

Minutes of Committee Meeting

The Foyer of the Ellison Hotel
Saturday 8th June 2024 at 11:30hrs.

Present	Apologies
Mick Oates	Jon Freestone and Nuala O'Malley
Colm Madden	
Marie Comerford	
Nathy Gilligan	
Colin Guilfoyle	
Pádraig Keogh	
Karen Hunt	
Graham Cawdell	

Welcome

Minutes of last meeting on Wednesday 16th March 2022. No amendments suggested.

Matters Arising

1. Set format for posters and posts on social media. This has proven to be more complex than Graham first thought. Photos need to be a certain standard and good quality
2. Storage of documents - storage on Graham's computer hard drive and his personal Google My Drive account. Photos filed in folders under the contributor's name. Currently access is by the secretary only.
3. Mayo Branch annual report - Graham had sent in copies of our AGM minutes, our treasurer's report and our summary of outings to Birdwatch Ireland.
4. **Funding** -no changes since last meeting.
Suggestion to look into the purchase of 2 scopes
Ask for voluntary donations for those that attend events e.g. collection box at each event.
Mick said he would look into bank accounts
5. **Branch Hide** The Galway branch have a hide near Tuam. There are a couple in Mayo but they have problems with design, site and maintenance. Pádraig said that there is an excellent hide at Moate. Suggestion to contact Galway branch regarding their hide.
6. **Talks, Lecture and Slideshows**
Indoor events are a means for raising branch funds provided the overheads are low. Graham said that he had attended two talks in Sligo involving eminent speakers, Sean Ronayne (Birdsong) and Jim Wilson. Both of these were in large hotel venues with excellent AV equipment and they were funded by the county council and university respectively with collaboration of the Sligo branch of BirdWatch Ireland in the organisation. The committee agreed that we should try to develop similar links.

Most talks in the Sligo branch are done by their members. Nathy was asked if he could speak on his India wildlife trip and he suggested maybe John Lusby could speak on bird ringing.

Discussion followed on potential venues and topics.

8. **Social Media update**

Instagram-125 followers after 1 year

Twitter-over 1000 members

Facebook-2300 followers

Branch email-96 members in the group

Birdwatch Mayo website- www.birdwatchingmayo.org

Barry Murphy had added a section "Branch Information" to our website.

Graham suggested that minutes of committee meetings and names of committee members should be posted there. The committee agreed.

George Keegan had spoken with Pádraig after our AGM. Pádraig explained that George was considering the vacancy on the committee for a research officer but the role was not what he had imagined. Discussion on alternative roles followed and a lead / organiser for our planned indoor events was suggested. Pádraig said that he would speak to George about this.

The vacancy for a "research officer" remains. Graham said that he receives occasional requests regarding the identification of birds, bird surveys and birding sites in Mayo. To assist in this an expert birdwatcher with excellent local knowledge and ideally one involved with surveys would be beneficial to the administration of our branch. Graham had received an expression of interest but she did not fulfil those criteria and had not confirmed that she was a member of BirdWatch Ireland. He would speak with John Milroy about his IWeBS team as one of them might be able to take on this role.

Upcoming Events

1. Ballina-Belleek Woods-Saturday 15th June – Colm and Karen to lead this
2. Downpatrick head-14th July – Graham to lead
3. Belmullet-21st July - Sligo branch have approached us to join their outing
4. Sea watch -Kilcummin and/or Erris Head. Successful sea watches are weather dependent particularly wind direction. Darren Ellis and Hannah Keogh have agreed to lead these and we may join up with the Irish Whale and Dolphin Group. Notice to be posted on WhatsApp, Facebook and by email to our branch members about 2-3 days beforehand.
5. Murmurations. Kieran Flynn had observed starling murmurations around Lough Carra last autumn. He has agreed to lead an outing at short notice if they occur this year.

Any Late Notices None

Date of Next Meeting: 28 September 2024 at 10.30am, Ellison Hotel Foyer.