Constitution for The Amphibian and Reptile Group of Cumbria (CARG)

1. Preamble

* 1. The name of the Group shall be Cumbria ARG (CARG)
  2. Cumbria ARG shall be non-party political, non-sectarian and non-profit making.
  3. Cumbria ARG shall not support or become involved with any organisation or individual engaged in activities which are illegal under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 or any of its subsequent amendments, or are in any other way unlawful.
  4. Cumbria ARG shall operate in the North west area encompassing Cumbria
  5. Cumbria ARG shall be affiliated to ARG UK, (Amphibian and Reptile Groups of the United Kingdom, Charity Number 1165504), the representative body for all ARGs in the UK.

2. Objectives

The objectives of Cumbria ARG shall be:

* 1. To promote the conservation of all native species of amphibian and reptile and their habitats in Cumbria and throughout the British Isles whenever necessary.
  2. To help monitor the distribution and status of amphibians and reptiles in Cumbria, including colonies of introduced species.
  3. To liaise with, and provide advice on, amphibians and reptiles and the management of their habitats to all relevant statutory and non statutory organisations and agencies and the general public.
  4. To foster an interest in amphibians and reptiles and their conservation and to develop the skills of those interested in these species.

3. Committee Structure

* 1. The affairs and policies of the Group shall be administered and decided by a Committee (hereinafter referred to as “the Committee”).
  2. The Committee shall normally consist of not more than 10 members and shall include a Chairperson, a Secretary/Treasurer and at least one representative from any sub-group. The Committee shall have the right to invite representatives from other voluntary bodies concerned with amphibians and reptiles and wildlife conservation to become a member of the Committee.
  3. The Committee shall be elected annually by Cumbria ARG members at the Annual General Meeting (AGM).
  4. No business shall be transacted at any meeting unless a quorum of four voting members is present when the meeting proceeds.
  5. Any casual vacancy on the Committee may be filled by a majority vote of The Committee and confirmed at the AGM.
  6. The Committee will have the right to co-opt individuals who, by the virtue of their specialised local knowledge, make a valuable contribution to the objects of the Cumbria ARG. These co-opted individuals will not have voting rights.

4. Sub-Groups

* 1. The Committee may establish geographical sub-groups to pursue Cumbria ARG’s objectives within their respective areas. Such sub-groups shall be responsible to the main Cumbria ARG Committee for all the matters set out in this constitution.
  2. Sub-group Committees shall be of not more than 10 members and shall include a Chairperson and a Secretary/Treasurer and other posts as needed. The Committee will have the right to invite representatives from other voluntary bodies concerned with herpetofauna and wildlife conservation to become a member of the Committee.
  3. The Cumbria ARG Committee shall fix the area of operation of sub-groups at its first meeting(s).

5. Amphibian and Reptile Records

* 1. Records shall be maintained by the Recording Officer.

6. Publicity, Publications and Promotions

* 1. All publications, displays, letterheads and other publicity and promotional material will include the logo and will conform to the guidance on house style of other organisations that the Group is affiliated to whenever necessary or required by that organisation.

7. Funds

* 1. The Committee may acquire funds for furthering the objectives of the Cumbria ARG so long as the person or organisation providing funds does not conflict with the aims of other voluntary bodies concerned with amphibian and reptile conservation.

1. Membership
   1. Cumbria ARG members will complete a membership form and volunteer working agreement.
   2. A membership fee will be payable, which is currently set at £5.00 (yearly).
   3. Membership fees will be spent on activities that benefit the group or the interests of amphibian and reptile conservation.

9. Group Meetings

* 1. Cumbria ARG meetings shall be held at such time and place as may be determined by the Committee.
  2. Cumbria ARG shall hold an Annual General Meeting each year at such time and place as may be determined by the Committee, giving at least 21 days notice to members, at which Committee members and officers will be appointed.
  3. There shall be regular general meetings to be called Extraordinary meetings, open to all members of the Cumbria ARG, as business dictates.
  4. An Extraordinary meeting can be held at any time and place determined by the Committee, with at least 14 days notice being given to members.

10. Voting at Meetings

* 1. For resolutions, members must declare any interest in the matter being voted upon (for Special Resolutions see 11 below).
  2. Members who have no such declared interest shall be entitled to one vote.
  3. Any member with such a declared interest shall be able to speak, but has no voting rights.
  4. In the event of an equality of votes, the Chairperson of the Cumbria ARG shall have the casting vote.

11. Accounts

* 1. Accounting records will be kept by the Cumbria ARG Treasurer.
  2. The financial year shall run from 1 January to 31 December.
  3. Bank accounts shall be maintained in the name of the Cumbria ARG. Cheques may be signed by any two of the Cumbria ARG’s authorised signatories. There may be up to three authorised signatories. The account must not be overdrawn.

12. Alterations to Constitution (Special Resolution)

* 1. Any alterations to this Constitution shall require the approval of two thirds of all members of the Committee.
  2. Any Special Resolution for the alteration of the Constitution must come from a member of the Committee and must be received by the Cumbria ARG Secretary at least eight weeks before the meeting at which the resolution is to be brought forward and must be passed by two thirds of the members present.
  3. The Committee members may vote by proxy provided that the notice of the vote is received by the Cumbria ARG Secretary at least one week before this meeting.

13. Dissolution

* 1. Cumbria ARG may be dissolved by the Committee, satisfying a resolution passed at a meeting of the Committee, provided that such a resolution comes from members of the Committee. At least eight weeks notice will be given to the Cumbria ARG Secretary before the meeting at which the resolution is to be discussed and it will subsequently be circulated to the Committee at least two weeks before the meeting.
  2. Any assets of the Cumbria ARG will, after discharge of any liabilities, be transferred evenly to those charitable organisations that the Group has affiliated to.

Last amended 26/01/2019