



## Kent Ornithological Society

Providing information about Birds and Birdwatching in Kent

### Executive Committee

**Minutes** of a Meeting held on Thursday 1 November 2012 at 7:00pm at Brogdale Farm, Brogdale Road, Faversham, Kent ME13 8XZ

**Present:** Martin Coath, (Chair), John Cantelo, Jack Chantler, Rob Clements, Mike Henty, Ken Lodge, Geoff Orton, Keith Privett, Chris Roome, Mike Roser, Brendan Ryan AntheaSkiffington, Stephen Wood and Barry Wright.

#### 1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chairman welcomed Rob Clements as the new chair of the Conservation and Surveys Sub-Committee and Geoff Orton as BTO representative, to their first meeting of the Executive Committee, as well as returning EC alumni Jack Chantler and Ken Lodge, who were in attendance for Item 5.

Apologies for absence were received from: Chris Abrams and Robin Mace.

#### 2. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 28June 2012 were accepted as an accurate record.**(Attachment A)**

#### 3. Publicity

BR told the Committee that following his experience in establishing a Twitter account for Bockhill Birders, he had been working closely with Keiron Palmer to create Twitter and Facebook accounts for KOS. He explained that these could be used to announce KOS activities such as indoor and field meetings as well as to encourage new members to join us. However he emphasised that it was not intended to establish a bird information service similar to RBA or Bird Guides. He proposed to restrict the number of individuals who could tweet on behalf of the Society to himself, Keiron and one or two others so that unauthorised or malicious material could not be transmitted.

In answer to MH he confirmed that the service was free to both KOS and to users. Members welcomed this innovation and expressed their thanks to Brendan and Keiron for their efforts.

**Action: Brendan Ryan**

#### **4. Membership**

CR presented his membership report (**Attachment B**). He told the committee that the current membership stood at around 700 and that he had received encouraging comments from new members. An unforeseen consequence of this continued success is that we have run out of copies of the 2009 KBR to include in the new membership pack, and he has had to repossess copies from the RSPB shop at Dungeness !

**Action: Chris Roome**

#### **5. Kent Bird Report**

RM was unable to be present but had sent a report, which the Chairman read out (**Attachment C**).

Jack Chantler and Ken Lodge, long-standing members of the *KBR* production team described some of the problems which they had had lately in completing *KBR 2010* together with their suggestions for future improvements. They noted that Robin was clearly overburdened with work and had indicated his desire to step down as *KBR* Editor while continuing as Archivist, but that this had so far proved impossible because no-one had stepped forward to replace him as Editor. They therefore proposed the following arrangements be brought into effect:

- The Archivist will be responsible for distributing sightings data to the writers and for maintaining a list of observers.
- Responsibility for maintenance of the gazetteer should be clarified.
- 'Aspects of the Year' should be prepared by the Editorial and Records Committee.
- Mike Gould will be responsible for photographic content.
- The Ringing Report will be provided by Chris Hindle.
- The list of KOS officers will be maintained by Steve Wood.
- The Systematic List will be prepared by Jack Chantler and Ken Lodge.
- The arrangement for the maintenance of the list and count of rarities, first and last dates of migrants and special articles remains to be settled.

Jack and Ken proposed that a *KBR* Sub-Committee be established to take on the editorial role formerly invested in a single person. After a wide-ranging discussion the Executive Committee accepted the proposals and appointed JCh and KL together with Keith Privett to be the core members of the Sub-Committee, with the authority to co-opt further members at their discretion. JCh agreed to act as the *KBR* chairman and also to be a co-opted member of the EC to report on its progress.

The issue of whether professional assistance was required with certain technical aspects of *KBR* production was discussed and MH agreed that up to £1,000 could be made available at the request of the new Sub-Committee.

**Action: Jack Chantler, Robin Mace**

## **6. *NewBirds of Kent***

BR reported that he had been in correspondence with Andrew Henderson and that he had reiterated the EC's offer of help with the project.

Rob Clements spoke as the new chair of the C&S Sub-Committee. He proposed that we should immediately set about the production of breeding season atlas based on the mapping already published on the KOS Website, together with a short explanatory text for each species. He believed that the C&S Sub-Committee already had sufficient resources and expertise to complete this project, but if necessary he could call upon the wider KOS membership to assist.

RC acknowledged that technical help would be required with aspects of digital mapping and he had entered into discussions with Chris Dee who had been responsible for the Hertfordshire Atlas and who would be prepared to help with an equivalent Kent atlas. He requested financial assistance from the EC in funding this.

RC suggested that the atlas could be published either as part of a future edition of the *KBR* – as with the last atlas in 1996 *KBR*, or as a stand-alone book. It could also be made available on-line. He believed that it would be possible to complete the project in about a year.

In discussion SW strongly supported RC's proposal and pointed out that the reputation of KOS was seriously impaired by its difficulty in the timely publication of annual reports and other material. He believed that if a breeding bird atlas could be published within a year or so it would do much to improve the perception of the Society in birding circles.

John Cantelo expressed the view that we should be careful to ensure that the publication of an atlas did not damage the prospects of the *NewBirds of Kent*, and that Andrew Henderson should be fully involved.

The Executive Committee agreed that RC should proceed with preparations and should establish the likely costs. MC agreed to brief Andrew Henderson on the proposals.

**Action: Rob Clements, Martin Coath**

## **7. KOS News**

John Cantelo told the Executive Committee that the last two issues of the Newsletter are now available on-line as .pdf files and that the next issue will be the last to be published as a hard paper copy. CR reported that so far he had received only 16 requests for continued provision of paper copies, but he expects this to rise when the

routine circulation ceases. He emphasised that if the desired cost-savings were to be achieved, then future hard copies could only be simple laser prints of the electronic version, provided by special arrangement to a small and diminishing number of members. The EC endorsed this view.

**Action: John Cantelo, Chris Roome**

## **8. Treasurer's Report**

MH presented his report (**Attachment D**). He considered that if the move to electronic publication of *KOSN* achieved the anticipated savings then there would be no need to increase subscriptions.

Although the current account showed a deficit of around £1,500 for the year, this was adequately covered by reserves. Action has been taken to control expenditure in the next financial year as noted above.

**Action: Mike Henty**

## **9. Indoor Meetings**

The Committee recorded its thanks to Marcus Lawson for his splendid effort in organising indoor meetings over the last few years and wished him well in his new home in Dorset.

AntheaSkiffington agreed to take over responsibility for organizing the programme and recruiting speakers in 2013, although she could not guarantee to attend all meetings, and would therefore need help with practical matters such as unlocking the hall and setting up AV equipment. CR currently holds the key to the hall and is in possession of the projector.

**Action: AntheaSkiffington, Chris Roome**

John Cantelo reported that he had looked into the possibility of holding a conference, but it appeared that the cost of hiring a suitable venue would be prohibitive. He will continue to explore the possibilities.

**Action: John Cantelo**

## **10. Outdoor Meetings**

MR reported that new members had been appreciative of several outdoor meetings, which were averaging 13 to 22 participants per trip.

**Action: Mike Roser**

## **11. Website and Forum**

CA reported via email that there had been no recent issues affecting the website apart from the addition of several hundred fake members! This appears to be a problem with the hosting service rather than the KOS website itself and should not affect its performance.

**Action: Chris Abrams**

## **12. Editorial and Records Sub-Committee**

BW noted that the E&R Sub-Committee had met in July when the main topic was *KBR 2011*. There had also been a discussion concerning the replacement of COBRA but without any conclusion being reached.

**Action: Barry Wright**

## **13. Conservation and Surveys Sub-Committee**

MC thanked RC for taking over the chair of the C&S Sub-Committee following the resignation of Marcus Lawson.

RC summarised some of the topics recently covered including the BTO Nightingale Survey and work on a variety of other species. He informed the EC that an Avian Population Estimates Panel had been set up to establish best evidence for bird populations in Kent.

**Action: Rob Clements**

## **14. Any Other Business**

### **Honorary Life Vice Presidents**

SW pointed out that with the recent sad news of the death of EH Gillham, the Society had only two Honorary Life Vice Presidents, Ken Lodge whom we were fortunate to welcome to the present meeting, and Jim Allen who now lived outside the county and played little part in KOS activities. He suggested that an additional HLVP should be sought and asked the Chairman to take this up with the President, Don Taylor.

**Action: Martin Coath, Don Taylor**

### **Kent & Medway Biological Records Centre**

MR announced that KMBRC would be mounting a conference during 2013 and hoped that KOS would consider putting up a speaker. This was strongly endorsed by the EC.

**Action: Mike Roser**

### **Date and Time of the Next Meeting:**

**The Annual General Meeting** will take place on Thursday 4 April 2013 at Grove Green Community Centre, Grovewood Drive, Maidstone ME14 5TQ. Doors will open at 7.15pm for a 7.45 start.

**The Next Meeting of the Executive Committee** will be on Thursday 18 July 2013 at 7.00pm at Brogdale Farm, Brogdale Road, Faversham, Kent ME13 8XZ.

## **Attachment A**



**Kent Ornithological Society**  
Providing information about Birds and Birdwatching in Kent

### **Executive Committee**

**Minutes** of a Meeting held on Thursday 28 June 2012 at 7:00pm at Brogdale Farm, Brogdale Road, Faversham, Kent ME13 8XZ

**Present:** Brendan Ryan (Chair), John Cantelo, Mike Henty, Keith Privett, Mike Roser, AntheaSkiffington, Stephen Wood and Barry Wright.

#### **1. Welcome and apologies for absence**

BR welcomed AntheaSkiffington and Keith Privett, Ordinary Members , to their first meeting of the Executive Committee following their election at this year's AGM.

Apologies for absence were received from: Chris Abrams, Martin Coath Marcus Lawson, Robin Mace and Chris Roome

SW reported that Martin Coath was unable to attend because of ill health, but had submitted a number of items for discussion.

#### **2. Minutes of the last meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 January 2012 were accepted as an accurate record.

#### **3. Annual General Meeting**

JC reported that he proposed to publish the proceedings of the 61st AGM held on 12 April in the next edition of KOS News. Because of considerations of space this will be in an edited form, but the Finance Report and Annual Accounts will be reproduced in full. SW reported that he had posted a complete version of the proceedings on the Forum.

**Action: John Cantelo**

#### **4. Publicity and Membership**

CR was unable to attend the meeting but in his absence the Chairman tabled his report (Attachment B). The Society currently has 690 members, of whom 646 are fully paid-up and 9 have standing orders at the old rate of £9.00 instead of £12.00. 35 are honorary or life members. 71 new members have joined since April 2011.

Members of the Committee approved the report and expressed their gratitude for Chris's work.

**Action: Chris Roome**

BR reported that he had issued press releases publicising the Nightingale survey which had been taken up by several local newspapers as well as the BBC Kent website. He asked that he be alerted to any similarly news-worthy events in the future.

**Action: Brendan Ryan, All Members**

#### **5. Kent Bird Report**

BW reported that the systematic list for the 2010 Report was almost complete with only a few additions and corrections to be added. Mike Gould has compiled the photographs to be included, and as requested in previous discussion at the EC, some more common species will be included and not just notable rarities. BR emphasised his view that each photo should reference the text in some way so that events of the year were recorded and illustrated in a co-ordinated manner. The Report is expected to be delivered to members by August 2012, after which work will start on the 2011 edition which has a target date for publication in April or May 2013.

**Action: Robin Mace, Barry Wright**

Robin Mace had emailed to report that Rachel Jackson is unfortunately no longer in a position to help with the editing of the KBR due to family commitments, and he would therefore be remaining as editor for the 2011 issue. The EC expressed its thanks to both Rachel and Robin for their hard work on behalf of KOS.

RM has advised that a replacement is now needed for COBRA and has identified several possibilities including Recorder and Mapmate. He estimates the likely cost to be less than £500 and MH confirmed that funds were available. The Committee accepted the recommendation and authorised the necessary expenditure, subject to confirmation by the Treasurer.

**Action: Robin Mace, Barry Wright, Mike Henty**

#### **6. New Birds of Kent**

The EC discussed this item in some detail and expressed disappointment that there has apparently been little recent progress in bringing the project to a conclusion.

It was resolved that a final date for the inclusion of new data should be set, and 31st December 2012 was suggested. It was also felt that an experienced KOS member should be appointed to liaise with and assist Andrew Henderson in the completion of the text and illustrations. The name of a suitable member was suggested and BR undertook to take this forward with Martin Coath when he is recovered.

**Action: Brendan Ryan, Martin Coath**

## **7. KOS News**

John Cantelo told the Executive Committee that he is well on with the next edition which will contain a contribution from Andrew Henderson as well as the proceedings of the AGM.

He had met with Chris Roome and Rick Webb to discuss the feasibility of producing an online version of KOSN (Attachment C) and considerable progress had been made. It is now proposed that RW will prepare a mock-up edition of an online edition to present to the Executive Committee for its approval. Once approved e-KOSN will be available for members to sign up, either as an alternative or in addition to the paper version.

The EC approved the proposal and thanked JC, CR and RW for their hard work.

**Action: John Cantelo, Chris Roome**

## **8. Treasurer's Report**

MH reported no change in the Society's satisfactory financial position and asked that the Committee record it's thanks to our auditors, which was unanimously agreed.

**Action: Mike Henty**

## **9. Indoor Meetings**

BW reported on behalf of ML who was unable to attend. The programme for next season of indoor meetings has been completed and posted on the website. During discussion, the success of Martin Garner's talk was noted and there was general support for further 'celebrity' speakers in the future as a means of attracting new members.

**Action: Marcus Lawson**

## **10. Outdoor Meetings**

MR reported that the next meeting will be on 15 September at Cliffe Pools and BR volunteered to prepare a press release for local newspapers. The programme will include visits to all parts of Kent to ensure better accessibility for all members.



**Action: Mike Roser, Brendan Ryan**

## **11. Website and Forum**

CA reported via email that he had upgraded access for AS and KP to the Executive section of the Forum. He also urged EC members to check regularly what is being posted on the Forum and to contribute appropriately.

Several members of the Committee noted recent discussion concerning the 'ownership' of records published elsewhere on the web and agreed with the stance taken by KOS that such records were in the public domain and could be included in KOS publications such as KBR or KOSN, provided an appropriate acknowledgement is made of the source.

**Action: Chris Abrams, All Members**

## **12. Editorial and Records Sub-Committee**

BW noted that the post of recorder for the Central area remains unfilled and that Ken Lodge is continuing to fill in on a temporary basis. JC agreed to place an advert in KOSN.

**Action: Barry Wright, John Cantelo**

BW reported that Richard Bonser had now stepped down from the Rarities Panel and had been replaced by Richard Collins. BW reminded the Committee that appointment to the Rarities Panel is currently fixed to a five-year period, but this may no longer be desirable and he is exploring the options.

**Action: Barry Wright**

David Walker is preparing guidelines for the E&R Committee on the ethical use of biological material for DNA studies. This would include, for instance, when it is acceptable to take feather or blood samples from live birds to determine its sub-species or area of origin.

**Action: Barry Wright**

## **13. Conservation and Surveys Sub-Committee**

In the absence of Marcus Lawson, this item was deferred.

## **14. Any Other Business**

### **Friends of Rede Common**

CR had been contacted by a representative of this body and asked if KOS would lend its support to an open day on 15 July. SW agreed to publicise the event on the Forum.

**Action: Stephen Wood**

## **Dates of Future Meetings**

SW reported that there appeared to be general support for planning EC meeting dates in advance.

All meetings will be held on a Thursday evening:

2013 January 17, April 4 (AGM), July 18, October 24

2014 January 16, April 10 (AGM), July 24, October 23

## **Date and Time of the Next Meeting:**

Next Meeting of the Executive Committee: Thursday 8 November 2012 at 7.00pm at Brogdale Farm, Brogdale Road, Faversham, Kent ME13 8XZ

## **Attachment B**

### **Membership Secretary's report**

- As of October 30<sup>th</sup> 2012 :-
- We currently have **33** non paying members. [Mainly these are honorary members, lifelong members etc]
- We have **658** fully paid up ordinary members.
- We have a further **9** paid up members who are debtors i.e. still pay £9 on a standing order.
- Current membership is therefore **700** [Current mailing list] The apparent fall is accounted for by some 22 members who have all had two reminders in the current year, one in February and another in March - either by email, letters and phone calls - a combination of methods – but have not paid subs and have therefore been deemed to have lapsed. Since April 2011, **81** new members have joined the society (Compared with 42 in 2010/11 – an increase of over 50%)
- Membership has been slowly growing – but we need to attract new members too. Leaflets have been circulated – and some used – and the website does produce a constant stream of new members.
- Anecdotally, a range of conversations with various members encountered in the County, in hides, beside marshes and gravel pits etc has pointed to a generally favourable view of the society and a recognition of the good work it is doing. (I have also received generally positive comment about *KOS News* going electronic.)
- New members have – for the past two months – been receiving the 2008 KBR as part of their Welcome Pack. I have no more hard copies of the 2009 Report.

### **Chris Roome**

Membership Secretary

30 October 2012

## **Attachment C**

### KBR Editor's Report

KBR 2010

Now that all the queries on the Systematic List have been sorted I am working to get the report together for the printers by mid-November. I will arrange a final meeting with Ken and Jack to go through the copy before I send to the printers.

KBR 2011.

I am working on the 2011 data to get ready for the next KBR as soon as I can. If there is anything I can do to help whoever is taking over the editor's job I will, of course, make myself available.

Printers

I had an interesting meeting with a rep from Lavenham Printers. Their costs for producing a KBR are on a par with (if not slightly cheaper than) Press-on-the-Lake. They offer a significantly better turn round than POTL (maximum 10 working days against 4 weeks+). The main problem is that the way copy is provided will be different (I won't go into technical details here but it relates to photographs) and so would need careful consideration. The quality of their printing is at least as good as POTL and in some other respects (e.g.binding) better.

COBRA

Suffice to say that I have not made much progress on this. There are 2 products under consideration and I need to make a reasoned decision on this. As soon as KBR 2010 has gone to the printers and data sheets for writers for 2011 are out I can concentrate on this for a period. There are many aspects to consider, not least what is provided to Area recorders. The costs of providing all current COBRA users is likely to be in the order of £600 maximum.

**Robin Mace**

KBR Editor

30 October 2012

# **Attachment D**

## **Treasurer's Report**

### **Financial Balances**

As of today the available funds are:

Current account c£4,000

Deposit account £6,968

PayPal account £32 (so far this year 70 members have paid subs via PayPal and I have transferred £1,120 to our current account), and

Cash £41.

The Barclays Bond will stand at £33,045.77 when it matures on 14<sup>th</sup> November

Our sound cash position has been boosted by the fact that we have not paid for a KBR this yet to date.

### **Financial Accounts**

Very rough calculations indicate that we will have a deficit in 2012 of around £1,500. This is adequately covered by our reserves.

Critical to assessing the position for 2013 will be the projected costs of newsletters. In 2012 the cost of four newsletters was £3,895. If we substantially reduce this cost for 2013 there will be no need to increase subscriptions.

### **Barclays Bond**

On maturity at 14 November we will be able to enter into another one-year bond but no shorter period is on offer. The key question is: will we need any of these funds in the next twelve months to finance the Birds of Kent?

If it is possible that some of this sum will be needed, alternative investments will have to be discussed.

### **Mike Henty**

Treasurer

30 October 2012