



KRAG

KENT REPTILE AND AMPHIBIAN GROUP CONSTITUTION

1. PREAMBLE

- 1.1 The name of the Group shall be the KENT REPTILE AND AMPHIBIAN GROUP abbreviated to KRAG.
- 1.2 KRAG shall be non party political, non sectarian and non profit making.
- 1.3 KRAG shall not support or become involved with any organisation or individual engaged in activities which are illegal under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981, or any of its subsequent amendments, or are in any other way unlawful.
- 1.4 KRAG shall operate in the Vice Counties of East & West Kent (hereafter Kent).
- 1.5 KRAG will be a membership organisation consisting of ordinary members, corporate members and conservation partners. The conditions governing these three types of membership are described below.
- 1.6 KRAG will be an organisation affiliated to Amphibian and Reptile Groups of the United Kingdom - ARG (UK).

2. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of KRAG shall be:

- 2.1 To promote the conservation of all native species of amphibian and reptile and their habitats in Kent and throughout the British Isles whenever necessary.
- 2.2 To record and monitor the distribution and status of amphibians and reptiles in Kent including colonies of introduced species.
- 2.3 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.
- 2.4 To foster an interest in amphibians and reptiles and their conservations and to develop the skills of those interested in these species

3. COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

- 3.1 The affairs and policies of the Group shall be administered and decided by a Committee (referred to hereafter as The Committee).

- 3.2 The Committee shall include an Honorary Chairman, an Hon. Secretary, Hon. Treasurer, Hon. Recording Officer, Hon. Editor, at least one representative from any sub-group and other posts (e.g. Hon. Education Officer, Hon. Events Officer, Hon. Publicity Officer) as the Committee considers appropriate.
- 3.3 Committee members shall be elected at an AGM and such members will have voting rights. They will normally serve a term of three years and at the end of this period there will be an election for any posts at full-term. Posts that fall vacant before full-term may be filled by members co-opted by majority vote of the Committee and such co-opted members will have voting rights. Elections for such posts will be held at the next AGM. The Hon. Secretary will inform the membership about vacant or full-term posts for election, not later than four weeks before an AGM. Nominations for each post must be submitted with the names of a proposer and seconder not less than two weeks before the AGM. Nominations will also be accepted for postholders seeking re-election.
- 3.4 Not more than one individual associated with any particular corporate member may be elected to serve on The Committee and such individuals will not serve as representatives of a corporate member.
- 3.5 The Committee will have the right to co-opt onto the Committee representatives from other voluntary bodies concerned with herpetofauna and wildlife conservation or other individuals who, by virtue of their specialised local knowledge, make a valuable contribution to the objects of KRAG. Such members will not have voting rights.
- 3.6 No business shall be transacted at any Meeting unless a quorum of **four** voting members is present for the duration of the Meeting..

4. SUB GROUPS

- 4.1 The Committee may establish sub-groups to pursue KRAG's objectives as appropriate. Such sub-groups shall be responsible to the main KRAG Committee for all the matters set out in this constitution.
- 4.2 Sub-group Committees shall be of not more than 5 members and shall include an Hon. Chairman and an Hon. Secretary/Treasurer. 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 Sub-group Committee.
- 4.3 The Sub-group Committee shall fix the area of operation of sub-groups at its first meeting(s).
- 4.4 The Sub-Group Committee shall have the right to authorise expenditures associated with its objectives up to a maximum of £500. Any expenditure above this amount will require authorisation from The Committee.

5. ORDINARY MEMBERSHIP

- 5.1 Ordinary members will contribute an annual subscription determined by the Committee

- 5.2 Membership of KRAG does not give an individual right of access to private land.
- 5.3 Whilst members are encouraged to actively contribute to the objectives of KRAG, members should not undertake activities in the name of KRAG without prior approval from The Committee.
- 5.3 Any individual shall cease to be a member of KRAG if:
- i) They cease to be involved in the organisation
 - ii) Their conduct is considered detrimental to the objectives of KRAG by not less than 50% of The Committee.
- 5.4 Such members will be given two weeks notice of a meeting where the matter will be discussed and they must submit an explanation of their conduct to the Committee, or the sub-group to which they belong, before a vote is taken. The explanation must be submitted in writing and must be received by the Hon. Chairman at least seven full days before the meeting. Committee members may vote by proxy provided that notice of the vote is received by the Hon. Chairman at least two full days before the meeting.

6. **CORPORATE MEMBERSHIP**

- 6.1 Businesses or other organisations that are engaged wholly or partly in activities that have a bearing on the conservation or well being of reptiles and/or amphibians may become Corporate Members of KRAG. Eligibility for Corporate Member status will be determined by The Committee. Elected Corporate Members will
- i) contribute an annual subscription determined by The Committee.
 - ii) be entitled to display the KRAG Corporate Membership logo, with a ‘working with KRAG to support best practice’ strap line, on their letter headed paper and publicity materials.
 - iii) be entitled to rights and privileges as determined by The Committee.
 - iv) not undertake any activities in the name of KRAG without prior approval from The Committee.
 - v) at all times observe good practice in relation to the care and conservation of reptiles and amphibians as defined by The Committee and be subject to whatever checks The Committee may take to ensure that good practices is observed.
 - vi) be debarred from Corporate Membership by a vote of at least 50% of The Committee if evidence is presented that good practice has not been observed or that conduct is considered detrimental to the objectives of KRAG.

7. **CONSERVATION PARTNERS**

- 7.1 Organisations that are engaged wholly or partly in activities that have a bearing on the conservation or well being of reptiles and/or amphibians may be invited to become Conservation Partners of KRAG. Eligibility for Conservation Partner status will be determined by The Committee. Elected Conservation Partners will
- i) be entitled to display the KRAG Conservation Partners logo on their letter headed paper and publicity materials.
 - ii) be entitled to rights and privileges as determined by The Committee.
 - iii) not undertake any activities in the name of KRAG without prior approval from The Committee.

- iv) at all times observe good practice in relation to the care and conservation of reptiles and amphibians as defined by The Committee and be subject to whatever checks The Committee may take to ensure that good practice is observed.
- v) be debarred from Conservation Partner status by a vote of at least 50% of The Committee if evidence is presented that good practice has not been observed or that conduct is considered detrimental to the objectives of KRAG.

8. COMMERCIAL INTEREST

- 8.1 KRAG members shall not use their activities within the Group to promote their own business interests.
- 8.2 If, as a result of acting on behalf of KRAG, a member gains an opportunity to act as a paid consultant this opportunity should be drawn to the attention of the Committee to ensure that this would not impact negatively on the reputation of KRAG and that best practice will be observed in the execution of the consultancy. Where appropriate, those seeking consultancy services will be directed to the list of KRAG Corporate Members since these will have signed up to good practice and are herpetological specialists.

9. STORAGE AND RELEASE OF DATA

- 9.1 The Committee shall decide the means of gathering and storage of data. The Hon. Recording Officer shall maintain records.
- 9.2 All data shall be deemed to be the copyright of individual contributors but shall be made available to businesses and organisations as appropriate. A fee may be charged for the service of providing such data. Fees will be determined by The Committee.
- 9.3 All data held on the KRAG Recording Database shall be made available to Conservation Partners. The sharing of such data may be subject to a data sharing agreement. Data sharing agreements will be reviewed annually.
- 9.4 All data on the distribution of amphibians and reptiles shall be deemed as confidential and Conservation Partners will not be entitled to redistribute such data unless its release is specifically authorised by the Committee.
- 9.5 The Committee grants businesses and organisations permission to summarise data supplied by KRAG and to cite such data in reports as required. Information supplied by KRAG may also be reproduced in reports as evidence that a database search request has been received.

10. PUBLICITY, PUBLICATIONS AND PROMOTIONS

- 10.1 Publications, displays, letterheads and other publicity and promotional material may include the KRAG logo.
- 10.2 KRAG will maintain an Internet web site, as finances permit. The method of managing and operating the website will be determined by The Committee and will reflect the financial position of KRAG but may include the payment of a professional management fee.

11. FUNDS

- 11.1 The Committee may acquire funds for furthering the objectives of KRAG so long as the person or organisation providing funds does not conflict with the aims of other voluntary bodies concerned with herpetofauna conservation.
- 11.2 The use and disposal of funds will be at the discretion of the Committee provided expenditure does not exceed income and reserves, taking into account all financial obligations.

12. GROUP MEETINGS

- 12.1 KRAG shall hold an Annual General Meeting 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 elected.
- 12.2 The Committee shall meet at intervals as determined by the Committee.
- 12.3 There may be general meetings to be called 'Extraordinary Meetings' open to all members of KRAG, as business dictates. 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.
- 12.4 The minutes of Annual General Meetings, Committee Meetings and Extraordinary Meetings will be made available to members within one month of such meetings.

13. VOTING AT MEETINGS

- 13.1 For resolutions, members must declare any interest in the matter being voted upon (for Special Resolutions see 14 below).
- 13.2 Members who have no such declared interest shall be entitled to one vote.
- 13.3 Any member with such a declared interest shall be able to speak, but has no voting rights.
- 13.4 In the event of an equality of votes, the Hon. Chairman of KRAG shall have the casting vote.

14. ACCOUNTS

- 14.1 The Committee shall cause accounting records to be kept by the KRAG Hon. Treasurer.
- 14.2 The financial year shall run from 1 January to 31 December.
- 14.3 Bank accounts shall be maintained in the name of the Kent Reptile and Amphibian Group. Cheques may be signed by any of KRAG's authorised signatories. Expenditure in excess of £200 must be given prior approval by The Committee. The account must not be overdrawn.

15. POLICY STATEMENTS

- 15.1 KRAG may hold Policy Statements relating to activities outside of the scope of this constitution.
- 15.2 Policy Statements may be drawn up at any time but their adoption requires the approval of two thirds of The Committee.

15.3 Amendments to Policy Statements are subject to the conditions outlined in Section 14 below.

16. ALTERATIONS TO CONSTITUTION (Special Resolution)

16.1 Any alterations to this Constitution or accompanying Policy Statements shall require the approval of two thirds of The Committee.

16.2 Any Special Resolution for the alteration of the Constitution or Policy Statement must come from a member of The Committee and must be received by the KRAG 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.

16.3 The Committee members may vote by proxy provided that notice of the vote is received by the KRAG Secretary at least one week before the meeting.

17. DISSOLUTION

17.1 The KRAG may be dissolved by The Committee, satisfying a resolution passed at a meeting of The Committee, provided that such a resolution comes from a member of The Committee. At least eight weeks notice will be given to the KRAG 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 this meeting.

17.2 Any assets of KRAG will, after discharge of any liabilities, be transferred evenly to those charitable organisations to which KRAG is affiliated.

October 2009