**Cornwall Reptile & Amphibian Group AGM**

**Thursday 22nd September 2016**

**Minutes**

**Present**

Chris White, Nicola Morris, Sarah Stevens, Helen Fearnley, Mark Nicholson, Laura Fox, Paul Diamond, Steve Green, Stuart Edwards, Edward Norkett

**Apologies**

Tamsin Lee, Dave Williams, Kate Hills

**Chairman’s report**

CRAG have had successful visits this year to Penhale, Breney Common & Carn Moor.

Previous requests have been made for a visit to Windmill farm. Mark contacting Dougie Wright to make plans.

Joint CRAG/SINNG/Cornwall College Newquay activities include gully pot ladders and mesh installation at Eden project (successfully installed with no further fatalities reported by Eden staff. This has been reported in local press), practical clearance of invasive parrot’s feather in ponds at Breney Common.

Tamsin has moved away so we need a new secretary. Kat has also moved away. New Secretary, chair and treasurer needed.

Membership numbers have been discussed and 4 new members have joined since last AGM

**No matters from previous meeting**

**Treasurer’s report**

25 membership fees paid. Financial report given and accounts provided.

**Election of officers and committee members**

Chair – Chris White. Proposed by Helen, seconded by Nicola

Secretary – Nicola Morris & Steve Green. Proposed by Mark, seconded by Chris

Treasurer – Mark Nicholson. Proposed by Chris, seconded by Stuart

Recorder – Nicola continuing. Stuart to assist

Reptile champion – Stuart continuing

Amphibian champion – Edward continuing

Facebook – Stuart continuing

Website – Laura continuing

Signatories – Mark, Chris, Nicola

**Review of membership fees**

Currently £5 & free for students. No plans to increase. There was a discussion regarding students paying £5 membership. It was agreed that the current membership form should be used ongoing stating free membership for students to encourage them to join and take part in activities.

**Relationship with CWT**

The matter of whether CRAG continues to be independent from or affiliated with Cornwall Wildlife Trust (CWT).

Concerns were raised about the potential for lack of Independence, additional level of bureaucracy, financial reporting and paperwork involved in affiliation. Potential for conflict in future was mentioned as this has occurred with other ARGs affiliating with Wildlife Trusts. It was stated however that this was not thought to be the case with CWT as current relationships are very good. Risk assessments also have to be signed off by CWT for all activities.

Benefits stated were the possibility of the use of meeting rooms at Allet, additional publicity through CWT marketing & articles in Trust magazine. Financial reporting not thought to be a problem for affiliated groups as only basic accounts are requested. Activities and events should be reported to CWT. If affiliation is decided against it was stated that this could be reconsidered at a later date.

Current affiliation with ARG UK offers full insurance provision. This is unaffected regardless of affiliation status with CWT.

The committee voted 7 against affiliation with CWT, 2 for affiliation with CWT, 1 abstained from voting. Opportunity to affiliate with CWT declined. Mark to report to CWT.

**Sand lizards**

Helen has taken this project on and there are a few possibilities on horizon. The current habitat has invasives and needs work to clear. Investment is needed but there is little support to clear by landowners. Winter clearance was suggest. Helen to formulate a plan of action and report back to committee to make plans. Helen has been in touch with those involved in the original introduction and has information relating to this which she can provide. There is no information on population size but it is thought there is a good population based on observations. There have been unofficial introductions but no records have been kept. A licence is needed to disturb sand lizards in hibernation or above ground. Winter management and clearing sand patches would involve minimum disturbance so CRAG licence could cover works.

January scrub clearance activities were suggested but concerns were voiced about advertising the site. It was suggested that bookings should be made by participants with more details provided at point of booking.

Sand patch clearance could be undertaken in April along with surveys. It was suggested to keep attendance to CRAG members.

**Future activities**

Laura explained about CBC procedure for advertising events and suggested we advertise events well in advance.

Requests have been made for people to monitor sites but can we take on more sites? A list of sites is to be compiled along with location of members to allow for sites to be allocated to those living nearest sites for ease of monitoring. Helen to coordinate and needs postcodes of members and GPS details of sites.

Bedruthan – plenty of reptiles. Previously mapped but now not able to find some tins. These need checking March to September – Sarah to check. Currently averaging once a month.

List of sites with tins.

Bedruthan – To be surveyed by: -CRAG Chris/Stuart/ Sarah

Breney – To be surveyed by: -CRAG Nicola

Carn Moor – To be surveyed by: -CRAG Stuart

Penhale – To be surveyed by: -CRAG Nicola/Steve

Lundy Bay – To be surveyed by: -NT Sarah

Ventongimps – – To be surveyed by: -Mark

Tregantle – To be surveyed by: - Paul, Chris, Helen (MOD land)

Lanner Moor – To be surveyed by: - CRAG Stuart

Bassets Cove - NT Steve Sudworth

Windmill Farm - CWT Dougie Wright

Stuart mentioned needing to GPS tins. Helen spoke about available phone apps which would allow this to be made easier. Such as Paparazzi/GPS Kit

**AOB**

Paul mentioned problems with gully pots in new developments. Suggested CRAG write to Natasha Collings (County Ecologist) regarding mitigation & the installation of Enkamat in new developments. Supporting evidence is needed. Nicola to provide this through contacts such as Barry Kemp (Sussex ARG).

Dates for coming year’s meetings: -

Nov 29th

Feb 28th

May 30th All to be held at Hawkins Arms Zelah at 6.45 pm unless otherwise decided.