

## **Minutes for Lincs Bird Club committee meeting held via Zoom at 7.30pm on November 12 2024**

1 Chairman Phil Espin welcomed the following to the meeting: Sally Prescott, Bill Sterling, Jon Cooper, Andrew Chick, Michael Harrison and Jim Wright.

2 **Apologies for absence** were received from Phil Hyde and Pete Short. Phil Porter was unable to attend owing to a Zoom log-on hitch.

3 The minutes of the meeting held on July 23, 2024 were approved.

### **4 Matters arising**

a) Update on breeding Curlews on RAF airfields survey. PE reported that some data for writing up the survey was still outstanding but had been promised for 3 December. It was hoped the report would be completed by Christmas with a summary in the January Heron pending full publication in the Bird Report. A more limited follow up survey is proposed for 2025.

b) Motus installation(s)

There was nothing to report.

c) Committee awayday

PE reported that only one member had expressed interest but this idea might be revisited at another time.

d) LBC policy on awarding grants and donations.

PE's draft document has been discussed, slightly amended and approved in readiness to be publicised in due course in *The Heron* newsletter and online.

### **5 Future events**

a) 2025 joint annual meeting with LNU in January.

This will be held at Whisby Education Centre, Lincoln at 2pm on January 25. PE has agreed to give a talk on changes in the birds of a Lincolnshire market town; Louth, over the last 50 years.

b) 2025 Lincs Bird Club AGM

This will be held on at Whisby Education Centre at 2pm on March 15 when guest speaker Conor Jameson will talk about his book, *Finding W.H. Hudson*.

c) LBC Scottish holiday

JW confirmed that Cairngorm Travel will be running a third LBC trip to Scottish Highlands from January 14-18, 2025. Cost is £259 per head.

d) Prospective visit to Vine House Farm in Deeping St Nicholas

SP confirmed that this will be from 8am on May 10, and arrangements will be publicised in due course. The attendance limit is likely to be about 20.

e) Proposals (if any) for other outdoor/indoor meetings - possibly in conjunction with county RSPB/ LWT groups.

JW said Lincoln RSPB had approached him re potential co-operation, for instance with outdoor/indoor meetings, especially as some members belonged to both. JW suggested similar links could also be established with Grimsby RSPB. The committee agreed that establishing links should be pursued.

## **6 Membership leaflets**

JC is exploring options for an updated leaflet and further details will be forthcoming in due course.

## **7 *Birds of Louth***

PE reported that only about 100 of the 500 print-run remained, and he was hopeful that most of these would be sold by the early part of the New Year, especially as some would be on sale at the joint meeting with LNU on January 25.

## **8 Prospective overhaul of club's website**

AC regretted that he had not been able to give as much time as he would like to upgrading the site. He described the updated Spurn Bird Observatory website as a model. There was discussion about delegating any forthcoming revamp to a commercial partner. JC said this had been done with his village's website. Pending further investigation, the matter was deferred to a future meeting. In the meantime, an appeal for member IT/website content assistance will be posted in a forthcoming edition of *The Heron*.

## **9 Peregrine webcams - pre-2025 breeding season update**

Following a short discussion, it was agreed to continue with both Louth and Grantham projects. AC noted that similar projects operated on other churches/ cathedrals and live Peregrine nest webcams had lost some of their initial novelty. However, they remain popular. PE described some of the complexities of the Louth scheme. Geoff Mullet (Louth) and Alan Ball (Grantham) were commended for their continuing work on the schemes. It was agreed that Wildlife Windows would be engaged to install, wire in and set up livestreaming for the Louth project in Jan 2025 at a cost of £450+VAT.

## **10 To consider free Lincolnshire County Council trees scheme**

JW referred to this scheme whereby LCC is ready to donate to farmers, landowners and community groups up to 50 free trees or 250 free hedging plants to plant on their land in Lincolnshire. LBC does not own any land, and it is probably too late to apply this year. However, it was agreed that JW could publicise the scheme in case it might be of interest to any landowning LBC member.

## **11 Officers' reports (if any)**

### **a) Chairman**

i) Work will start on a new BTO atlas on November 1, 2027, and he hoped volunteers would help survey Lincolnshire's 2,000-plus tetrads. Publicity will be given in due course. Nearly half a century will have elapsed since the last Lincolnshire atlas, and some significant changes in species status and distribution are likely to be revealed. The BTO is seeking two new representatives for their West and South regions in the county.

ii) Work is now nearing completion on the Lincolnshire Bird Trail - a joint initiative by the LBC and Lincolnshire County Council's tourism unit with input from other organisations such as the Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership and the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust.

iii) Thanks to an intercession by LBC, Anglian Water's Toft Newton reservoir remains accessible for bird-recording, albeit by permit only of which only 3 will be available and all have been issued to members.

iv) Following extensive discussions, the county Nature Recovery Strategy for Lincolnshire is expected to be published "within the next few weeks".

v) So far, no volunteer has stepped forward to take on the role of honorary secretary when JW steps down at the end of the year. Further efforts will be made to fill the vacancy.

vi) Following a glitch with his own laptop, PE has been using an alternative device which was used by Colin Casey for data processing. The battery needs replacing but it will make handing over PE's LBC archive straightforward when the need arises.

### **b) Treasurer**

JC supplied a written report to committee members

c) County recorder

PH supplied a written report

d) Sales Secretary

BS provided a written update in publication sales. He further noted that two of the last five members to have purchased keys for the Cut End hide had reported problems gaining access. However, this may have been because they were unaware that two revolutions of the key in the lock were required after insertion. Following a proposal from AC, it was agreed that a further 10 keys should be cut (at a cost of £5 each) and tested. If need be, any failed keys could then be returned by their owners and replaced.

e) Membership secretary

MH reminded members of the value of automatic renewal subscription to many members. Although subscriptions by Paypal remain welcome, some members have reported difficulties when it comes to renewing. To assist with this it was agreed the updated LBC membership leaflet would continue to include a direct debit mandate as well as a QR code linking electronic membership application.

f) IT officer/ newsletter editor

AC said he was happy to continue editing the newsletter, *The Heron*

## **12 Any other business**

MH noted that the seven or eight Curlews he had described at the previous committee meeting are likely to have been failed breeders. Still with Curlews, he reported that he had been advised by a poultry farmer in Bucknall that a pair had bred within the boundaries of a broiler chicken unit. He said this report was unverified but he would be seek to monitor any similar breeding effort in 2025.

MH further reported that American BirdWeather birdsound-recording system had been installed at the South Ormsby estate which is owned by an LBC member. Some early teething problems with false IDs have occurred and these are being ironed out.

## **13 Date of next meeting**

This will be held online via Microsoft Teams at 7.30pm on Tuesday February 11.

There being no further business, the chairman wished members greetings for the festive season, then closed the meeting at 8.44pm.