



Kent Ornithological Society - Executive Committee

7.30pm, 4 June 2025

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

Apologies: Robin Mace

1. Key Matters for decision or discussion

1. Birds of Kent update

i. Chris Dee has answered the questions of the Committee:

1. Timing

If I get to the build during July, after the Joomla 5 migration of the current site, then I think you could start adding content from mid-August.

2. Future-proofing

Yes, no different to the main KOS website. This will be developed in Joomla - which is a mainstream website content management system with plenty of alternative developers.

3. Ringing recoveries

I was planning on including that as an optional extra for each species, based on an existing Joomla component used, for example, on the Swale Wader Group website, amongst other.

4. Breeding atlas to be uploaded

Could you please send the Breeding Atlas texts.

ii. We are keen to progress. But we really need the website upgrade and the BoK at stage of being ready for inputs, by end of August. We recognise it is not helping that we can be slow to provide feedback/input.

iii. To address this we agree that MC will become more of a sounding board to support Chris Dee. And that PE will help out with testing and quick replies to Chris as well.

iv. **Action: AF to contact Brendan and tell him MC and PE will get involved to manage the project**

v. **Action: AF to contact Robin Mace to action hand-over, we need a full job description and agree timings for handing over. MC could perhaps do this, although maybe we can recruit as well (BW to contact Ian Roberts?). In meantime, MC to get familiar with the data and how to interrogate it.**

2. Rare Breeding Bird guidelines

i. We thought we should be a bit clearer when and when not we can put out news of potential rare breeding birds.

ii. We have a created list of species where we can and cannot disclose, and where we can disclose after considering and discussing with wardens, etc.

- iii. **Action: MO to finalise proposal, get input from David Smith and then send round to committee for agreement.**
- 3. KOS days: Dunge on 17 August & Migration Day on 28 September
 - i. First one was a good start
 - ii. Learnings:
 - 1. Use TVs in VC for slide show
 - 2. We can use the reserve's radios for instant communications
 - 3. Need a few more volunteers (ideally 10 in total) to take spots around the reserves, to talk to visitors, point out birds, etc. (this probably works better than guided walks)
 - 4. John Young has been a fantastic help
 - 5. 17 August is to be more family friendly. Maybe organise a treasure hunt?
 - iii. **Action: AF/CR to take organisation of 17 Aug Dunge day forward. All to indicate if they can volunteer**
- 2. **Updates (including relevant actions from last meeting)**
 - 1. Membership CR
 - i. Small increase in membership, we gained three at Dunge day
 - 2. Treasurer's update GH
 - i. Hand-over from MH to GH in progress
 - ii. Might move to use an external accounting tool, although current system very clear and useful
 - iii. Annual return to charity committee in October: MH still to lead on this this year. GH to become authorised person for next year.
 - 3. Editorial and Records Committee BW
 - i. 'Twitter' link on website to be fixed with Joomla5 upgrade
 - ii. Revisiting idea of a Kent South East bird trail, to link our two observatories. We may be asked for some sponsorship money to create a pamphlet (as er idea from Gill). Kent Tourism board, BirdWise or Natural England Coastal Trail maybe interested to be involved. Folkstone Birding website (Ian Roberts) might be useful as well, provides a great template.
 - iii. KBR just waiting for last writer's contribution. Still on target for August.
 - iv. **Action: BW to chase finder of Solitary Sandpiper for article in KBR**
 - 4. Surveys and Conservation Committee MO
 - i. LSW completed, well organised by Heather. Good experience with acoustic recorders.
 - ii. Heathland Bird Survey: Dartford Warbler and Wood Lark sorted out, but coverage of squares for Nightjar is quite poor so far. MO will put new request out.
 - iii. BTO Winter Bird Survey coming up this winter.
 - iv. Conservation: lots going on with developments.

- v. MO met Stephan Bartan recently who is warden at Stodmarsh and agreed to better communication of breeding records
- vi. Looks like a tough time this year in the Medway, with the main Sandwich Tern colony deserted (perhaps due to persistent NE winds). Records of breeding Common Terns are very welcome as getting quite rare in Kent.
- vii. As per previous action: MO would see as a minimum requirement for survey work on RSPB reserves that all RBBP species are surveyed and reported, plus WeBS counts during the core months.
- viii. Great news about the North Downs NR. The campaign to save Old Park Canterbury is building nicely.
- ix. **Action: AF to write up piece on North Downs NR for website**
- x. **Action: MO to write survey requirements up and take this to RSPB and offer surveying help where needed.**

5. Engagement Committee

CR

- i. CR has sent round draft diversity policy.
- ii. CR has set up a zoom call with Ray O'Reilly, and has set up a list of things Ray needs to do before an outing (similar to what Samphire Hoe does with walks, which is setting out the risks before each walks, but do a pre-walk reconnaissance to check all is in order for the walk).
- iii. Engagement Committee to be organised in next few weeks, Ralph Todd will join the committee.
- iv. Positive feedback received on Winter Talks
- v. **Action: Everyone to comment on diversity policy by end of the month**
- vi. **Action: CR to report back on meeting with Ray, and then add statement on our website on the risks perhaps specified by location.**

3. Administration matters

- 1. Minutes of last meeting (5 March) approved PE
- 2. Upcoming meeting dates PE
 - i. 2025 dates:
 - 3 September
 - 3 December

4. Any other business

- MO has enlisted Chris Dee to develop two maps for £90 (approved)
- PE is liaising with the Bough Beech locals to see how Alan Ford's contributions can be continued now that he has passed.
- **Action: MC to raise with Chris Dee to add a search function to the website**
- **Action: MO, BW, CR to send updated officers of sub-committees to PE so we can update list on website.**