



Marylebone Birdwatching Society

MINUTES

of the 34th Annual General meeting held on Friday 15 January 2016 at the Gospel Oak Methodist Church, Lisburne Road, London NW3 2NT.

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chairman welcomed members of whom some 30 were in attendance. Apologies were received from John Hunt, Meg Game, Gill Moore and Julia Wood.

2. Minutes of the Previous AGM

Minutes of the AGM held on 16 January 2015 were read and confirmed as a true record.

3. Matters arising from the Minutes.

There were none.

4. Chairman's Report.

The Chairman reported that 2014-2015 had been a successful year for the Society. Membership was buoyant, peaking at 123 at the end of the last season. Links with the London Natural History Society had been strengthened to the benefit of both organisations. Consultation over new arrangements for coach pick-ups had been sensitively handled and indications so far were that the new system was working well, successfully shortening outward journeys.

There had been an excellent programme of coach outings, enhanced by an unforeseen excitement on the trip to Keyhaven Marshes, when a navigational error landed the coach on a bridle track from which it had to reverse a considerable distance through woodland. Thanks were due to Andrew Peel for organising and leading an interesting programme with many good sightings.

High spots of a full and varied programme of local outings were kestrel, hobby, peregrine, sparrowhawk and marsh harrier on a day at Rainham RSPB and a snow bunting at Two Tree Island. In thanking Lynette Small for organising the programme the Chairman regretted that she had decided not to continue after this season. The Society was however fortunate that Joyce Huggins had volunteered to take her place. Suggestions from members for new places to visit would be welcome.

Thanks were due to Gaye Henson for a similarly full and interesting programme of indoor meetings, and to Catherine Perry for organising two successful weekend trips. The post of organiser of weekend trips is currently vacant. It could be shared and it was hoped that a volunteer/volunteers would come forward. Suggestions from members for possible trips would be welcome.

Sadly, John Benson and Malcolm Wroe died just before the start of the season and Alix Mullineaux in the autumn. The Committee proposed that their passing should be marked with a donation of £150 to the RSPB. After discussion of possible alternatives, it was agreed that the British Trust for Ornithology would be a more appropriate recipient for the donation.

Summarising, the Chairman said that in the year the Society had seen and absorbed a number of changes and was now in good heart for a successful new season.

4. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer reported that whilst more work was needed, draft accounts for 2014 – 15 indicated that the Society's finances were in good heart. There was a surplus of income over expenditure of £605, compared with a similar deficit last year. Income from membership subscriptions was up, and coach bookings had roughly broken even over the year, though at £500 per trip this was an expense to be carefully watched. The Dreda Farrell Memorial Fund had a closing balance of £588 and the Society had ended the year with total net assets of £5761.

In discussion it was suggested that hire of the hall for the Dreda Farrell Memorial lecture ought properly to be charged to the DF fund; the Treasurer agreed to adjust this. An increase in provision for drivers' tips was considered but not pursued.

On a motion from the floor, the accounts were approved subject to completion and audit.

5. Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee (HHCC) Representative Report

Gaye Henson reported that work on the Ponds Project (dams), which had been a cause of concern at the last AGM, began in February 2015 and, in spite of some setbacks, was making good progress towards expected completion in October 2016. So far there appeared to have been no impact on bird activity.

Other activities of interest to the Society were reports on trial monitoring of hedgehogs on the Heath and similar reports on grass snakes, wild flowers, tree management etc. Oak Processionary Moth was found in June and a management plan had been put in place.

The views of all committee members were noted and taken into consideration by management on a wide range of issues. The committee as a whole was very supportive of maintaining and protecting bird life on the Heath; she was grateful to MBS for the opportunity to represent them, and birdwatchers generally, on the Committee.

6. Election of Committee

On a motion proposed by Barbara Luke, seconded by Helen Newnham, Joyce Huggins was elected Local Outings Co-ordinator in succession to Lynette Small.

The meeting noted that Jo Campbell (Minutes Secretary), and David and Susannah Davidson (Coach bookings at indoors meetings) would resign at the end of the current season. Volunteers were invited to take their places.

The remainder of the Committee were re-elected en bloc on a motion proposed and seconded from the floor, as follows -

Chairman	Steve Ripley
Secretary	Nick Moore
Heath Walks Leader	Meg Game
Minutes Secretary	<i>Vacancy</i>
Treasurer	Judy Powell
HHCC rep	Gaye Henson
Indoor Meetings Organiser	Gaye Henson
Catering	Jean Clarke
Local Outings Coordinator	Joyce Huggins
Coach Outings Coordinator	Andrew Peel
Membership Secretary	Helen McCulloch
Coach Bookings at Indoor Meetings	<i>Vacancy</i>

At the 2017 AGM it was noted that "Publicity Marion Hill" had been omitted from this list although MH was duly re-elected as appeared on the Agenda.

7. Election of Auditor

Richard Campbell was re-elected on a motion proposed by Barbara Luke, seconded by Susannah Davidson

8. Any Other Business

Marion Hill informed the meeting that a joint Heath Walk with LNHS had been arranged for Sunday 6 March. Members were also invited to a LNHS study day on 5 March. More information would be available on the Society's website.

Members expressed their thanks to the Committee for the year's work.

JAC