



Kent Ornithological Society
Providing information about Birds and Birdwatching in Kent

Executive Committee

Minutes of a Meeting held on Thursday 26 January 2012 at 7:00pm at Brogdale Farm, Brogdale Road, Faversham, Kent ME13 8XZ

Present: Martin Coath (Chair), Gordon Allison, John Cantelo, Jack Chantler, Mike Henty, Mike Roser, Brendan Ryan and Stephen Wood.

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from: Chris Abrams, Marcus Lawson, Robin Mace, Chris Roome, and Barry Wright.

2. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 September 2011 were accepted as an accurate record.

3. Annual General Meeting

The 2012 Annual General Meeting will take place on 12 April at Grove Green Community Centre.

Jack Chantler announced that he would be stepping down at the AGM and so a replacement as Ordinary Member would be required. Members of the Executive Committee expressed their appreciation for Jack's contribution to the work of the Society over many years.

After discussion it was agreed that Mike Gould would be asked to give a brief presentation after the formal proceedings on the subject of Bird Photography.

Action: Stephen Wood

4. Publicity and Membership

CR was unable to attend the meeting but in his absence the Chairman tabled his report (Attachment A). The Society currently has 698 members, of whom 652 are fully paid-up and 9 have standing orders at the old rate of £9.00 instead of £12.00. 37 members are in arrears and CR continues to pursue them. 95 new members have joined since April 2010.

Members of the Committee expressed their gratitude for Chris's efforts which have greatly contributed to the present upsurge in membership.

Action: Chris Roome

BR suggested that the forthcoming BTO Nightingale Survey provides an excellent opportunity to publicise the work of KOS and undertook to work up some firm proposals.

Action: Brendan Ryan

5. Kent Bird Report

MC reported an exchange of emails with Robin Mace. Due to unforeseen and unavoidable personal commitments, RM has not made as much progress with the 2010 *KBR* as he would have wished. This has been compounded by problems with COBRA which he believes he has now fixed. Nevertheless he expects that the COBRA records will be distributed to the species account writers by the first week in February. He also expects to meet Rachel Jackson next week to discuss her offer to help with *KBR* production.

Action: Robin Mace

BW reported via email that he has received jpg. files for all the photographs for the 2010 *KBR* from Mike Gould. He also reported that Andrew Lawson and others asked for a complete breakdown of all the tasks required for production of the *KBR* in order that individuals may then be able to express an interest in whether they feel they can take on the role of *KBR* editor or part of the team. Many of the writers are keen to start writing their species accounts but the window of opportunity may soon pass as spring approaches and they would rather be out birding.

Action: Robin Mace, Barry Wright

A general discussion followed and it was agreed that the species account writers should be asked to work as quickly as possible after receiving the COBRA data.

Action: Jack Chantler

6. New Birds of Kent

Andrew Henderson had emailed MC with a progress report. He has updated some species files but is waiting for final data from the *BTO Atlas* and missing data from COBRA. It was agreed to ask Andrew to forward backup copies of *BoK* files for safe-keeping in Kent.

Action: Martin Coath

7. KOS News

John Cantelo told the Executive Committee that he had copy for four articles in hand, although some similarity in content meant that their publication would have to be phased. He had also received an offer of an article describing the work being undertaken at Westbere Marshes by KWCA. Members agreed that the EC had no objection to the publication of such material, subject to the discretion of the Editor.

Negotiations continue with our printers to improve the pictorial content of the newsletter.

Action: John Cantelo

A Forum member, Mike Puxley had suggested that paper copies of *KOSN* should be phased out in favour of an on-line version, and this view was the subject of a wide-ranging discussion.

BR pointed out that the membership survey carried out in 2010 had reported a high level of satisfaction with the newsletter and that many older members did not have access to the internet. No doubt this would change in time, but for the present he considered that it was essential to continue to offer a paper version. BR agreed to contact Mike Puxley to discuss the matter.

Action: Brendan Ryan

It was agreed that the possibility of offering an enhanced on-line version of *KOSN* should be explored.

Action: All Members

8. Treasurer's Report

MH presented his draft report for the financial year 2011. He reported that the Society had additional income of approximately £600 over that predicted in September 2011 which resulted from a surge in new membership subscriptions during the last quarter. This would be credited to income during 2012 and MH believed that it would now not be necessary to increase subscription rates until 2013.

The Society continues to maintain reserves of over £40k against the projected costs of publishing the *New Birds of Kent* and / or a new Kent Atlas. There is also a pressing need to replace the KOS database which is now technically obsolete and for which assistance from commercial sources may be required. Finally, both the Website and *KBR* production and publishing may also require some degree of out-

sourcing. Taking all these uncertainties into consideration MH advised the Executive that it would be prudent to maintain substantial reserves.

The EC agreed that the decision on subscription rates should be decided at the 2013 AGM and that this will be explained in the Treasurer's Report to the 2012 AGM.

Action: Mike Henty

9. Indoor Meetings

GA reported on behalf of ML who was unable to attend. The recent meeting addressed by Martin Garner was a great success and was attended by more than fifty members and guests, each paying £4.00.

ML wished to raise again the possibility of holding an annual conference or study day which could also include the AGM. SW felt that Grove Green Community Centre would not be a suitable venue for such a meeting.

John Cantelo agreed to liaise with Chris Roome and other interested members to take this forward.

Action: Marcus Lawson, John Cantelo, Chris Roome

10. Outdoor Meetings

MR reported that Outdoor Meetings continue to be popular, with more than twenty attending Andy Lawson's Gull Workshop. The programme for 2012/13 is in place and includes another 'pelagic'.

Action: Mike Roser

11. Website and Forum

CA reported via email.

The Forum continues to attract a lively exchange of news and comment. All recent issues of *KOSN* have been posted, but back numbers have to be transcribed from the paper copies as they do not exist in electronic format. This will take some time!

CA commented that it may be time to reconsider the policy of sending hard copies of *KOSN* to all members. Reducing the print run should save money, but if savings are not significant, then surplus copies could be sent free to libraries, schools and reserves.

CA hopes to revise the appearance of the website so that more of the screen space is used. When the website was designed, computers had a much lower screen resolution than is now the case and it is now desirable to update the appearance. CA will be discussing this with Robin Mace, and Don Petrie, but it will require considerable work.

Action: Chris Abrams

12. Editorial and Records Sub-Committee

BW submitted a written report.

Some breeding data has been obtained from the Stour Valley. The main difficulty is with the viewing of Collards Lake due to restricted access. BR has undertaken to liaise with Becky Plunkett (Natural England) to try and resolve this problem.

Action: Brendan Ryan

Following recommendations made by the Conservation and Surveys Committee, BW advised the E&R Committee that the location of records of Savi's Warblers should not be published.

Action: Barry Wright

BW reported that Richard Bonser would be stepping down from the Rarity Panel in March 2012 after serving five years. BW expressed his gratitude for his hard work and commitment. Richard Collins has kindly agreed to take his place. Chris Hindle has agreed to continue as a member after the end of March although this would extend his tenure beyond the usual five-year period. BW will continue to seek nominees for the Rarities panel.

Action: Barry Wright

The position of Recorder for Central Kent remains vacant following the resignation of Richard Jenkinson. As a stop-gap measure, Ken Lodge has kindly agreed to input observer data.

Action: Barry Wright

13. Conservation and Surveys Sub-Committee

GA reported that KWT was now represented on the Conservation and Surveys Committee by Sue Young, who has taken over from Richard Moyse. He also reported that Tony Morris had stepped down and Norman McCanch had been invited to take his place.

GA outlined the Committee's recent discussions concerning various conservation issues and forthcoming surveys. BR suggested that it would be useful to issue a press release on the Nightingale Survey and he will liaise with Andrew Henderson about this.

Action: Brendan Ryan

14. Any Other Business

No other business was reported.

Date and Time of the Next Meeting:

Annual General Meeting: Thursday 12 April 2012 at Grove Green Community Centre, Grovewood Drive, Maidstone ME14 5TQ. Doors open at 7.15pm for a 7.45 start.

Next Meeting of the Executive Committee: Thursday 10 May 2012 at 7.00pm at Brogdale Farm, Brogdale Road, Faversham, Kent ME13 8XZ