

Lavell's Wetland Trust (LWT)
AGM
Charity Number: 1176960
Earley St Peter's Church Hall, Tuesday 17 June 2025

Minutes

Present: Jane Campbell (Chair), Fraser Cottington, Keith Boseley, Angela Gunn (Secretary), Jasmine Hughes, Roger Powell, Peter Scudamore, Ella Wheeler and 15 others

1) Apologies for absence: 10 apologies were received.

2) Minutes of the sixth LWT AGM held on 18 June 2024 have been publicly available on the LWT website for several months and were sent to all members, no comments have been received. Acceptance of the minutes was proposed by Brian Bennett and seconded by Andy Stickland.

3) Reports:

a) Treasurer – Peter Scudamore

Income streams are similar to the previous year with the addition of a grant from the Berkshire Ornithological Club's Dot Lincoln memorial fund to extend the Sand Martin Wall. The gift aid claim for 2023 is still to be submitted and the interest on the NS&I account needs to be chased. The main outgoings were; insurance, web maintenance, Membermojo fees, promotional events (gazebo, posters), AGM and bank charges.

Additional one-off costs were for the Landfill View Point, the drainage ditch (so that the Sand Martin wall work could go ahead) and a new Tern raft. The Network Rail project, with funding from the Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment (TOE), was completed this year and we received a grant for a 2nd Tern raft.

The green bridge is still in need of repair; the contractors have been chased but there has been no reply. The Reading & District Angling Association fee is shown as outstanding on the accounts as this was paid into our old bank account, we have now received the funds.

b) Membership - Angela Gunn

We have completed our first full year with Membermojo. This has made it much easier to communicate with members and to co-ordinate Bird News subscriptions with the WhatsApp group. It is important that members keep their contact details up-to-date in Membermojo, everyone can do this from their membership record or, if there are problems with logging in, email lavellswt@gmail.com with details of the amendments needed. We can sort out problems quickly, often within a few hours.

If you change your email and it is not changed in Membermojo, you will not receive our emails (e.g. newsletters, reminders) and we do not always get a "failure to deliver" notice. A few members did not realise their membership had expired because they did not get the renewal notice. We have also had expired membership renewal bypassing Membermojo and making a payment to our old bank account. Membermojo will send you the correct details.

This time last year we had 552 members, today we have 568 members and 315 Lavell's Bird News (LBN) subscribers. Memberships are fairly evenly distributed between Individual and Family memberships. Membership rates for 2026 will remain £12 for individuals, £15 for families and £3 per LBN subscription but we anticipate that, with increasing costs and increases in our assets, subscriptions will increase for 2027.

4) Election of Officers & Committee

LWT's constitution requires a third of the committee to retire at each AGM. Ron Bryant is standing down, we are grateful for all his support; he built us a hide, bought us Lea Farm Lake, and has paid for the foundations for the new hide. His practical support at work parties has also been invaluable. Fraser Cottington is standing down but is standing for re-election.

The following members were nominated and elected as a group, proposed by Mick Inskipp, seconded by Brian Bennett

- Fraser Cottington: re-elected as a trustee.
- Jasmine Hughes: election as a committee member
- Roger Powell: elected as a committee member

The officers & committee for June 2025 to June 2026 are

Trustees: Jane Campbell (Chair), Fraser Cottington (Chief Visionary Officer), Angela Gunn (Secretary & Membership), Peter Scudamore (Treasurer).

Committee: Keith Boseley, Jasmine Hughes, Roger Powell, Ella Wheeler.

5. Chair's Report: Jane Campbell

Jane thanked the committee for all their work, in particular Fraser for his enthusiasm, which sometimes needs to be reined in, and Ron Bryant, already mentioned above. Bob Bennett, former committee member, still co-ordinates bird and other sightings listed on our web pages. Simon Bartlam and his team at Wokingham Countryside Service deliver tools needed at work parties and have provided wood chippings to repair the very muddy path near Teal hide as well as the riverside footpath. They have also erected a Swift tower on Goat Island and a new Barn Owl box near the Kestrel box at Lea Farm Lake, unfortunately it is not visible from the hides as it needs to overlook fields rather than a lake.

There have been no work parties in April and May due to the breeding season but are restarting in June. We have received grants from the Berkshire Ornithological Club for a second tern raft and to extend the Sand Martin wall. There is a portable wheelchair ramp at Ron's hide, not used so far but is available if needed.

6. Chief Visionary Officer: Fraser Cottington

Bird sightings and trends were highlighted. These include 3 Great White Egret overwintering, possibly a pair. Species of concern are Kingfisher (3 pairs at Dinton Pastures and 3 pairs at Lea Farm Lake), but Chaffinch and Bullfinch have not been seen recently.

We now have 2 rafts, the one on the left is occupied by Black Headed Gulls and the one on the right by Common Terns. A pair of Lapwings is nesting at Lea Farm Lake.

Spring has been long and dry. Sand Martins arrived 27 February. Cuckoo, Common Sandpiper, Reed Warbler and Garden Warbler all appeared earlier than usual.

Best bird highlights include; Smew – 2 appearing, Great White Egret overwintering, Bittern at Teal hide, Stonechat now breeding on site, Firecrest overwintering and possibly breeding and Grasshopper Warbler. Other breeding birds include; Swan, Kingfisher, Sedge Warbler, Little Ringed Plover and Lapwing.

Work on building the new hide will start the first week in July, this is good to see after 4-years planning. There have been problems in getting the biodiversity report for TOE2 ready, we are close to running out of time and may lose the funding. In hindsight, some of the work could have been prepared in advance and been ready when the funding became available. Blackthorn has been planted to protect the fencing. A strategy is being developed for our publicity stall, we need to identify suitable venues and have the right promotional attractions.

My time as a trustee is coming to an end and I will be standing down at the next AGM. There are still things I want see through including e.g. setting up a bird database allowing updating from mobiles, and installing a sluice on the Lea Farn Lake ditch. Thanks to Jane for all her hard work since taking over as chair.

A.O.B.

No issues were raised.

The AGM was followed by light refreshments and an interesting, informative talk by Grahame Hawker on Butterfly identification.

Date of next AGM 16th June 2026