

Kent Ornithological Society

Executive Committee – Draft Minutes

22nd June 2020 (via zoom)

Present: Martin Coath, Chris Roome, Mike Henty, Murray Orchard, Andre Farrar, Barry Wright, Keith Privett, Robin Mace, Brendan Ryan

Apologies: Stephen Wood, Ray O'Reilly

1. Key matters for decision or discussion

1.1 Birds of Kent

BR had circulated a briefing paper summarising options and issues discussed during e-mail exchanges.

MH reported that there was £11k set aside in the accounts for publication of the next Birds of Kent.

It was agreed that a traditional book publication was impractical given the resources needed to get the accounts readily for publication. Additionally a hard copy was out of date by the time it was published and that people now expected these resources to be available on-line.

The committee agreed that the production of an on-line Birds of Kent was the way forward and that much data was already available to provide a good starting point, namely the status of each species described annually in the Kent Bird Report, the species accounts and analysis already written by Andrew Henderson et al, data from the breeding and winter atlases and records of rare and scarce birds currently published on the Kent List section of the website.

It was agreed that we should agree a template (like in HBW live/ Birds of the World) into which the available data could be uploaded and published. Each account could be developed, expanded and updated in a Wikipedia type approach, albeit with a limited number of authors with editing rights. Photos could be uploaded and added to the accounts in a manner similar to the way the Macaulay Library links to Cornell's Birds of the World.

Resourcing the project was discussed and it was agreed that monies set aside of the Birds of Kent could be used to pay someone to develop and design the template and to transfer the existing data into the template. This may be using a consultancy like Garganey or paying a member of the Society to do the legwork to transfer the data to the template. Possibly a summer job for a student?

It was agreed that:

BR would draft a brief for the work that would be required from a consultant

MO would contact Chris Dee from Garganey to see if this was a project he could help with

KP would contact Andrew Henderson to seek his approval of this approach and explore how the existing data and accounts could be made available for the project

The on-line Birds of Kent would be available on the KOS website but would only be available to paid-up members of the Society.

1.2 Kent Bird Report – digital version

Copies of the Kent Bird Reports up to 2003 had been available on a CD. Someone had recently enquired if digital versions of later years were available.

It was agreed rather than producing a CD, an electronic version should be available as a download. The information was available in a digital format (albeit without the photos in some early years) so producing a downloadable version was possible and desirable. However the demands of the database renewal, 2019 KBR and now the Birds of Kent meant that producing a digital KBR was a low priority.

It was agreed that:

A down loadable version of previous Kent Bird Reports would be made available at some time in the future, possibly linked to the 70th anniversary of the Society

1.3 Kent Bird Report

KP reported that all the species accounts had been completed for the 2018 report and he was working on the final build before it went to the printers. Hopefully it will be at the printers in a month's time.

RM was working on collating data for the 2019 report so that it can be sent to writers later in the summer. There was a discussion about the impact of delays in the Dungeness BO report on the production of the KBR. It would be helpful if writers could have a draft copy of the Dungeness report in the way they have for Sandwich Bay.

It was agreed

CR would let KP know how many copies would be printed

BW would speak to Dave Walker about the availability of the Dungeness report

1.4 Cobra database replacement

RM had been nominated as the key contact for Garganey consulting. The key focus during the last month had been preparing data for the 2019 KBR. RM would seek an update from Chris Dee at Garganey.

1.5 Paper records archive

BW reported that a site visit to examine the state of the records and assess the task of putting them in an order that could be digitalised had not taken place because of the Covid situation.

1.6 Vacancies on the Executive Committee

Two vacancies had arisen on the Executive Committee but these were not filled at the virtual AGM. Various potential candidates had been suggested. However there was a need to discuss what skills

and experience we needed to add to the committee. It might also be difficult for someone to join a committee when meetings were only taking place by Zoom.

It was agreed that:

The current vacancies would remain until the committee had the opportunity to consider what it required of future committee members at its next meeting.

1.7 Any other Business

(i) AF suggested that in the current climate organisations were having to think carefully about diversity issues. The Society might consider adopting a diversity policy and reaching out to under-represented groups.

It was agreed that:

AF would bring forward some suggestions for consideration at the next meeting

ii) MO suggested that work needed to update some elements of the website for example reports from outdoor meetings were swamping/burying other news items.

It was agreed that:

Comments on changes should be made initially to CR who would liase with Alan Fossey

2. Administrative matters

The next meeting is scheduled for 2nd September. It was agreed that subject to the Covid guidelines in place at the time that the meeting is switched to Grove Green to allow for more space for social distancing. BR to organise