



Minutes of the Annual

General Meeting held on

**Tuesday 12th April 2022 at 7.30 p.m.
at the Maltings Ditchingham Bungay.**

Present:

Officers: Steve Piotrowski (SP), Mark Broughton (MB), John Garbutt (JG), Rebecca Bedwell (RB), Vivienne Broughton (VB), Helen Gooderham (HG), Chris McIntyre (CM), Jane Watkins (JW), Leslie Cuthbert (LC), Cheryl Deeks (CD),

There were also approximately 25 club members.

1. Welcome and Apologies

1. The President (SP) welcomed everybody. Apologies were received from Donna Dean (DD) and Richard Walden (RW)

2. Minutes of the AGM 2021

- 2.1 The minutes of the meeting were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

3. Matter Arising not elsewhere covered in the Agenda

- 3.1 There were no matters arising.

4. Charitable Status Report

- 4.1 JG reported that he had now completed the application for Charitable status and that all members had received an e-mail outlining the main points of the application prior to the AGM. He said that there were many advantages to having charitable status including being able to get gift aid on any donations, and more grant applications would be open to us and be looked at more favourably.

5. Voting on Resolutions

- 5.1 Attendees were then asked to vote on the two following resolutions.

- a) That the committee is authorised to apply for charitable status for the Waveney Bird Club.
- b) That The Waveney Bird Club should adopt the revised constitution.

- 5.2 Both resolutions were passed.

6. Election of Officers

6.1 President	Steve Piotrowski
Chairman	Mark Broughton
Vice Chairman	John Garbutt
Secretary	Rebecca Bedwell
Membership Secretary	Jane Watkins
Treasurer	Vivienne Broughton
Ringing Liaison Officer	Chris McIntyre
Projects Officer	Robert Flindall
Event's Organiser	Helen Gooderham
Recorder	Richard Walden
Communications and Publicity Officer	Donna Dean
Website	Kevin Allenby(<i>ex-officio</i>)
Ordinary Members	Cheryl Deeks
	Sue Alderman
	Leslie Cuthbert
	Mike Raven

6.2 SP reported that he was pleased that Mark Broughton had agreed to take on the position of Chairman after he had decided to step down.

6.3 SP also welcomed Robert Flindall who had agreed to take on the position of Project Officer after the untimely death of Paddy Shaw.

6.4 JW had agreed to continue as Membership Secretary until the end of this year when CD had agreed to take over.

6.5 SP welcomed two new committee member Sue Alderman and Mike Raven.

6.6 The committee was then voted in *en bloc*.

7. Chairman's Report

7.1 After two years of restrictions imposed by the Covid pandemic the club is returning to a more normal programme of events. We have a full outdoor meeting programme planned for this year thanks to the huge amount of work Helen puts into coordinating it all. So, many thanks to Helen and to all of those who have volunteered to lead events. In 2021, after the lockdown ended in March, we managed to hold a good programme of day and weekend outdoor events. Helen managed to recruit extra leaders so that events could comply with the rule of six. Indoor meetings have been on hold for two years but we have plans to resume these through the autumn and winter.

7.2 The access for all project is reaching its final stages and work is due to start later this year. The club should be very proud of what it has achieved with this project.

7.3 Our application for charitable status is reaching its later stages and now that our application and new constitution have been adopted, we can make our application to the charity commission. Many thanks to John Garbutt for the work he has put into preparing our charitable status application.

7.4 We were all saddened by the sudden loss of committee member and project officer Paddy Shaw. Paddy was a stalwart of the club, always willing to help and always great company. We'll all miss his enthusiasm and sense of humour.

7.5 It was fitting that we were able to remember him at the Swift walk, Swift pint event that he was so passionate about.

7.6 Many thanks to Keith Watkins who steps down from the committee after several years of service and a very warm welcome to Sue Alderman, Mike Raven and Robert Flindall who join the committee.

7.7 I'll finish by thanking the committee for their support over the last six months and for all of the work they do to keep the club running smoothly. It's very much a team effort and we've got a marvellous group of people working on your behalf.

8. Treasurer's Report

8.1 Accounts for the year ended 31/12/2021

At start of the year – balance of £23,851.77

WBC has money ring-fenced for various projects, which includes

- AfAP at Minsmere
- Waveney Bird Club Ringing Team
- Waveney Barn Owls
- Paddy Shaw Memorial Fund

Receipts for WBC and all ring-fenced areas of £6,508.29

This included payments of

- £2,000 for work at Heveningham Hall for 2020 and 2021
- £500 from Viking Optical

Expenditure was minimal, because of the continuing restrictions due to covid-19, totalled £1,416.65.

The balance at 31st December 2021 was £28,943.41, comprises

- £4,015.28 Waveney Bird Club
- £14,511.75 Access for All Path
- £6,250.85 Waveney Bird Club Ringing Team
- £3,301.91 Waveney Barn Owls
- £863.63 Paddy Shaw Memorial Fund

The accounts are currently with the auditor.

8.2 As at 12/04/2022 the account balance is £29,960.33

This includes £14,690 which will be paid out for the AfAP in April.

8.3 Currently subscriptions are £10, with a concession of £5 for those aged 60 and over. The committee consider this to be extremely good value for money, and would like to propose the removal of the concessionary rate for 2023, to simplify admin and because age is no indication of ability to pay. We still consider this to be very good value for money. We're all aware of the increase in living costs and inflation, and that some members may be finding it particularly difficult financially at present. In line with our aims of being accessible to all who are interested in birding the committee will consider requests for waiver of the annual subscription for anyone who finds it difficult to pay.

9. Membership Secretary's Report

9.1 JW reported that so far we had 101 fully paid-up members which was down on the past couple of year, maybe some people did not pay because we were not meeting.

9.2 Many of the members were adding a donation onto their subscriptions for either the Paddy Shaw Memorial Fund or the Access for all Path.

10. Project Officer's Report by SP

10.1 There are two ongoing projects at present.

10.2 The first one was the application for a Swift tower to be built at Walberswick. The club has been promised a donation from Mrs Pat Lancaster towards the building of the tower and the Club will also add donations from the Paddy Shaw Memorial Fund to the project. The Common Land Trust of Walberswick were approached with the idea and it looks as if permission will be granted. SP has applied for various

grants to help fund this project. The project is in the early stages but hopefully it will all go ahead. SP also thanked Rob Gooderham for his work with various designs for the tower.

- 10.3 The second project was the Access for all Path at RSPB Minsmere. After the project had been put on hold for two years due to Covid at last it appears to be underway. All the funding is in place and it is hoped the building of the path will commence in September of this year.
- 10.4 The Club will hand over approximately £14,000 to RSPB Minsmere at the end of April. This is the money raised through donations and grants towards the project.
- 10.5 SP reported that the Club will be able to receive gift aid backdated for 4 years for all the donations received once we achieve Charitable status.

11. Events Secretary's Report

- 11.1 Firstly, we miss Paddy hugely as he was a mainstay among leaders, always full of ideas and enthusiasm in addition to keeping us entertained and I relied on him a great deal in arranging events. Others have stepped in and have been very generous with their time so many thanks to them.
- 11.2 The events committee wasn't able to meet in the autumn of 2021 so this year's programme was put together in November with Steve and a couple of others informally. It was then changed and added to with excellent suggestions from other leaders who subsequently suggested some new sites. The programme came together and was on the website by mid-December. We will resume planning with an events sub-committee in September this year.
- 11.3 Fourteen events have taken place since the last April 2021, including one trip away to Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory last September. Four trips have taken place so far this year, all of which were well attended.
- 11.4 This is the first indoor meeting since February 2020. Four meetings with speakers have been scheduled for this coming autumn.

12. Ringing Report

- 12.1 At Minsmere all ringing was suspended due to Covid restrictions but we were able to ring at Dunwich Heath in the Autumn of 2021.
- 12.2 A number of ringers took part in a BTO project under CES protocols on resident passerines including summer migrants and also continued to ring in their own gardens or on farmlands.
- 12.3 In total 2954 birds were ringed in 2021.
- 12.4 Looking to the future it is hoped we will commence ringing at Minsmere and Dunwich Heath shortly and demonstrations will commence during the Easter holidays at both sites.
- 12.5 CM then gave a visual presentation of some of the birds seen and caught during 2021.

13. Communications and Publicity Report.

- 13.1 In the absence of DD no report was forthcoming.
- 13.2 SP reported that he had been in contact with DD and unfortunately at present she was unwell. He hopes to have a report from her when she is feeling better.

14. Recorders Report and Presentation

- 14.1 In his absence, MB read the sightings report sent by RW.
- 14.2 With the new year seeing most of us back into lockdown, birdwatching on a more local scale became the norm again. Many of us found places where we could still find pleasure in the simple pastime of just watching birds. For myself and several others in the Waveney valley it was the flooded marshes at Barsham and Shipmeadow. The large numbers of wildfowl and smaller numbers of waders provided us with many happy hours. However, it must be remembered that this flooding was a double-edged sword bringing flooding and misery to several people's homes.

- 14.3 As we progressed through the spring and with restrictions easing slightly people were getting out and about more and also seeing more. One stand out species from this period was White-tailed Eagle. There were several reports of this majestic raptor from our area, some of which involved birds from the Isle of Wight reintroduction scheme. As the population surrounding this scheme increases hopefully it's occurrence in our skies will also increase.
- 14.4 As the spring and summer progressed our area of North-east Suffolk saw the return of our summer visitors for hopefully a successful breeding season. With them came several scarce and rare birds but with no real standout rarities.
- 14.5 Perhaps one of the most notable was a Gull-billed Tern at Minsmere in July, Suffolk's second in as many years. Several people north of the reserve who tried to see this bird found themselves gridlocked in heavy traffic exiting the Latitude festival, the bird having departed by the time that their wheels started turning again.
- 14.6 Through the autumn and early winter period we were again treated to a succession of scarce migrants both onshore and offshore, sea watchers enjoyed a bumper season with several Shearwaters and Puffins being seen.
- 14.7 In the autumn the coastal bushes and nature reserves hosted many scarce passerines and waders, though again with no real standout birds. The most worrying aspect of the autumn of 2021 was the lack of commoner migrants such as Blackcaps and Whitethroats, the bushes seemed eerily empty and if this trend continues through coming years, will be of very great concern to us all.
- 14.8 The winner of the bird of the year award was John Grant with a Gull-Billed Tern

There being no further business the President closed the meeting at 8.15 p.m.

Signed

Date

Rebecca Bedwell
Secretary
2nd May 2022