

Carsington Bird Club



Minutes of the club's 29th Annual General Meeting

(held Tuesday 15th March 2022 in the New Leaf Restaurant,
Carsington Visitor Centre at 7pm)

Committee attendees: **Gary Atkins** (Chairman and Publicity Officer)
 John Follett (Treasurer / Membership Sec)
 Chris Lamb (Events Sec)
 Rob Chadwick (Recorder)

APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Roger Carrington, Anne McClachlan and Sandra Neep.

MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes from the previous AGM (in September 2021) were accepted as an accurate record.

MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising from the previous Minutes that would not be discussed at the latest meeting.

TREASURER'S / MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Last year the club gained **6** new members but **7** failed to renew. However, towards the end of the year we were able to welcome a further **3** members resulting in an overall increase of **2**, at **76** memberships.

Total Income for 2021 of **£1140.30** includes membership subscriptions of £597.50 (just £6 down on the previous year); donations of £354.50 (including £275 from club member Patrick Lawless who kindly repeated a previous gift to support the printing cost of the club's annual report); and £165 door receipts from indoor meetings.

The year's Expenditure total of **£911.74** includes indoor meeting costs of £120 (4 at £30 each) for venue hire in the Mainsail Restaurant; speaker costs of £170 (this total comprised one "live" presentation at £70 plus contributions of £50 each to the RSPB and Derbyshire Ornithological Society for allowing CBC members to access on-line talks via Zoom ... speaker costs were not incurred for the other three indoor meetings as our members Louise and John Sykes presented in December, DOS arranged the October

meeting, and Paul Bingham waived a fee on the suggestion a payment be made to a charity of our choice – the accounts show this as a £50 donation to the British Trust for Ornithology under Conservation & Protection); and postage and stationery of £244.19.

The year ended 31st December 2021 resulted in Income exceeding Expenditure by £229.56, thereby increasing Accumulated Funds to £6057.21.

This year (2022) the club is forecasting a possible deficit in funds with increased costs for postage; report printing; speakers' fees (petrol!); and bird food (unsure at this time whether past donations from DOS will resume).

The Committee's recommendation is that subscriptions (£7.50 for single and £10 for family membership) continue unchanged although it may be necessary to review this position later in the year.

The adoption of the Club's accounts for 2021 was proposed by Dave Armit and seconded by Fay Follett.

RECORDER'S REPORT

Since August all data has been collated into a monthly spreadsheet, the sources for which are Simon Roddis's monthly report, all sightings on the Carsington Bird club webpage, the Carsington Facebook page and Derbyshire birders Facebook page.

From all this data the Bird Notes document is produced and has now started to be posted in Paul Stanley, Lane End and the Wildlife Centre hides as well as on the website. The total of collected data has now been put in a more compact version ready to be used to produce the 2021 report which will come out later this year.

Since August there have been no reports of rarities that have required any further investigation.

EVENTS SECRETARY'S REPORT

After a prolonged period of lockdowns, it was very pleasing (and such a relief!) to be able to get much of our events programme back into action in 2021. It was looking like a very different picture at the start of the year though, when new Covid restrictions were brought in and we were unable to have our scheduled indoor meetings in the spring, and the prospect of any sort of organised trips later in the year seemed bleak.

Although we were unable to stage any of our own meetings, a welcome substitute was the series of 'virtual' talks arranged by the RSPB Derby Local Group and DOS. Both of these organisations were very kind enough to allow us to join their programmes, and as a club we are very appreciative of their generosity.

As the Covid restrictions were being eased, we held our first trip of the year in May to the ever popular Middleton Lakes RSPB Reserve. Later on in October a group of members made the journey to the Frampton Marsh RSPB Reserve on the Lincolnshire coast. On both occasions it was a great pleasure to be able to visit reserves and enjoy birding as a group again – something we very much missed in 2020.

Our long-awaited and very welcome return to face-to-face indoor meetings came in September and we were treated to a variety of talks on different birding locations around the world. Having made the decision to hold our meetings for the time being in the Mainsail Restaurant, this arrangement seems to be working well so far.

Looking ahead in 2022, we are now feeling more positive that we can enjoy a full programme of events this year. Our first trip of the year is planned for 1st May to the Fairburn Ings RSPB Reserve in Yorkshire, followed by the 'Warbler Walk' at Carsington Water on 22nd May, and we have a full schedule of talks arranged for the autumn.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

It only seems yesterday that we were holding our lengthily-delayed 2021 AGM. It was in fact a full six months ago, but we were keen to get it back to its traditional first-quarter timing.

At that point, last September, we were hopeful that our attempt to slip back into a routine with monthly indoor meetings would be successful – and I'm pleased to report that it has. We have been able to stage all seven 2021-22 talks in our new (for how long we're not sure!) venue, the New Leaf restaurant, which has proven a good choice with its much larger space enabling attendees to feel comfortable with much extra room to spread out.

Covid has continued to be something of a shadow over many facets of life, particularly when Omicron looked like it might lead to further restrictions, but thankfully we were able to continue with relaunching various activities. Indeed, since the first whispers of Covid over two years ago, the club has weathered the pandemic well, maintaining overall membership levels and, despite some natural attrition, has witnessed a steady influx of new members. And it's good to see a healthy core of members participating in talks and trips as soon as we've been able to restore them to the calendar.

The last several months have also been good for the committee, which had been looking decidedly threadbare just a year or so ago. During 2021 we were pleased to welcome Rob Chadwick as our new Recorder, and later in this meeting we will – with your indulgence – be appointing a new club Secretary, who even before officially joining the committee has come up with some fresh thinking and lively ideas.

My thanks go to the hard work of our existing committee members – John Follett, Chris Lamb and Roger Carrington – and to those who choose not to be on the committee but still make great contributions to the running of the club.

These include our webmaster Richard Pittam, who keeps 'carsingtonbirdclub.co.uk' as fresh and lively as he can, and let's not forget that enthusiastic band of regular recorders who ensure the execution of one of our fundamental roles – notably Simon Roddis who attends the reservoir most days when he's around, and is additionally playing a key role in helping the production of our 2021 annual report.

We are hopeful that the recording activity will be enhanced in the not-too-distant future by the 'resurrection' of Sheepwash Hide – reckoned to be the best vantage point for reservoir monitoring – which has been closed for some time now for safety reasons. Severn Trent have been considering replacement options, so we are hopeful of good news in this regard soon.

From a club that seemed a couple of years ago to be on a downward slope, slipping towards possible extinction, now, with a stronger committee, more diverse membership and a good range of activities on the calendar, we feel much more optimistic about the future.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS OF THE CLUB

The following members of the committee were listed as standing for re-election:

Gary Atkins – Chairman and Publicity Officer
John Follett – Treasurer and Membership Secretary
Chris Lamb – Events Secretary
Rob Chadwick – Recorder
Roger Carrington – Ex-officio

In addition, we were delighted to be able to announce that Louise Sykes had offered her services as Secretary of the club, and had already come up with a number of fresh ideas and potential initiatives.

The election and re-election of these officers of the club was proposed by Mary Tyers and seconded by Jane Chadwick.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

1. Louise Sykes mentioned that she planned to stage some fund-raising events in the future in aid of club coffers, and urged members to let her have any items such as books, DVDs and bric-a-brac that she could sell.

The meeting closed at 7.28pm