

Minutes of Lincolnshire Bird Club, held at the Education Centre, Whisby Nature Park, Lincoln, on March 23, 2024 at 15.45

Attendees: Phil Espin, Andy Sims, Chris Good, Chris Grimshaw, Vin Fleming Own Beaumont, Liam Andrews, Graham Catley, Phil Hyde, Nicky Clarkson, Gary Fenwick, Barrie Hunt, Joshua Sollitt, Terry Whalin, Pete Locking, Jon Cooper, Steve Lovell, Mike Harrison, Jim Wright, Ian Newton

1. Apologies for absence:

Andrew Chick, Clive Kent, Sally Prescott, John Walker, Phil Harland, John Watt.

2. Minutes of the 2023 AGM.

These were confirmed. There were no matters arising.

3. Address by Hon Chair Phil Espin:

Welcome everyone to our 2024 AGM here at Whisby for our second time. Thank you all for being here this afternoon.

I'll start by saying what an honour it is for me to have served as your Chair for 10 years. That's a long time but I've enjoyed doing it and am happy to continue, though perhaps not for another 10 years! I turned 65 earlier this month and retirement is starting to beckon. Also looking to the future the next national BTO Atlas will start in 2027. I originally joined the LBC committee back in 2011 as the BTO representative as I was and still am the BTO regional organiser for East Lincs. I was heavily involved in the last Atlas from 2008 to 2011 and hope to be in the next one too! The BTO Atlas is the biggest thing in British birding when its on and I hope like me you are all looking forward to taking part in the next one. Involvement in it played a fundamental role in turning me from a twitcher into a committed bird surveyor which I got into professionally as well as voluntarily, so if it wasn't for the Atlas I probably wouldn't be stood here today.

The person who was instrumental in persuading me to join the bird club committee was my oldest and closest birding friend John Clarkson our former County Recorder. John sadly passed away in August after fighting what turned out to be a losing battle with a brain tumour. His brother Barry another well known county birder died shortly after him at Christmas and I'd like to take a brief moment for us all to remember John and Barry and all the other birders we've lost over the last year.

The main business of the club is producing our annual Bird Report. Our 2021 report came out last July and was widely acclaimed. It's an impressive document and this year's should be just as good. It's gone to the printer this week and should be with you in May. The production of the report is a team effort and I'd like to thank Phil Hyde our County Recorder, Andrew Chick our IT Officer and Jon Cooper who manages the data for all the work they put in.

So what else has the club been up to over the last year? We've had a good programme of field meetings organised by Sally Prescott who volunteered to be our Events Organiser starting with an excellent summer barbecue at Frampton.

Our committee has been strengthened by the addition of Pete Short the Humber manager for RSPB who brings a wealth of practical experience from a lifetime in bird conservation. I'd like to thank all the committee for the work they've done this year and especially Jim Wright our secretary who has announced he intends to retire at the end of this year. Please think about volunteering to takeover his role if you have the skills and don't be modest!

One particular first was our attendance at the Lincolnshire Show for two days last June in the County Council marquee. We showed the flag and Mike Harrison and Bill Sterling did a great job setting up our stand and manning it.

The Lincolnshire Bird Trail we have developed with Visit Lincolnshire was expanded to include a Wolds birding trail all available on their website and we hope to finish the Bird trail this year.

As you see from the accounts we have a lot of cash in the bank and we would like to spend it on conservation projects in the county. We have put cash in to help the start of a new Motus bird tracking aerial network in the county and that had its first successful result in the autumn when a Yellow-browed Warbler was tracked coming across the North Sea to Gib and heading straight back to the continent thereafter.

We've also supported Gib, the only bird observatory in the county and our most important bird recording site by donating them cash towards entering their records on Birdtrack which helps them be more effective.

We've set up a survey to monitor our county Curlew breeding population this spring in conjunction with Gill Fisher at Natural England and the RAF Ornithological Society. Most of the planned squares are covered but if you'd like to help please get in touch with me. But do it quick as we have just started this week.

Ultimately we hope we can find a home for head started Curlews to be released in Lincs and I'm in the process of talking to the big rewilding projects in the county at Wilder Doddington, Boothby Rewilding and Wild Wrendale to see if we can facilitate that.

Our e-newsletter The Heron has continued to be successful and a great way of keeping in touch with members. Thank you to everyone who supports it especially Andrew Chick and Chris Grimshaw who do most of the leg work of bringing it together.

Turning to the rest of our business this afternoon, all our officers and committee members have indicated they are happy to continue in their current roles.

As mentioned last year we are looking to raise membership rates which we haven't done in many years and we'll have a short debate on this and a vote later on the agenda.

Finally can I thank everybody who has helped the Club in anyway in the last year and not been mentioned and also I'd be happy to take questions on any aspect of the running of the Club now. Can I ask when asking a question if you would state your name and where you are from and then your question.

Questions/ comments from members:

Among questions was one about 'usability' of the club's website, specifically the Forum. The chairman said it was being reviewed by our IT officer, Andrew Chick, with a view to radical overhaul. Members would be kept up to speed via the newsletter/ website Forum.

Graham Catley asked for the club to consider holding more winter indoor meetings to communicate the clubs activities to members. Philip Espin said he would raise that with Events Organiser Sally Prescott who is keen to increase the number of events and any winter meetings would almost certainly be held by Zoom. He also explained that the usual joint January meeting with LNU had been cancelled by LNU because of logistical issues they were experiencing.

Gary Fenwick expressed gratitude to the club and Philip Espin for their support in his efforts to persuade the Environment Agency to continue to allow access at Toft Newton Reservoir for bird monitoring, which was ended at the end of February.

4. Presentation of the Audited Accounts

Treasurer Jon Cooper presented the annual accounts, noting that the club's balances were in a healthy state. However, he advised that the income from subscriptions (approximately £5,500) were now significantly lower than cost of producing the annual report (£6,700). The club also faced other expenses such as maintenance of the website and public liability insurance.

There ensued some discussion about ceasing hard copy publication of the annual report in favour of electronic publication, but the consensus was that most members preferred the 'physical' version.

5. Re-appointment of Auditor

Terry Whalin proposed that Steve Bartlett should be re-appointed. This was seconded by Andrew Sims. Unanimously agreed.

6. Reports (if any) from Officers

County recorder

- i) Phil Hyde reported that the 2022 edition of the annual report was now with the printers.
- ii) Species information on the birds of Lincolnshire on the website had been updated, but scrutiny by members would be welcome in case any oversights or inaccuracies needed rectifying.
- iii) An update was given on how records, particularly relating to rare/scarce birds were processed and submitted to the British Birds Rarities Committee.

Secretary

Jim Wright said members would be welcome to attend a stand the club was taking at the Festival of the Sea being held at Grimsby Riverhead between 2pm-5pm on Saturday June 22. It would be a chance to talk about birds, particularly marine species, to members of the public. There may also be an opportunity to give impromptu guided bird tours of about 15 minutes each around the Riverhead and Alexandra Dock.

7. Election of Officers/ Committee Members

The following were re-elected *en bloc*

Chairman: Phil Espin

Secretary: Jim Wright

Treasurer: Jon Cooper

Membership officer: Mike Harrison

IT officer/ Editor, *The Heron* newsletter: Andrew Chick

Sales officer: Bill Sterling

8. Motion from the committee to change member subscriptions from 1 April 2024:

Ordinary members: £18

Senior citizens (over 60): £14

Family members: £20

Corporate members: £30

Members aged under 25: £5

This was proposed by Mike Harrison and seconded by Jon Cooper. After a short discussion, the resolution was approved by members.

9. Any other motions previously notified in writing or via email to the Secretary.

None.

10. Any other business

In response to a question from Steve Lovell, the Chairman confirmed that the club retained stocks of back copies of *Birds of Lincolnshire* and previous years' editions of the annual report.

Phil Hyde reported all our past annual reports from 1977 through to 2019 are now online and accessible via the club's website. When the 2022 report is published the 2020 report will be made available for download from the website too.

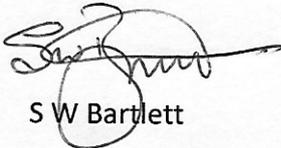
There being no other items raised the meeting was closed at 16.30.

Lincs Bird Club Accounts Year ended 31 December 2023

I hereby certify that I have examined the books and records for the above and can confirm that I am satisfied that these are accurate and well maintained.

I also certify that I am satisfied that the Receipts and Payments Account prepared is accurate and represents a true record of the Club's financial position for the year ended 31 December 2023.

Signed

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S W Bartlett', written over a circular stamp or mark.

S W Bartlett

16/02/24

Deposit Account				
Opening Balance	£	20,217.05		
Income	£	5,353.19		
Outgoing	£	(1,000.00)		
Closing Balance	£	24,570.24		
Current Account				
Opening Balance	£	10,766.80		
Income	£	17,391.09		
Outgoing	£	(17,057.74)		
Closing Balance	£	11,100.15		
Paypal Account				
Opening Balance	£	2,729.17		
Income	£	10,128.17		
Outgoing	£	(5,361.23)		
Closing Balance	£	7,496.11		
Overall				
Opening Balance	£	33,713.02		
Income	£	32,872.45		
Outgoing	£	(23,418.97)		
Closing Balance	£	43,166.50		
Commitments	£	6,000.00	Money from MoD for Curlew Survey in 2024	
	£	2,500.00	Money promised to Gib for Data in 2024	
	£	2,500.00	Money promised to Gib for Data in 2025	
	£	1,500.00	New camera for St James' Louth	
	£	12,500.00		

Account Balances	Deposit	Current	Paypal	Total	
Jan 1 2023	£ 20,217.05	£ 10,766.80	£ 2,729.17	£ 33,713.02	
Income	£ 5,353.19	£ 17,391.09	£ 10,128.17	£ 32,872.45	
Expenditure	£ (1,000.00)	£ (17,057.74)	£ (5,361.23)	£ (23,418.97)	
Dec 31 2023	£ 24,570.24	£ 11,100.15	£ 7,496.11	£ 43,166.50	
Income					
	Deposit	Current	Paypal	Total	
Interest	£ 353	£ -	£ -	£ 353	
Data	£ -	£ 8,304	£ -	£ 8,304	
Events	£ -	£ 80	£ 360	£ 440	
Donations	£ -	£ 75	£ 10	£ 85	
Sales	£ -	£ 301	£ 881	£ 1,183	
Subscriptions	£ -	£ 2,661	£ 2,877	£ 5,538	
Grants	£ -	£ -	£ 6,000	£ 6,000	
Internal Transfer	£ 5,000	£ 6,000	£ -	£ 11,000	
	£ 5,353	£ 17,421	£ 10,128	£ 32,902	
Expenditure					
Bank Charges	£ -	£ (72)	£ (361)	£ (433)	
Events	£ -	£ (463)	£ -	£ (463)	
Sales	£ -	£ (148)	£ -	£ (148)	
Subscriptions	£ -	£ (93)	£ -	£ (93)	
Donations	£ -	£ (2,610)	£ -	£ (2,610)	
Equipment	£ -	£ (121)	£ -	£ (121)	
IT	£ -	£ (646)	£ -	£ (646)	
Insurance	£ -	£ (584)	£ -	£ (584)	
Club Expenses	£ -	£ (268)	£ -	£ (268)	
Volunteer Expenses	£ -	£ (19)	£ -	£ (19)	
Volunteer Travel	£ -	£ (133)	£ -	£ (133)	
Internal Transfer	£ (1,000)	£ (5,000)	£ (5,000)	£ (11,000)	
LBR	£ -	£ (6,786)	£ -	£ (6,786)	
Gifts	£ -	£ (68)	£ -	£ (68)	
Total	£ (1,000)	£ (17,012)	£ (5,361)	£ (23,373)	
				Income - Expenditure	£ 9,529
<p>On the 24/07/2023, a payment of £45.60 was made to P. Espin, this covered a £75.60 Travel Expenses Expenditure and a £30 Book Sale income, this was recorded as one net Expenditure by the bank, but is split into a £30 income and £75.60 Expenditure in the breakdown. Hence the difference between the Current Account Balance Income and Expenditure totals and their corresponding breakdowns</p>					
Commitments	£ 6,000.00	Money from MoD for Curlew Survey in 2024			
	£ 2,500.00	Money promised to Gib for Data in 2024			
	£ 2,500.00	Money promised to Gib for Data in 2025			
	£ 1,500.00	New camera for St James' Louth			
	£ 12,500.00				