



## Kent Ornithological Society

Providing information about Birds and Birdwatching in Kent

### Executive Committee

**Minutes** of a Meeting held on Thursday 31 October 2013 at 7:00pm at Brogdale Farm, Brogdale Road, Faversham, Kent ME13 8XZ

**Present:** Martin Coath, (Chair), Jack Chantler, Mike Henty, Norman McCanch, Keith Privett, Mike Roser, Brendan Ryan, Anthea Skiffington, Stephen Wood.

#### 1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from: Tony Morris, Geoff Orton, Chris Roome, Barry Wright, and Robin Mace.

#### 2. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 January 2013 were accepted as an accurate record.

The Chairman welcomed Norman McCanch, new editor of *KOS News* to the meeting, and also expressed his thanks via Mike Roser to the Brogdale Trust for allowing the Committee to use its facilities.

#### 3. Promotions and Publicity

BR told the Committee that he had continued in his efforts to find a technical manager to update and maintain the KOS Website, but had so far been unsuccessful. He will keep trying and hopes to meet with Alex Lister from KCC to discuss the project in the next few weeks. BR stated that the website had been built on a platform called 'Contribute', which was now considered to be obsolete, and it needs to be redesigned using a more modern alternative.

KP agreed with this and pointed out that Contribute has compatibility problems with Windows 8 and perhaps other software too.

MH believed that the money saved in the past year from printing costs for *KOS News* should be sufficient to fund the project without having to raise more funds from members.

The chairman thanked BR for his work and asked to report back on further developments as they occur.

NMcC reported that a member had written to him to suggest that KOS should have a schools liaison officer, but drawing on his own long experience in the teaching profession, he could foresee a variety of practical and legal obstacles to such a plan. He agreed to respond appropriately to his correspondent.

**Action: Brendan Ryan, Norman McCanch**

#### **4. Membership**

CR was unable to attend, but had reported the following information:

- As of October 29<sup>th</sup> 2013 :
- We currently have 30 non-paying members.
- We have 650 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 689 [Current mailing list].
- Since the last meeting (July 18<sup>th</sup>) 6 new members have joined the society
- Membership has contracted slightly since last year. The website does produce a constant stream of new members – let's hope the free Newsletter will also begin to fulfil this function.
- Please could all members ensure that email and home address changes and telephone numbers are notified to the membership secretary.

We now have the facility to email 420 members for whom we hold addresses. Apologies for the clunkiness of the recent emailing over the cancelled indoor meeting. I am still coming to terms with *Mailchimp* – the service we use – and asked another member to send the email and the site proved not as agile and responsive as we had hoped – hence the farcical receipt of an email about a date already past.

**Action: Chris Roome**

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

KP reported that some of the photographs in the final printed version of *KBR 2011* had been of a poorer quality than the proofs supplied by the printers. He has taken this up with them and it has been agreed that a discount will be applied to the next edition.

*KBR 2012* species accounts are now being compiled and it is hoped that they will be complete by the end of the year. A number of detailed comments concerning wader counts and breeding records were made by members of the EC and these will be taken forward to the next E&R Committee.

The issue of the inclusion or non-inclusion of obituaries in *KBR* was discussed. A senior member of the Society had contacted the President to complain that the obituary of a recently deceased distinguished founder member of KOS had not been included in *KBR 2011*, published earlier this year. In fact, the death had occurred in 2012 and it had therefore been decided that it would be more appropriate to publish the obituary in *KBR 2012*. This will appear in 2014.

In view of the inevitable recent increase in the number of deaths of senior members, which is expected to continue for some years to come, it was agreed that those to be included in future *KBRs* would need to be carefully and sensitively selected and this would best be done by the EC itself.

**Action: Keith Privett, Martin Coath**

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

There was nothing to report.

**Action: Martin Coath**

## **7. *Kent Breeding Bird Atlas 2008 – 11***

RC and SW told the Committee of progress on this project. Most of the species accounts have been written and an editorial panel consisting of RC, SW and Murray Orchard has begun to revise the text. After a meeting with the publishers in London, 135 distribution maps have been prepared and some examples were demonstrated to the Committee. Introductory essays covering aspects of change in the environment of Kent have been commissioned from several local experts.

The question of expected production costs and retail pricing and distribution was discussed by the EC. A production run of 1,000 copies is planned and has been provisionally priced at £10 each. The total cost of the project has been estimated at £8k – 9k, which is expected to be recouped by sales over several years.

MC suggested that the book might be offered to KOS members at a pre-publication discount price, but MH believed that the proposed margins would not allow for this.

It was agreed that the reserve set aside for the *New Birds of Kent* could be used for the *Atlas*.

RC and SW for their work and asked that they keep the EC up to date with progress.

**Action: Rob Clements, Stephen Wood**

## **8. KOS News**

NMcC reported that he had taken over the editorship from John Cantelo. He discussed his plans for future issues and how *KOS News* might best be promoted to members. He noted that the 'recent sightings' report had not been available for one issue, but that this had been incorporated retrospectively.

He raised the issue of ownership of copyright of photographs, and it was agreed that this required further exploration.

**Action: Norman McCanch**

## **9. Treasurer's Report**

MH told the EC that he does not anticipate that there will be any need to raise the subscription rate during 2014.

**Action: Mike Henty**

## **10. Indoor Meetings**

AS outlined the programme for the winter 2013-14. The December meeting has had to be brought forward because of the double-booking of the hall.

The date of the AGM was discussed and April 24<sup>th</sup> 2014 was considered to be most convenient.

**Action: Anthea Skiffington**

## **11. Outdoor Meetings**

MR reported that the meetings in the current cycle had attracted 65 members, averaging 10 per trip. He thanked Rob Clements for his contribution to the Kent Field Club conference, which had been a great success.

MR asked for clarification of the Society's legal liability for injury and loss during outdoor meetings. MH replied that KOS has public liability insurance, but he agreed to check the position and inform MR. SW pointed out that Criminal Record Bureau checks might be required for KOS officers if under-sixteen's or 'vulnerable' adults were regularly to be included in outdoor meetings.

**Action: Mike Henty, Mike Roser**

## **12. Website and Forum**

Item 3 refers.

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

In the absence of BW, this item was deferred.

**Action: Barry Wright**

**14. Conservation and Surveys Sub-Committee**

Nothing to report.

**Action: Rob Clements**

**15. Any Other Business**

SW raised the issue of the practice of making a present to long-serving members of the EC upon retirement. He suggested that the value of any such gift should be modest in order to comply with the Society's charitable status. Members supported the proposal, but felt that some flexibility should be allowed to take account of exceptional service. It was agreed that any such gifts proposed in the future should be authorised by the EC and made public in the annual accounts,

**Action: Executive Committee Members**

**16. Date and Time of the Next Meeting:**

**The Next Meeting of the Executive Committee** will be on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2014 at 7.00pm at Brogdale Farm, Brogdale Road, Faversham, Kent ME13 8XZ.