



Minutes of AGM & Committee Meeting

The Meeting Room, Grainne Uaile Pub, Newport.
Wednesday 16th April 2025 at 19:30 hours.

Present	Apologies
Pádraig Keogh - chairperson	George Keegan
Graham Cawdell - secretary	Marie Comerford
Mick Oates - treasurer	
Colin Guilfoyle - research & IT lead	
Karen Hunt - assistant secretary	
Jon Freestone - general committee	
Nathy Gilligan - general committee	
Colm Madden - general committee	
Nuala O'Malley - general committee	
Rosemary McCreery - branch member	

Annual General Meeting

Welcome Pádraig welcomed everyone and opened the meeting. Graham gave the apologies as above.

Appointment of Committee for 2025/6

George Keegan had spoken to Pádraig and emailed Graham saying that he was unable to continue on the committee but would remain a branch member. All other committee members had indicated their willingness to continue. In line with BWI policy our branch membership had been informed of this AGM and asked if anyone wished to be considered for any of the principal officer roles. We had not received any nominations. As the sole branch member present, Rosemary was encouraged to join the committee to which she agreed. Pádraig welcomed her on board.

Branch Account Mick said that €300 is in the branch account. Details to be sent to BWI with our branch summary.

Branch Membership Our Google contacts has 141 subscribers, Facebook over 2500, X 1267 and Instagram 387 followers. The latter is a recent addition as is our YouTube account with a mere 12 subscribers.

Summary of Events for Last Year Our summary was attached with the agenda. No amendments were suggested. This will be sent together with the details of our new committee, branch financial accounts and membership to BirdWatch Ireland as required.

Future AGMs Graham said that the Sligo branch is also holding its AGM this week. They link their AGM to a talk by an invited speaker so that many branch members are present. This was discussed and we agreed to try the same format.

Suggestions from Branch Members Not applicable.

Minutes of Committee Meeting

Minutes of last meeting on Saturday 8th June 2024. No amendments suggested.

Matters Arising No matters arising as they are covered in the agenda items.

Reports from Recent Events Circulated with the agenda. No amendments requested.

Event Management Our recent talk by Eoin Warner which was sponsored by the Biodiversity department of the Heritage section of Mayo County Council had involved a lot of work by committee members and Graham in particular. We were denied any collection of donations to branch funds. A decision was made to book seats by emailing the branch. With a good response our initial venue at Breaffy House would be oversubscribed. We then had the additional workload of directing everyone to the new venue in the TF Hotel. Sheila Murphy, MayoCoCo Biodiversity Officer, had suggested using Eventbrite initially. With no experience of this booking platform and the short time to the event Graham was not happy to experiment with it. After subsequent investigation this is probably the way ahead for us. Eventbrite is used by many groups in Mayo to book places on local events particularly those that are free. There is no charge for booking free events. Where there is a ticket price to pay Eventbrite adds a small fee and percentage but the organiser/group are not charged. Colin confirmed this and it was decided to use Eventbrite for all our indoor events.

With regard to our outdoor events, it would be helpful if we knew how many people to expect. Eventbrite was thought too formal. Colin suggested using the polling facility on WhatsApp and he could demonstrate it or post for the group.

Our Aims / Mission Statement Graham thought it would be beneficial if we had a statement on our website regarding our principle aims etc.. The committee agreed and we would develop one.

WhatsApp Groups “BWMayo Chat” had a lot of posts recently which did not comply with the guidance and had resulted in a couple of members leaving the group. After lengthy discussion on the potential damage to our membership of being over prescriptive, it was decided that Pádraig and Graham would create a statement to post to our WAP groups.

Branch Funding At our last meeting the topic of subscription fees for branch membership was brought up. Our original agreement was no subscription for branch membership but we would encourage our members to join BirdWatch Ireland. The committee agreed to funding our branch through donations.

Meeting Points for Outings At our outing to Toormakeady, a member requested a lift from Ballina. With no one obvious to ask Graham agreed to collect her from Castlebar bus stop. The Sligo branch meet in a couple of car parks before setting out on their trips many of which are outside Sligo. The problem of Mayo’s size and geography and the difficulty of copying the Sligo example was discussed. It was decided that Graham should look into this further.

Any Late Notices

- **Mayo PPN Plenary** This meeting will take place in Breaffy House Hotel on 29th April. There are many excellent speakers including the ombudsman and Mayo’s recently appointed biodiversity officer, Sheila Murphy.

Date of Next Meeting Saturday 21st June 2025 at 11:30 in the foyer of the Ellison Hotel.