



Kent Ornithological Society
Providing information about Birds and Birdwatching in Kent

Executive Committee

Minutes of a Meeting held on Thursday 30 July 2015 at 7:00pm

**At West Faversham Community Centre, Bysing Wood Road, Faversham, Kent
ME13 7RH**

Present: Martin Coath(Chair), Jack Chantler, Mike Henty,Andrew Lawson, Norman McCanch, Tony Morris, Geoff Orton, Keith Privett,Brendan Ryan, Anthea Skiffington Stephen Wood andBarry Wright.

1. Chairman's Welcome and apologies for absence

Martin Coath welcomed members to the new venue of the West Faversham Community Centre, and also welcomed Andrew Lawson as a returning EC member, and Ray O'Reilly as the new Outdoor Meetings Organiser, who unfortunately was unable to attend this evening.

Apologies for absence were received from, Robin Mace,Chris Roome and Ray O'Reilly.

2. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 February 2015(Attachment A),were accepted as an accurate record.

3. Promotions and Publicity

BR told the meeting that the upgraded and refreshed website was up and running after some initial hiccups with the hosting software. A significant amount of time and effort had gone into the project, requiring up to a day's commitment from him each week. He pointed out that although future maintenance of the site would be less demanding than the recent redevelopment, more routine input than had hitherto

been given would be required to keep the site up to date, and the EC would have to decide how this was to be accomplished.

Some features still need some attention, such as an additional tab to bring up the full programme of events, the incorporation of the Kent List and Kent Listers, obituaries, and some links to members' blogs. He is also hoping to add extra inputs to the @kentishplover Twitter account.

Although the link remains to the Forum, and there are no plans to close it down, it is clear that it is increasingly being superseded by the KOS Facebook page and tweets using the #rbnkent hashtag.

Action: Brendan Ryan

4. Membership

CR was unable to attend, but reported that as of July 28th 2015, there were currently have 31 non-paying members, 626 fully paid up ordinary members and a further 8 paid up members who are debtors, still pay £9 by standing order.

Current membership is therefore 665, an increase of 18 new members since our last meeting on February 26th. This is encouraging, as is the take up of standing order mandates for some of the new members indicating that they will remain as members.

There is now, too, a facility via PayPal for members to pay annually as PayPal will automatically credit our account and this too could aid retention of members. As ever, a few members do not renew and of course some die. 21 new members have joined the society in the course of this calendar year.

We can now email 426 members direct - 64% of the membership - although the rate of opening each email averages 50%.

Action: Chris Roome

5. Kent Bird Report

KP reported that *KBR 2013* was now with the printers, after a minor problem with one of the picture files. The printers will distribute the final product and insert a flyer advertising the *Kent Breeding Bird Atlas*.

KBR 2014 is still at a very early stage of preparation. A revised, clockwise order for the site list is planned, and Cobra data will need to be updated.

MC asked if sightings data were being delivered promptly, and KP agreed that some recorders need encouragement!

GO suggested that KWT might be interested in inserting an advertisement in the next *KBR* and volunteered to look into this.

Action: Keith Privett, Geoff Orton

6. Kent Breeding Bird Atlas 2008 – 13

SW reported that a major problem had arisen with the production of the *Atlas*, several maps having apparently been printed in black-and-white rather than colour. The error seems to have been that of the designers, who mistakenly supplied the wrong files to the printers. The upshot was that the entire first-run of one thousand copies had had to be pulped, though, fortunately at no additional cost to KOS! The second printing was being rushed through, and it was hoped that there would be little, or no delay in publication.

Delivery of the consignment is to be to a commercial storage facility in Ashford, from which a team of members have kindly volunteered to distribute pre-ordered copies to purchasers, using their own cars. This will take place in late August and early September, after which the remaining copies will be mailed to purchasers.

Chris Roome and the distribution and marketing team have arranged several publicity events, at Sevenoaks WR, Dungeness RSB and Sandwich Bay BO at which members will be able to pick up their pre-ordered copies and meet some of the contributors.

SW thanked all those who had volunteered to give up their valuable time to help with the project.

Action: Stephen Wood, Chris Roome, Mike Henty

7. KOS News

Norman McCanch reported that the next issue is on schedule for late summer. Chris Hindle has contributed an article on the occurrence of ring-tailed harriers in Kent, and MC has written a piece on counting birds.

Action: Norman McCanch

8. Treasurer's Report

MH reported a generally favourable financial position. Website costs had increased by £1,000 compared to last year, mainly accounted for by a raised charges by the hosting company in response to greater traffic and data transfer.

A legacy of £500 had been gratefully received from the estate of the late Mr Ray Cordero of Hawkhurst.

SW read out a letter received from the RSPB, which requested the assistance of KOS in funding the erection of an anti-predator fence at Northward Hill RSPB Reserve, with the aim of improving the breeding success and survival of waders including Lapwings and Redshanks. The cost of the fence was likely to be £84,000,

and FCC Environment have pledged £64,000 towards the sum. The RSPB asked if KOS would be willing to donate £1,000 towards the project.

The request was discussed at some length, some members being opposed, but the majority in favour. It was pointed out by MH that the requested sum represented more than 10 per cent of our annual income, and that he considered this to be excessive, and suggested that £500 would be more appropriate. This was put to the vote of members (GO, being an *ex officio* member, having no vote), and was carried by 8 votes to 2, 1 member abstaining.

SW agreed to write to the RSPB.

Action: Mike Henty, Stephen Wood

9. Indoor Meetings

AS gave members an outline of the next season's indoor meetings:

October 8	Alan Johnson on the work of the RSPB in Kent
November 12	Allan Hale on Ethiopia
December 3	Members' Evening
January 14	Quiz
February 11	Brian Gallop on UK Seabirds
March 10	John Buckingham on the Falkland Isles
April	AGM

Action: Anthea Skiffington

10. Outdoor Meetings

In the absence of Ray O'Reilly, this item was postponed.

Action: Ray O'Reilly

11. Website and Forum

See Item 3.

12. Editorial and Records Sub-Committee

BW reported that Andrew Appleton has joined the Rarities Panel. The BOU Rarities Committee is assessing an record of Desert Finch at Dungeness in 2001.

Action: Barry Wright

13. Conservation and Surveys Sub-Committee

NM informed the committee of ongoing difficulties in recruiting participants to survey work. SW said that he is experiencing similar problems in gathering data on rare breeding birds. The C&S Committee is overdue to meet and will report back in greater detail after its next meeting.

Action: Norman McCanch, Stephen Wood

14. Any Other Business

AL reported on his correspondence with the Sussex Ornithological Society concerning recruitment and publicity. SOS has around 2,000 members, recently increased from 1,500 as a result of promotion of the *Birds of Sussex* (now sold out), the success of its website and through use of social media. It was agreed that there should be further discussion of the subjects raised at the next meeting of the EC.

Action: All members

15. Date and Time of the Next Meeting:

Thursday 26 November 2015 at 7pm at West Faversham Community Centre

Attachment A



Executive Committee

Minutes of a Meeting held on Thursday 26 February 2015 at 7:00pm at Brogdale Farm, Brogdale Road, Faversham, Kent ME13 8XZ

Present: Martin Coath(Chair), Jack Chantler, Mike Henty, Norman McCanch, Keith Privett, Chris Roome, Mike Roser, Stephen Wood. Barry Wright.

1. Chairman's Welcome and apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from, Robin Mace, Tony Morris, Geoff Orton, Brendan Ryan and Anthea Skiffington

2. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 October 2014(Attachment A), were accepted as an accurate record.

3. Promotions and Publicity

BR was unable to be present, but had spoken with JC, who updated members on progress with the website re-design. Most of the work has now been completed, the main exceptions being the photograph gallery and persisting problems with defining editing rights to the blog spots. Brendan is being assisted by Nigel Jarman.

After a general discussion, it was resolved to ask BR to complete the work by May 2015, and MC agreed to discuss this with him when he returned from holiday.

BW volunteered to publicise the re-designed website via the KOS Facebook page and suggested that BR might be able to do the same via the KOS Twitter account.

Action: Martin Coath, Brendan Ryan, Barry Wright

4. Membership

CR reported that membership continues to fall, and that a number of subscriptions are significantly overdue. He has discontinued membership benefits to those concerned, and this has had the effect of accelerating the decline. There are currently 672 paid-up members.

He also highlighted the phenomenon of new members who do not renew their subscriptions after the first year. 32 new members enrolled during 2014. Email addresses are known for 430 members. Two-thirds of members pay by standing order.

It was noted that the issue of membership numbers is to be discussed at the AGM on 9 April, and various suggestions were made for ways to improve the recruitment. CR suggested that we should give more publicity to our conservation activities. BW agreed to contact New Generation Birders to find out if they have any members in Kent who might be interested in joining KOS.

(see <http://www.birdguides.com/webzine/article.asp?a=4139>)

Action: Chris Roome, Barry Wright

5. Kent Bird Report

KP reported that preparation of *KBR 2013* was running about two months behind schedule because of the late submission of some species summaries, and also the late publication of the *Dungeness Bird Observatory Report*. He believes that it would be helpful to recruit additional writers, and MR expressed an interest in joining the team after he gives up his present role as Outdoor Meetings Organiser. Anthea Skiffington has also volunteered to help with proof-reading. KP thanked them on behalf of the Editorial Committee.

He also appealed for more photographs to be made available, and BW agreed to provide additional rarity photos.

Action: Keith Privett, Mike Roser, Anthea Skiffington, Barry Wright

6. Kent Breeding Bird Atlas 2008 – 13

SW informed the meeting that the text, maps and photographs were virtually complete. It had been decided to have hard covers for the *Atlas* in order to make it more durable, and he was awaiting a final price for this from LTD Design.

CR estimated that members would probably account for 400 copies, and emphasised that they should be offered some degree of discount over non-members. MH suggested that members be offered free P&P. NM pointed out that the *Atlas* would be an important document to be consulted when planning applications are submitted.

It was resolved that a small group be set up to take forward arrangements for publicity, pricing and distribution, and CR agreed to organise this in conjunction with MH and SW.

Action: Stephen Wood, Chris Room, Mike Henty

7. KOS News

Norman McCanch reported that he continues to accumulate material for future editions of the newsletter, and that the next issue is on schedule for March.

MR volunteered to write a summary of his five years of experience of organising outdoor meetings, and will send it to NM.

Action: Norman McCanch, Mike Roser

8. Treasurer's Report

MH drew members' attention to his draft accounts for 2014, previously circulated (Attachment B). He proposed that discussion should be deferred to the AGM, and this was agreed.

Action: Mike Henty

9. Indoor Meetings

In the absence of AS this item was deferred until the next meeting.

Action: Anthea Skiffington

10. Outdoor Meetings

On behalf of the Committee, the Chairman thanked and congratulated Mike Roser on his five years of service in organising outdoor meetings. These have been very much enjoyed by participants, and attendances have been consistently good, despite some very challenging conditions, such as wet and windy Kentish winters and disruptive engineering work at Oare Marshes. Mike announced that Ray O'Reilly had kindly agreed to take over from him, and members expressed their appreciation to both Mike and Ray.

In passing, it was noted that as MR would no longer be attending future EC meetings, he would be unable to arrange the use of Brogdale. SW agreed to look into suitable alternatives.

Action: Mike Roser, Ray O'Reilly, Stephen Wood

11. Website and Forum

See Item 3.

12. Editorial and Records Sub-Committee

BW discussed issues of confidentiality concerning certain species such as Ruddy Duck, and agreed to circulate guidelines on reporting.

He reported that Chris Hindle and Malcolm McVail have both agreed to extend the period of their membership of the Rarity Panel, and EC members expressed their thanks and approval.

Action: Barry Wright

13. Conservation and Surveys Sub-Committee

NM reported that the C&S Committee had met on 18 December 2014. He highlighted the continuing difficulty in recruiting members to take part in survey work. He illustrated this by his experience of the WeBS scheme, which is poorly covered in parts of Kent. However, as the organiser for West and East (but not North) Kent, he had recently managed to take on two new counters. Nevertheless, he could not be confident of committing KOS to future BTO or RSPB surveys.

Action: Norman McCanch

14. Any Other Business

None reported

15. Date and Time of the Next Meeting:

The 64th Annual General Meeting of the Kent Ornithological Society
Thursday 9th April 2015 at 7.15pm at Grove Green Community Hall, Grovewood Drive, Maidstone ME14 5TQ.

