchandise offer

KPa/MC to liaise with KPr to upload latest to KBR to members' area of the website

CR to develop membership offer for under 25s

Diversity to be added to the agenda of next Executive Committee meeting (BR)

Executive Committee members to undergo online diversity training

Someone?? To look at the copyright rider attached to the newsletter

1.3 Feeding the beast

The committee discussed the need to promote KOS more fully through regular rather than ad hoc communications via social media. Heather Mathieson had established a KOS Instagram page which was developing a following which was noticeably more diverse than the current membership. Output on all platforms had increased significantly as a result of Heather's involvement. However support was needed to increase news items to be communicated. The Executive Committee and all involved in the sub-committees needed to step up and think of things that could be communicated to members.

It was agreed to establish a KOS media WhatsApp group to share potential news for "broadcast via social media

Action: BW to set up WhatsApp Group

2. Updates

2.1 Cobra replacement

RM reported good progress has been made on the COBRA replacement and some bugs have been ironed out.

The focus has been concentrating on those aspects of the new system that will enable RM to produce the 2022 data for the KBR. Data for the next KBR should be available in the autumn.

There are some aspects of the reporting in COBRA2 that need expansion and RM will contact Chris about these in due course.

2.2 Treasurer's Report

MH reported that the accounts had been inspected and filed with the Charities Commission. MH had been rearranging Public Liability Insurance for the Society. Insurance cover had been arranged for £10,000,000 with cover for trustees of £100,000. The proposed policy would seem to exclude the Society from undertaking environmental campaigning which might conflict with members' expectations that KOS would continue to express views on environmental issues.

MH would clarify with insurers as report back. There was a discussion the risks associated with the various activities in which the Society was involved, these included boating activities (not applicable as Medway surveys under RSPB auspices) and outdoor meetings. KOS surveys included H&S information and risk assessment based on BTO model.

Paul Holt had offered to provide a copy of the H&S assessment carried out at Samphire before organised walks. This could provide a template for KOS field meetings.

It was agreed that the Committee needed to carry out a formal risk mapping exercise at the next away day or before

Action: MH to follow up with insurers

BR to contact Paul Holt and liaise with RO'R

Risk mapping to be added to the away day agenda

2.3 Kent Bird Report

All species accounts were now completed although some cross referencing would be needed once the Dungeness report is available.

2.4 Editorial and Records Committee

BW reported that no significant developments had taken place. There was a discussion about various tensions and sensitivities surrounding some records and locations in the county.

2.5 Surveys and Conservation Committee

MO reported that the Nightingale survey had been completed, with 70% coverage . The data is now being processed. It seems to be a good year for Nightingales. The woodcock survey is underway with all priority areas covered.

The usual development threats were touched on briefly with a proposed electricity sub-station at Weatherlees/Pegwell being the latest development of concern.

3. Administrative matters

3.1 Minutes of previous meeting (22nd March 2023)

Minutes agreed. GH to be added as being present.

3.2 Minutes of AGM (25th April 2023)

Agreed subject to final approval by next AGM

3.3 Future meetings

20th September 2023

10th January 2024

13th January 2024 (provisional strategy day- TBA)