

# GLOUCESTERSHIRE CAVE RESCUE GROUP

## CONSTITUTION

### 1. NAME

The group shall be called 'GLOUCESTERSHIRE CAVE RESCUE GROUP' hereinafter referred to as the 'GCRG'

### 2. OBJECTS AND POWERS

#### 2.1 Objects

The objects of the GCRG shall be the rescue and preservation of life of persons injured or stranded underground and to assist other emergency services including other Cave Rescue Groups and Mountain Rescue Teams.

#### 2.2 Powers

The GCRG shall have powers to:

- a) employ and pay any person or persons not being members of the Committee to supervise, organise and carry on the work of the GCRG.
- b) bring together in conference representatives of voluntary organisations, government departments, statutory authorities and individuals
- c) promote and carry out or assist in promoting and carrying out research, surveys and investigations and publish the results thereof
- d) collect and disseminate information on all matters affecting the said objects and exchange such information with other bodies having similar objects whether in this country or overseas
- e) raise funds and invite and receive contributions from any person or persons whatsoever by way of subscriptions and otherwise
- f) buy, take, lease or exchange, any real property necessary for the achievement of the objects and to maintain and equip it for use
- g) subject to any consents required by law, sell, lease or dispose of all or any part of the property of the charity
- h) do all such other lawful things as are necessary for the attainment of the said objects.

### 3. MEMBERSHIP

Membership of the GCRG shall be at the discretion of the Committee and shall be open to any person that demonstrates an interest in the furtherance of the GCRG's objects.

Members shall be over 18 years of age.

Each member shall fill in a membership form which shall be submitted via the GCRG Information Officer for consideration by the committee before acceptance into the GCRG.

The committee reserves the right to refuse any person that is considered unfit or incapable for the tasks which may be required of them. There shall be no membership subscriptions.

There shall be three types of membership within the GCRG:

#### **Full Members**

Full members of the GCRG shall be experienced or active cavers with at least 2 years expertise covering a variety of caves, mines and conditions, and have a genuine interest in the rescue aspect of their sport.

Full members should have a reasonable knowledge of cave rescue techniques and GCRG procedures and will be expected to attend Cave Rescue training sessions.

## **Probationary Members**

Probationary membership encompasses novice cavers that wish to become involved in cave rescue and partake of training as they progress and develop their own personal caving skills.

Probationary membership shall also incorporate new members that are experienced cavers who have had little, or no experience of the techniques and procedures used by GCRG.

Probationary membership shall be reviewed by the Committee at regular intervals with a view to awarding Full Membership.

The maximum age for Full and Probationary members who go underground shall be that stated within the guidelines set out by the Calling Authority Insurance Policy.

## **Support Members**

Support members are personnel who wish to take a limited role within the GCRG; may be over the maximum age stated within the guidelines set out by the Calling Authority Insurance Policy; do not wish to be included on the immediate call-out list; and are willing to assist with associated rescue matters if required. This category is extended to members whose skills may be of value to the GCRG but are not necessarily cavers.

## **Cessation of Membership**

The committee shall have the power to remove membership when, in their opinion, it would not be in the interests of the GCRG for that person to remain a member.

A member shall not be removed unless given 14 days written notice to attend a meeting of the committee and written details of the complaint against them. The member shall be given the opportunity to appear before the Committee to answer the complaints and adduce material in their favour.

The member shall not be removed unless at least two-thirds of the Committee, then present, vote in favour of their removal. If the member concerned is also a member of the committee, they shall take no part in the deliberations or vote on the issue of their removal, nor shall they be counted for the purposes of assessing the two-thirds requirement.

A removed member may only be re-admitted to membership if two-thirds of the Committee then present vote in favour of their re-admission.

If a removed member is also a member of the Committee, they shall, on removal, be deemed to have resigned from the committee.

## **4. COMMITTEE**

### **4.1 Functions of the Committee**

The general, financial, social and administrative business of the GCRG shall be administered by a Committee. The Committee shall liaise with the Emergency Services and other voluntary services as necessary.

### **4.2 Election of the Committee**

The Committee shall be elected annually, at the Annual General Meeting, from within the membership of the GCRG. Committee Members shall normally stay in office for one year and all may offer themselves for re-election at the next Annual General Meeting. The Committee shall assume office after election.

#### 4.3 Members of the Committee

The Committee shall consist of:

- Executive officers: Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer (these three executive officers shall also become the Trustees for the duration of office).
- Non-executive officers: Information Officer, Tackle Officer, Communications Officer, Training Officer, Vehicles Officer, Publicity Officer, First Aid Officer and two Ordinary Members.

The Committee shall have the power to co-opt other Members of the GCRG into the Committee. In the event of any vacancies occurring on the Committee before the Annual General Meeting, the remainder of the Committee shall have the power to co-opt further Member(s) from the GCRG. The number of co-opted Members of the Committee shall never exceed the number of elected Committee Members. The inability to fill a non-executive post vacancy shall not impede the operation of the Committee or the GCRG

#### 4.4 Committee Meetings

Committee Meetings shall be held as required. Meetings may be held in person, by remote electronic means or a combination of both. A quorum for Committee Meetings shall be five Committee Members and must include at least one Executive Officer. Minutes of the proceedings of each Committee Meeting shall be taken. Except in emergency, at least seven days notice of each Committee Meeting shall be given to all Committee Members. Non-receipt of the required notice by any Committee Members shall not invalidate the proceedings of the Meeting.

### 5. ACCOUNTS

Proper records shall be kept by the Treasurer showing all monies received and payments made by the GCRG. The GCRG shall have a current bank account and a deposit account both held in the name of Gloucestershire Cave Rescue Group. Withdrawals from these accounts must be authorised by two signatories. Authorised signatories shall be the Chairman, the Secretary and the Treasurer. The Treasurer should give a financial report at or before each Committee Meeting and a balance sheet shall be presented at the Annual General Meeting. The financial year of the GCRG shall be from 1st April to 31 March. The Group may hold petty cash.

### 6. EQUIPMENT OWNERSHIP

The GCRG shall own equipment for the purposes of cave rescue as outlined in clause 2. The title to all real and personal property which may be acquired by or on behalf of the GCRG shall be vested in the Trustees.

## **7. GENERAL MEETINGS**

### **7.1 Annual General Meeting**

The Annual General Meeting should be held in May of each year, or in exceptional circumstances as soon as possible thereafter, for the following purposes:

- a) to receive and approve the balance sheet of the GCRG for the financial year ended 31st March last
- b) to receive and approve reports from the Executive and Non-Executive Officers
- c) to elect Members of the Committee in accordance with clause 4
- d) to discuss any proposals or motions signed by two or more Members and received by the Secretary at least one month before the Meeting
- e) to transact such other business as may be notified in the circulated agenda for the Meeting

All members shall be notified of the time and place of the Meeting at least two weeks in advance, along with the agenda for the Meeting. Meetings may be held in person, by remote electronic means or a combination of both. Non-receipt of the required notice by any Members shall not invalidate the proceedings of the Meeting.

### **7.2 Extraordinary General Meeting**

An Extraordinary General Meeting may be called at the discretion of the Committee. The reason for the Meeting will be notified to all members and the meeting shall only discuss the matter for which the Meeting was called. All members shall be notified of the time and place of the Meeting in advance along with the agenda for the meeting. Meetings may be held in person, by remote electronic means or a combination of both. Non-receipt of the required notice by any Members shall not invalidate the proceedings of the Meeting.

### **7.3 Requirements for General Meetings**

A quorum at General Meetings shall be eight members, including at least one executive member. Minutes of the proceedings of each General Meeting shall be taken. Voting at General Meetings shall be by an individual vote per member.

## **8. CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION**

The Secretary shall inform all Members of the GCRG of the proposed changes at least 14 days before the General Meeting at which the changes are to be considered. Any changes made to this Constitution must be duly approved by a majority of 75% of those present and voting. Notwithstanding the wishes of the GCRG Members, no changes shall be made to clauses 2, 8 or 9 without final consent being obtained from the Charity Commission and no changes shall be made which would have the effect of causing the GCRG to cease to be a charity in law.

## **9. DISSOLUTION OF THE GCRG**

If the Committee by a simple majority decide at any time that on the grounds of expense or otherwise it is necessary or advisable to dissolve the GCRG, it shall call an Extraordinary General Meeting (in accordance with clause 7.2). If the Committee decision is confirmed by a two thirds majority of those present and voting at such a Meeting, the Committee shall have a power to dispose of any assets held by or on behalf of the GCRG. Any assets remaining after the satisfaction of any proper debts and liabilities shall be given or transferred to such charitable institution or institutions having objects similar to the objects of the GCRG as the Committee may determine and if and in so far as effect cannot be given this provision then to some other charitable purpose.

**10. MEMBERSHIP RECORDS**

Membership records and other relevant information may be stored by electronic or other means in accordance with current data protection legislation.

**11. MATTERS NOT COVERED BY THE CONSTITUTION**

The Committee shall have full power to deal with any matter not provided for in the Constitution. Their decision shall be at all times final.

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This completely rewritten constitution was formally approved at the Extraordinary General Meeting held on 7th January 1990.

Rule 2.2 f) and g) were added (and previous 2.2 (f) renumbered to become 2.2 (h) at the AGM on 14th May 1994.

Rule 3, Membership, was amended at the AGM on 13th May 1995.

This Constitution was amended in March 2021 to reflect new practices, formalise an amended Officer list, rename / redefine membership categories, for approval at the May 2021 AGM.