



## **Kent Ornithological Society**

### **Executive Committee – 1 May 2024 (via zoom, 19.30-21.15)**

#### **Draft Minutes**

**Present:** Andre Farrar (Chair), Chris Roome, Martin Collins, Mike Henty, Gary Howard, Murray Orchard, Keith Privett (KPr), Barry Wright, Peter Eerdmans

**Also in attendance:** Brendan Ryan

**Apologies:** Robin Mace, Kieron Palmer (KPa)

#### **1. Introduction**

AF welcomes PE to the committee and thanks BR.

#### **2. Key matters for decision or discussion**

##### **2.1 Revised Rules/Constitution**

BR withdrew the proposal for the revised rules from AGM as it was too short notice. We will put it on the KOS website as a consultation document. At the next AGM members can vote on it (committee feels a special interim meeting is not required). In their version, Sussex have gone very detailed on how they connect with people with no email. We have 42 members for whom we have no email address at this stage. We agreed we will use a paper notification for those to notify them on the AGM (this requires a small further amendment of the rules).

##### **Actions:**

**CR to try contact members with no email, to see if we can get email for them.**

**BR to add further amendment to reflect how we treat member where we don't have email and post revised rules on website for consultation.**

##### **2.2 Birds of Kent- next steps**

We should set up a working group to start with this key project. We have most of the information, from the atlas, Cobra, newsletters, etc. So while it would good to get the Cobra update out of the way, we should push ahead with Birds of Kent.

**Action: BR to organise a zoom meeting with the new work group (BR, MC, MO, BW, GH, Andrew Henderson) with IT support from Chris D.**

### **2.3 Migration Event – September**

CR has written a paper on this event which he will share after the meeting. This event is a key opportunity to engage with wider public. It will be held on Saturday 28 Sept. We need to think of a name (Kent Bird Migration Day?). We will organise teams of observers at different migration spots: North foreland, Sandwich Bay, Bockhill, Samphire Hoe, Dungeness, plus maybe others (Foreness, Reculver, Swalecliffe, Oare?). Main hub for the day is Samphire Hoe with a stand, ringing team, map with overview of sightings. We will create twitter feed to communicate sightings across the day. Sandwich Bay, Dungeness RSPB are fully onboard. We need to get the Dunge Obs involved as well. There is a clash with the gull survey of the BTO (but that is more an evening survey, so should be ok).

Jobs to do:

- Volunteers at key sites to bird and man KOS stands
- Set up Twitter hashtag
- Visible KOS presence at all sites (one exec member at each site preferably)
- Ringing group at Hoe (Pete Finn already rings there, so seems logical choice)
- Stalls, books, plotting table, overhead display, etc at Hoe
- Press liaison person, also to liaise with KWT, RSPB, BirdWise.
- Publish event through all our channels from now on

**Action: AF to lead the work group and action the jobs to do, with MC, CR, GH, PE to join.**

### **2.4 Scanned record cards**

There was a recent request on Marsh Warblers, which highlighted some shortcomings. Everything is digitalised, but not in useful form yet. MC proposes crowd-sourcing project where volunteers classify. KPr to meet with MC and download all digitalised record cards to MC computer/cloud. Then MC can decide how we can progress (all cards are handwritten so might be difficult to use software to read). It was noted we need to be careful not to waste too much time on this project. High level categorisation (species by year say) is good, and then individuals who want to use the data can zoom in further.

**Action: KPr and MC to meet, download all pdfs and decide on best way forward.**

## **3. Updates**

### **3.1 Cobra Replacement**

The work on the COBRA replacement is proceeding and RM is expected to start testing the ad-hoc reporting tool soon. RM has started collecting 2023 data.

**Action: RM to provide some examples by June**

### **3.2 Treasurer's Update**

Not a lot has happened. MH has renewed our insurance and is processing the web maintenance bill (same price as last year). We need to get PE registered as Trustee and as signature with the bank (CR also needs to be added as a signature for cheques).

**Action: MH to organise correct registrations for PE and CR**

### **3.3 Membership**

CR: we have 741 members of which 21 are youth members (as per AGM report). There was a drop due to increase which required action in PayPal (we chased everyone twice). General flow is 10-15 new members a month.

### **3.4 Kent Bird Report**

KPr reported that the 2022 report is coming along. He expects all photographs and writers' contributions by end of May. Dungeness Obs still the hold up.. KBR includes five articles on new birds for Kent. MO is 2/3 done with the seabird report section. Target date for publication is 1 August.

### **3.5 Editorial and Records Committee**

BW wondered if can we publish eBird map showing coverage of Kent (via hotspots?) on our website? Could help promote better coverage of less popular spots.

Further updates from BW:

Sussex have a Goshawk site now for public. Should we have one in Kent? Maybe Stephen Message's site? Such site could help less disturbance at other sites.

Rare bird committee has been quite stable in terms of members, maybe we should consider making some changes/additions.

A recent meeting with BBRC was very constructive.

BirdGuides has been constructive on rare breeding birds: contacting BW first most of the time. BR wonders if we are too cautious? Eg Savi's are put out in other places in the country.

The committee is working with eBird to adjust some 'exceptional' counts.

### **3.6 Surveys and Conservation Committee**

MO indicated we have all the data in for the nightingale survey. He is writing up a report with all the relevant graphs and tables. Some of this could do with help from BTO. BTO wants to charge £800 for their help/calculations. MH happy with this amount.

There is a proposal for a new National Nature Reserve in the Northdowns (Gravesend-Halling). There is money available, managed by KCC . MO is the lead person for birds in this project. There is £1000 available for KOS for our services to provide info from our database/records. This can cover the BTO payment above.

Next year: Lesser Spotted Woodpecker and Marsh Tit surveys planned.

The 'Kent Making Space for Nature' projects are gaining some momentum all across the county. KOS involved on birds. MO to put list together of priority species.

**Actions:**

**MO contact RM to get the data for the NNR project. OM to double check with RM if we can pass on eBird data.**

**MO to circulate priority species list for the county to committee.**

**3.7 Engagement Committee**

CR: working on diversity. Meeting of the committee to be organised shortly.

**4. Administrative Matters**

**4.1 Minutes of last meeting 10 Jan 2024**

Approved

**4.2 Minutes of AGM 10 April 2024**

**Actions:**

**PE to correct misspecification on breeding birds: we don't have more than other counties**

**MO to send some small edits to PE**

**4.3 Meeting dates 2024**

10 July, 18 September, 4 December

**4.4 AGM 2025**

We could consider an in-person AGM in the morning, with a speaker/members event in the afternoon, e.g. at Elmley, or Godmerhsam Village Hall as an alternative. Probably best to make the focus a member's afternoon with the AGM tagged on.

**Action: CR to put this idea on future agenda of Engagement Committee.**

**5. AOB**

**5.1 MC has collected Don Taylor's collection, including:**

Records

Books (which we can sell on 28 September, share with observatories and remainder to charity shops),

Reports of past bird races (may be useful for future newsletter to be shared with Norman M)

Slides (can be added to BW's Conservatory)

Paintings (one to be returned to Stephen Message, others sell on 28 September?)

**Action: MC will catalogue and share.**

**Action: AF/CR to send official thank-you to daughter of Don Taylor**

**5.2 Kent List**

**Action: KPr is struggling to update list for Barola Shearwater. MC to help out.**

**5.3 KOS Business Cards**

**Action: CR to send cards to KPr and PE**

**5.4 1 Feb Strategy Day at Dungeness**

**Action: CR to check with AF if there were any actions that need minuting from that meeting, which is not covered in this meeting.**