

ARGYLL BIRD CLUB



Minutes

1. Apologies for Absence; co-opting new committee member, welcome to new committee members and induction to role. Apologies for Absence were received from Gordon Holm, David Jardine, Grace Maclean, Alastair McGregor, and Rebecca Cheape. Rebecca Cheape was co-opted onto the Committee, proposed Nigel Scriven, seconded Malcolm Chattwood. Nigel outlined the induction of new members to the Committee by describing the role of the Committee.

2. Declaration of any conflicts of interest. None.

3. Minutes of the committee meeting 1st October 2025 (which had been reviewed by email).

Adopting the Minutes of the 1 Oct 2025 Committee meeting was proposed by Nigel Scriven, seconded by Dave Harris.

4. Matters arising not included in the agenda. None.

5. Club Finances

Current position. This was summarised by Dave Harris, based on the report previously circulated to the Committee. We now have four accounts, keeping conservation funds separate from running costs. The Committee thanked Dave for managing the accounts.

It was agreed that annual Accounts would be put onto the ABC web page (under tab "The Club") as soon as these have been accepted by the AGM (**Action: Malcolm**).

6. Indoor Meetings

Spring meeting 7th March 2026 Seil Island Community Hall. This is booked and organized. The next Eider will request members to pay in advance for the soup and sandwich lunch (£12.50 per person).

Main talks will be Sophie Bennett on howling pixies, Jenni Weston on corncrakes, Alan Knox on tartan nightjars, Pete Roberts on Birds of Islay & Jura. For the Eider, David Jardine will summarise the corncrake talk and Rachel Harris will summarise the Birds of Islay & Jura. Nigel will arrange for summaries of the other two talks when it is known who from the Committee will be available at the Seil meeting to do those (**Action: Nigel**).

Autumn meeting will be booked for Saturday 7th November at Kilmartin Church.

The Spring meeting in 2027 will be booked for the appropriate Saturday to be at Dunoon.

7. Outdoor Meetings

There was a long discussion on how to take forward risk assessments for field trips. It was agreed that it would be sensible to prepare a template for this that can be edited for each location that the club arranges a field trip. Nigel will draft this template and make it available to each person designated as leader of a field trip. Where necessary those trip leaders will be provided with training on completing risk assessments. It was agreed that Alastair McGregor should prepare a risk assessment before the February field trip takes place and that Laura Dawson would be asked to prepare a risk assessment for the March field trip (**Action: Nigel**).

First aid kits (one small, one larger as suited to different locations depending on their isolation) will be bought as soon as possible and made available to be carried on each field trip. If necessary, the relevant kit can be posted in advance to the field trip leader or another nominated person going on the field trip (**Action: Nigel and Dave**).

28th Feb. – Bute – Alistair McGregor

28th Mar. – Kilchoan Melfort Estate – Laura Dawson

25th April – Gigha – Malcolm Chattwood

30th May – Auchgoyle Farm, Tighnabruaich – Alistair McGregor

13th June – Sanda – Nigel Scriven (providing permission is given by MOWI)

July – no field trip

8. Club Projects & Activities

Conservation Plan/Strategy - Nigel will complete this soon and will circulate the draft to Committee members when it is available.

Grant applications – none currently being considered.

Mink trapping - ongoing, there appears to be vandalism issues at one site on Crinan canal, but no indication of who is involved. This is being investigated.

Songmeter recording - expected to be deployed for Nightjars in 2026.

Holy Loch LNR – nothing to report.

Auchgoyle Farm, Cowal – nothing to report in advance of a club field trip to see progress at that site in May.

9. Publications

Birds of Islay & Jura – copies of this book should be available at the March meeting at Seil.

The Eider – Deadline for copy for the next issue is 20th February, with the aim that the issue will be distributed to members on 1 March. Deadline for copy for the June issue will be 10 May. A note will be included in the March Eider to that effect (**Action: Danielle**).

Bird Report - the first drafts of all species texts are now complete. We are still on track to complete pdf by the Spring 2026 meeting.

Website – nothing to report

Facebook – nothing to report

10. Committee communication

Problems with the Zoom meeting (this meeting) led to a decision that the next Committee meeting would be a hybrid meeting, with as many Committee members as possible face-to-face at the Inveraray Hub.

11. Club Archives

Dave Harris is continuing to work through boxes of club paperwork, selectively retaining what seems appropriate as an archive.

12. BTO update

There are BTO bird survey sites in Argyll not yet taken up by volunteers. Scottish Bird Camp (22-25 May) for young birders will be on Colonsay. Nigel will put an item in the Eider about each of these topics (**Action: Nigel**).

13. Guga petition at Scottish Parliament

It was agreed that Bob should send text for inclusion in The Eider and Nigel should put a note about this on the Club's Facebook page (**Action: Bob and Nigel**).

14. A.O.C.B.

An email from David Jardine informed the Committee that there is a proposal to build a micro distillery on a site in Ardrishaig where there is an existing colony of Common Gulls. Could ABC request that this is mitigated e.g. by provision of a flat (gravel) roof? This was discussed and Malcolm agreed to check on

whether a planning application had been made. Malcolm reported that a Planning application ref 26/00085/PP was submitted on 15/1/26 for a craft whisky distillery and visitor centre on site. It is currently out to consultation. The plans suggest that the prospect of accommodating breeding Common Gulls was not considered. The site lies within one of the Council's "Areas for Action". It is uncertain whether an approach to include biodiversity net gain/mitigation of impact through providing nesting habitat for the Common Gulls would be possible to include.

15. Date of next Committee meeting – 5th May (if possible) or 28th April as an alternative option depending on availability of The Hub, Inveraray (**Action: Dave will book venue**).