



# **ARG UK and the ARG network in 2018**

Dr Angela Julian  
Coordinator ARG UK

[www.arguk.org](http://www.arguk.org)

Amphibian and Reptile Groups of UK (ARG UK) is a registered charity (number 1165504) committed to the conservation of native amphibians and reptiles and their natural environment by supporting the development of a network of independent volunteer amphibian and reptile groups (ARGs)

# ARG UK Highlights from 2018

## Adders are Amazing!

A pilot programme to engage the wider community in adder conservation in Pembrokeshire.

- Working with communities on the St David's Peninsula to create an exciting and positive focus on the natural environment, with the adder as its flagship.
- This will help to ensure a resilient future for adders in this area, and develop a sense of community pride in this beautiful, sensitive species.
- The findings and outcomes from the programme will be used to inform further outreach projects across Wales, UK and Europe, to help reverse the pervasive negativity associated with adders and other native snakes.

Total number of people engaged since March 2018 = **1,219**



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# Adders are Amazing!

Working with Schools



The WIs and the  
Stitchy Witches



Artists' groups

Images copyright Sam  
Langdon



# Involving the whole community in a magical lantern procession



500 school children with their families came to St David's Airfield to help our giant puppet adder go into hibernation

# Media coverage



Listen now

23/10/2018

Wynne chats to Mike Batt, the man who wrote the Wombles theme, 'Bright Eyes' and much else besides. Ralph McTell explains the story behind the song 'Streets of London'. And Pembrokeshire adder expert Sam Langdon explains why we should love our only poisonous snake.



Adders have an image problem that could result in the iconic species going extinct, experts have warned.

The Amphibian and Reptile Groups of the UK (ARG UK) said a "whole generation's attitude" towards the venomous snake had to change.

It has been working with 500 Pembrokeshire school pupils to put on a parade, which will see a giant adder sculpture slither through St Davids.

Wales is seen as one of the reptile's remaining strongholds.

28 days left to listen  
1 hour, 57 minutes



BBC's 'adder extinction' post downloaded over 250,000 times, and the interviews with Sam and Iolo were aired on BBC Wales, S4C and Radio 4.

# Land Manager Adder Networking Days

We ran two adder days for land managers in 2018: at Cleeve Hill (Gloucestershire) and NT Dudmaston Hall & Kinver Edge (Shropshire and Staffordshire).



Over 64 land managers attended from:

- National Trust
- Natural England
- Forestry Commission
- Local authorities
- Butterfly Conservation
- Wildlife Trusts
- Local conservation groups
- Golf course green keepers

More adder days  
are planned!



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# Working with the Ministry of Justice



Dave Willis (Herts ARG) MoJ Training Programme:

- 37 staff and prisoners trained in 2018 across 4 establishments in England and Wales: HMP Springhill, HMP North Sea Camp, HMP Hollesley Bay and HMP Prescoed
- GCN identified at HMP Springhill and this data used to help external ecologists.
- Toad populations identified at 3 sites.

Courses are being booked for 2019. Local ARG assistance welcome!

# What's in your Pond?

Training days and citizen science surveys in Northern Ireland



amphibian and reptile  
conservation



Image copyright Toby Edwards



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# Publications



Amphibian and Reptile Groups of the United Kingdom  
**Advice Note 11**  
[www.arguk.org](http://www.arguk.org)

**Managing Habitat for Adders: Advice for Land Managers**  
 May 2018

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Volume 29 (January 2018)

## Herpetological Journal

FULL PAPER



Published by the British Herpetological Society

<https://doi.org/10.33256/hj29.1.5770>

### **Make the Adder Count: population trends from a citizen science survey of UK adders**

Emma Gardner<sup>1</sup>, Angela Julian<sup>2</sup>, Chris Monk<sup>3</sup> & John Baker<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>School of Biological Sciences, University of Reading, Whiteknights, Reading, RG6 6AS, UK

<sup>2</sup>Amphibian and Reptile Groups of UK (ARG UK), 82 Gidley Way, Horspath, Oxford, OX33 1TG, UK

<sup>3</sup>Amphibian and Reptile Groups of UK (ARG UK), Hilburn, Chapel Lane, Middleton, Matlock, Derbyshire, DE4 4NF, UK

<sup>4</sup>Amphibian and Reptile Groups of UK (ARG UK), 34 Barons Court, Haleworth, Suffolk, IP19 8EL, UK

### **Amphibians and Reptiles in Leicestershire and Rutland: A Review**

by Andrew M. Heaton, County Recorder for Amphibians and Reptiles, 2018



Amphibian and Reptile Groups of the United Kingdom  
**Advice Note 10**  
[www.arguk.org](http://www.arguk.org)

### **Reptile Survey and Mitigation Guidance for Peatland Habitats** Version 1, April 2018

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APPENDIX: Flow chart and mitigation summary for

### *The Herpetofauna of Wiltshire*

Gareth Harris, Gemma Harding,

Michael Hordley & Sue Sawyer

March 2018

Wiltshire & Swindon Biological Records Centre and

Wiltshire Amphibian & Reptile Group



Amphibian and Reptile Groups of the United Kingdom  
**ARG UK Advice Note 9**

[www.arguk.org](http://www.arguk.org)

### **The General Data Protection Regulation (2018) for volunteer groups** November 2017

#### Background

On 25th May 2018 the new General Data Protection Regulation comes into force. This is not wholly new legislation, as it builds on the Data Protection Act 1998. Nevertheless, it represents an important challenge for volunteer groups, since there will be greater scrutiny of the way in which we manage personal information from this date.



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# Regional Events



## South East Amphibian and Reptile Group Regional Meeting

10:00 am – 4:00 pm, Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> January 2018, Marwell Zoological Park  
Thompson's Ln, Colden Common, Winchester SO21 1JH



Image copyright Tracy Farrer

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### Vanishing Viper 2019: A European Perspective on Adder Conservation

by Amphibian and Reptile Groups of UK

£38 - £48



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# 100% fund – supporting practical conservation

Gallows Hill – Yorkshire ARG creating new ponds and hibernacula



# 100% fund – supporting practical conservation

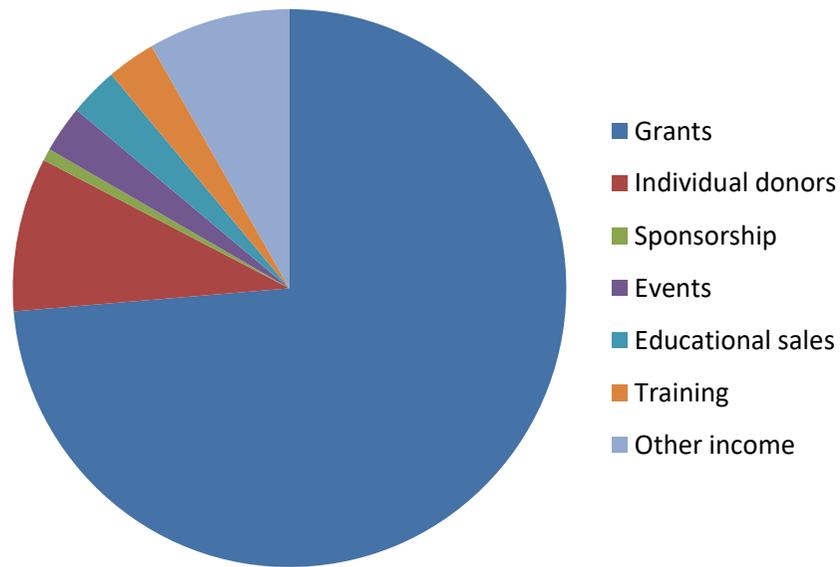
Unusually in 2018 we donated the entire proceeds of the ARG UK 100% fund raffle at the HWM to a very worthwhile legacy project set up by [Steve Parnwell](#) and family, following the tragic loss of Madeleine Parnwell just before Christmas 2017. At the 2019 AGM, Steve updated us on their progress towards turning a patch of Cambridgeshire farmland back into a wildlife haven - Madeleine's Patch.



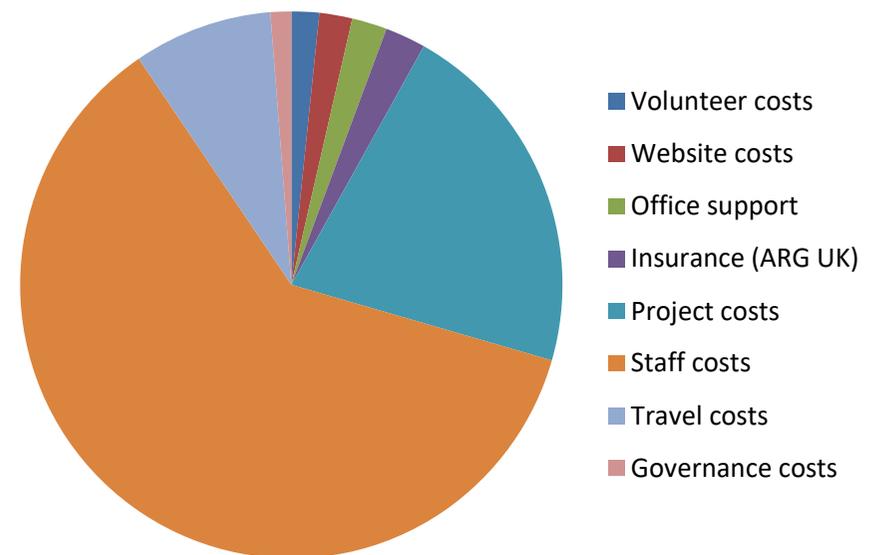
If you would like to support [Madeleine's Patch](#) please do visit their JustGiving page.  
[www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/madeleines-patch](http://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/madeleines-patch)

# ARG UK – Financial summary 2018-19 (draft)

Total Income = £57, 789



Total Expenditure = £55, 899



Surplus = £1,890  
 Balance carried forward = £34,425  
 Balance on 31 Jan 2019 = £36,315  
 (Unrestricted balance = £34,520)

Charity no = 1165504



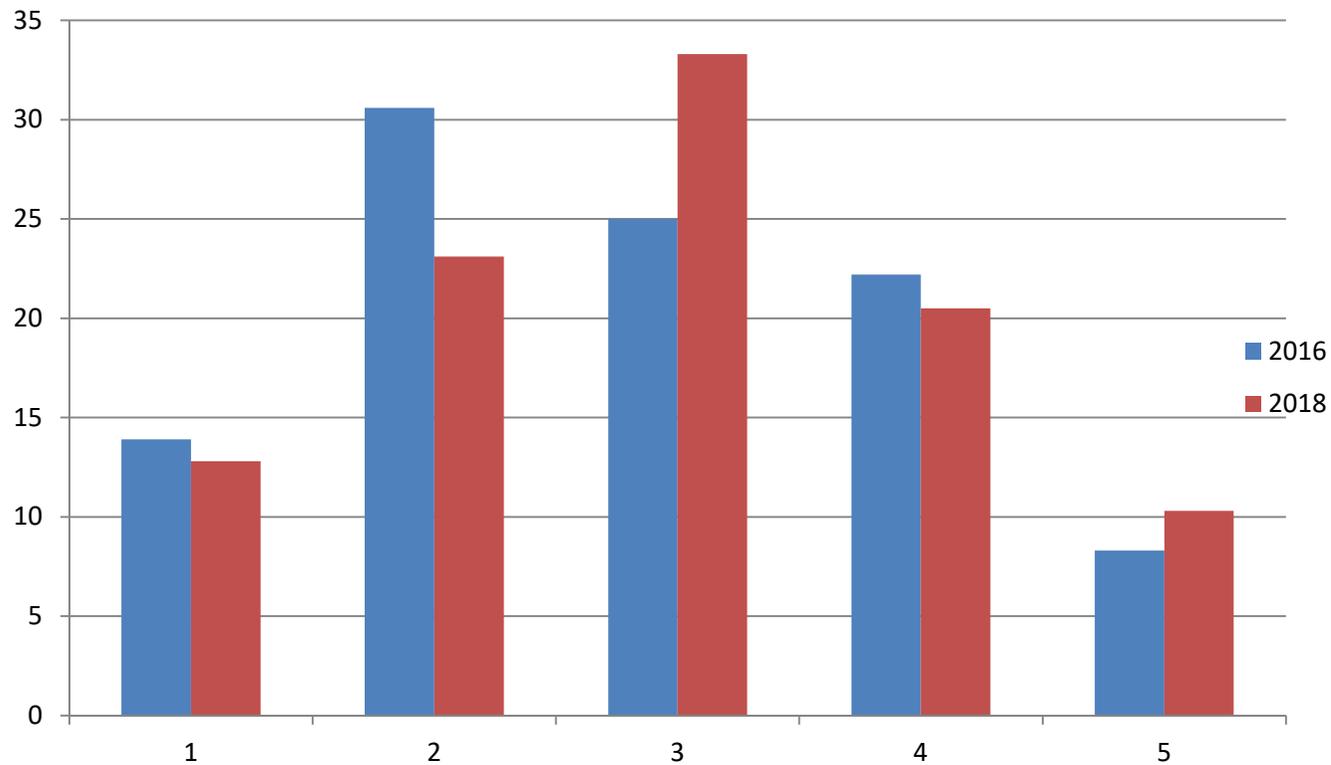
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# ARG Activity Survey - Summary

How active is your ARG, on a scale of 1-5, where 1 is inactive and 5 is very active

2016 = 36 responses  
2018 = 39 responses

Percentage responding

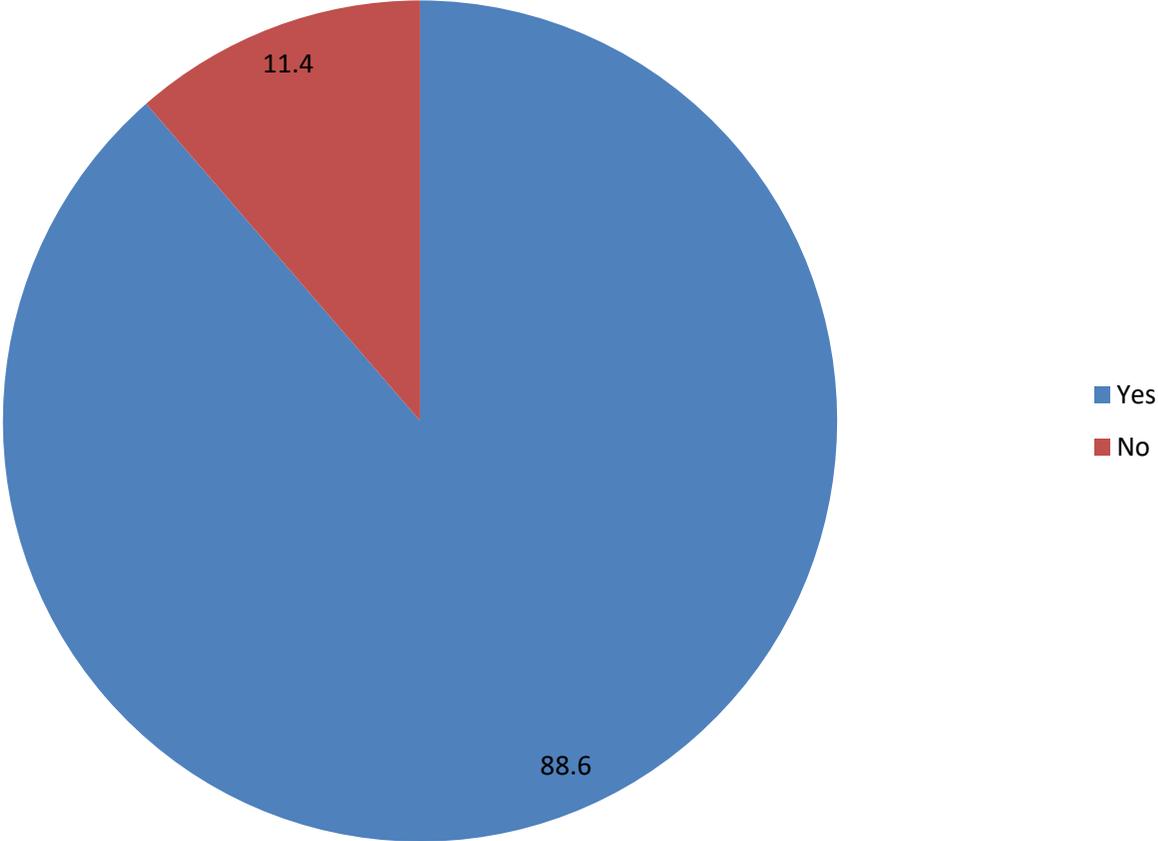


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# Do you use the ARG UK insurance cover?

2016 = 36 responses  
2018 = 39 responses

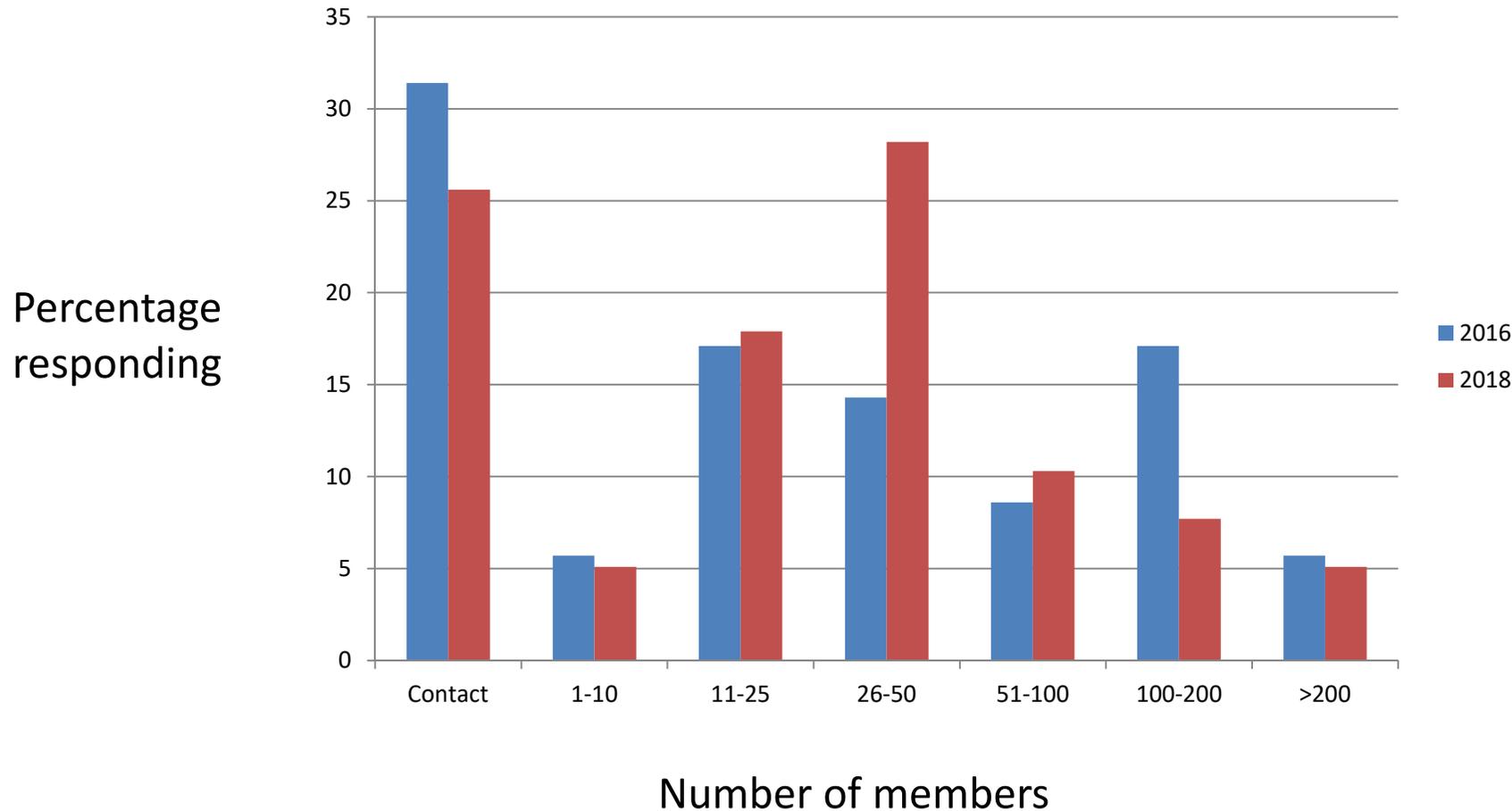
Percentage responding



**ARG UK**

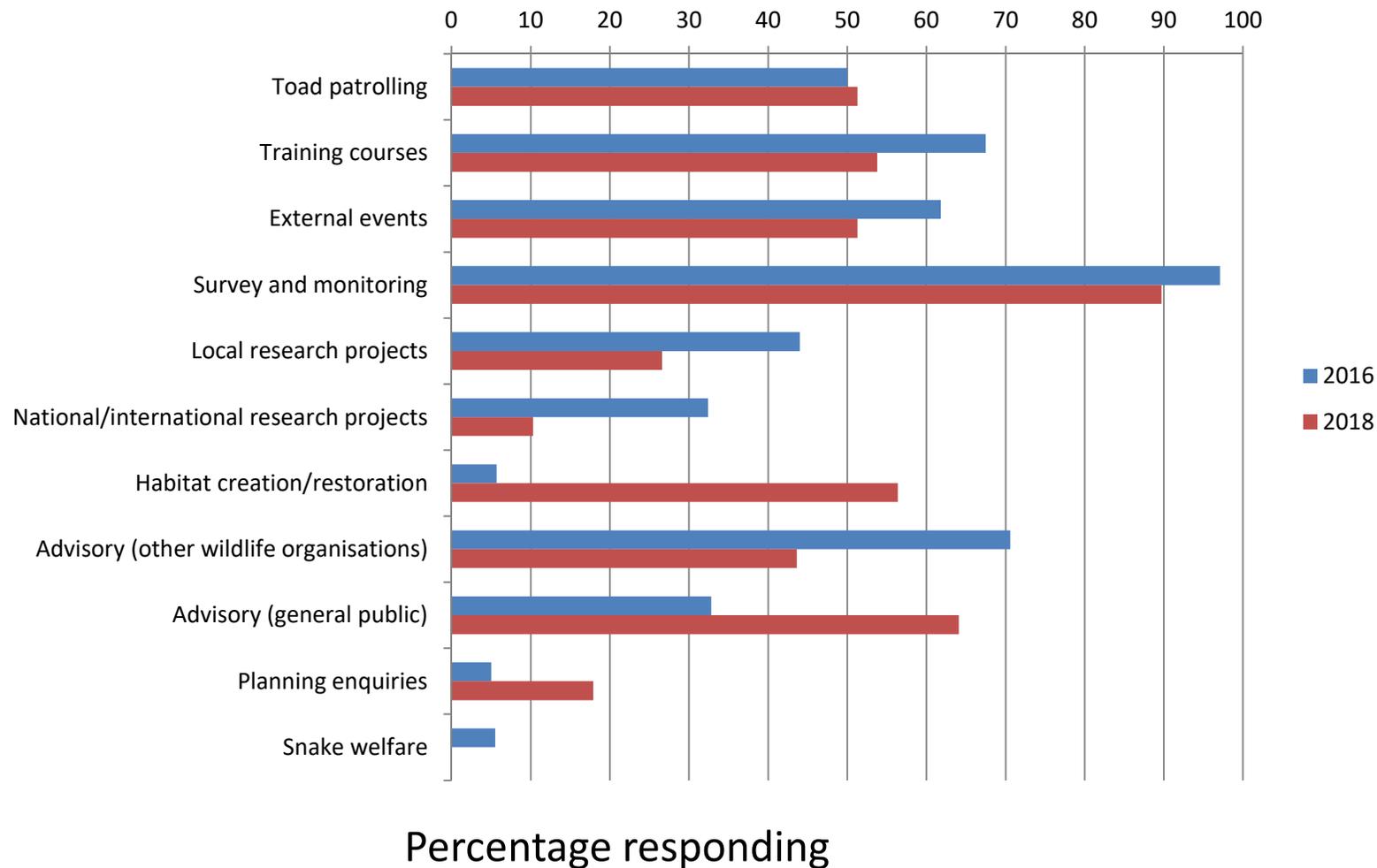
# How many members does your ARG have in total

2016 = 36 responses  
2018 = 39 responses



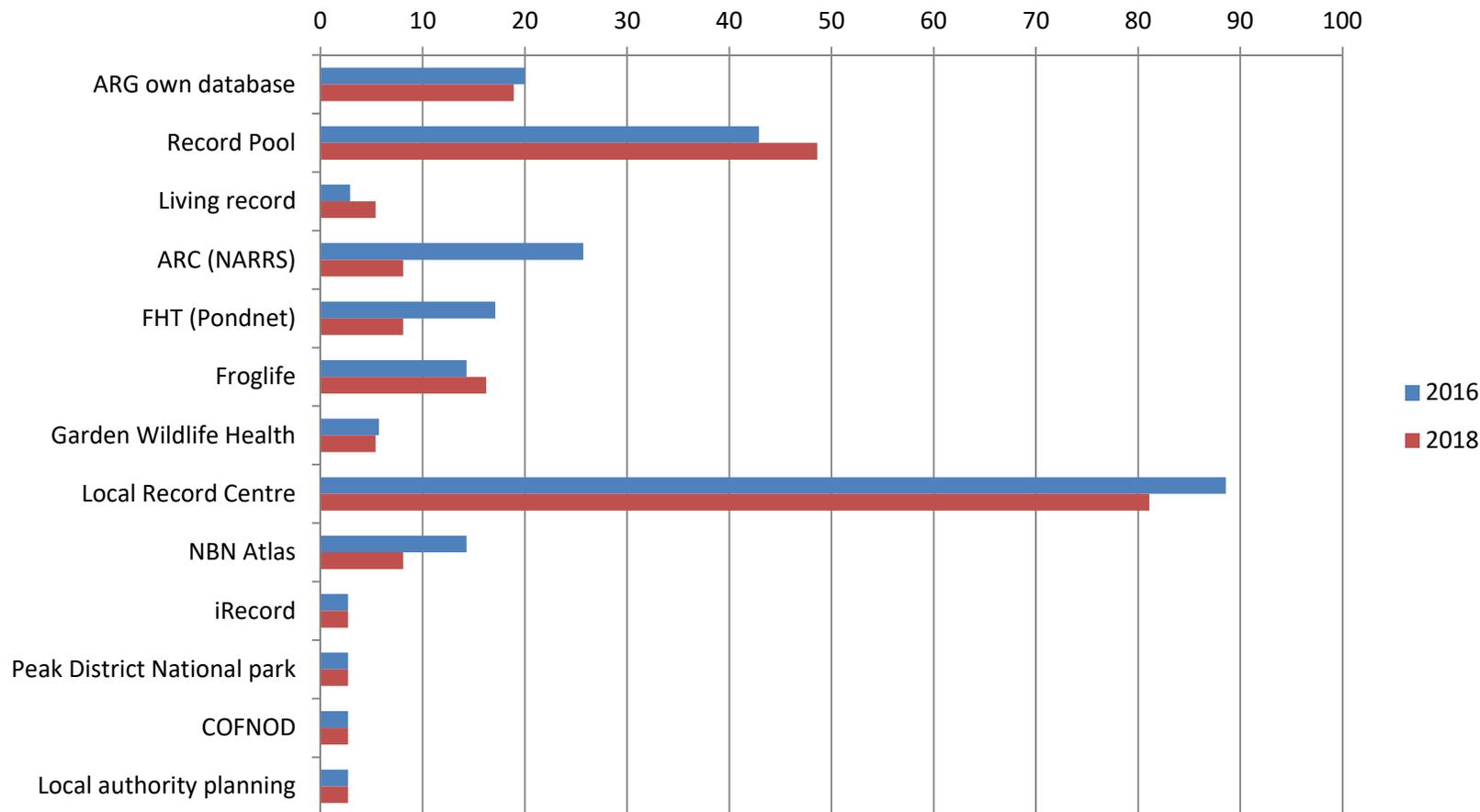
# In the past year what activities has your ARG taken part in

2016 = 36 responses  
2018 = 39 responses



# Where do you send your record data (tick all that apply)

2016 = 36 responses  
2018 = 39 responses



Percentage responding



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# Welcome to the Record Pool

The Record Pool collects data on herpetofauna (reptiles and amphibians) in the UK and to makes it available, locally and nationally, for conservation purposes.



36 Species

118 Counties

5,064 Recorders

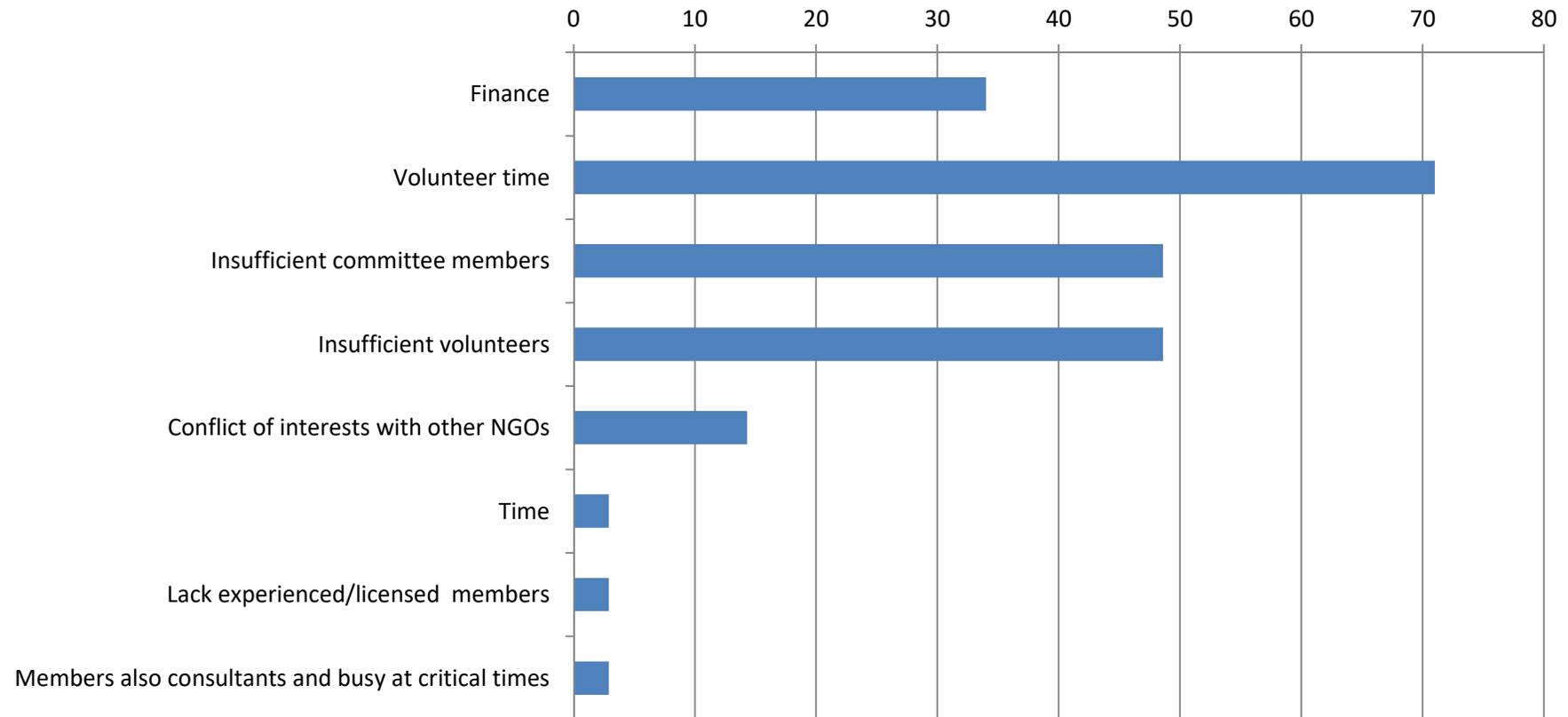
13,176 Submissions

25,976 Records



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# What are the major constraints to your ARG



Percentage responding



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# What can ARG UK do to help support your ARG better

- Provide a mechanism for species licensing for members
- We can find lots of willing volunteers to do the exciting stuff such as surveys, but nobody wants to contribute to the admin involved in running the group or organising the activities. Unless you can help with this, I don't think there is anything ARG UK could do further at the moment!
- You're great! We're very happy to be part of the family and I don't think there's much more you could do
- More regional events which might be a little cheaper to attend. We have many members who would like to attend the larger events but are unable to due to cost. Regional events may also encourage cohesion between ARGs.
- We need to find ways of getting people out surveying and submitting results without it all falling to me to organise. This is true of group activities too.
- Hosting ARG publications
- Anything that would encourage volunteers to take more of a lead role in organising events and activities.
- Can ARG source some funding to help with training?
- More updates on projects on a wider scale that require volunteers



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# ARG UK- strategy for 2019

- To continue to make a significant impact on conserving all native species of amphibian and reptile in the British Isles.
- To continue to support and develop the network of county-based independent volunteer amphibian and reptile groups (ARGs) across the UK.
- To work towards greater inclusivity and diversity, by welcoming and encouraging people from a broader range of backgrounds, to become involved in conserving amphibians and reptiles in the UK.
- To encourage the wider public to be more aware of, and sensitive to, the ecological needs and conservation of amphibians and reptiles in the UK.



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# ARG UK- strategy for 2019

We will achieve this by:

- Supporting the ARGs by phone, through visits and by email support. To help new ARGs set up, and revitalise those that are struggling. Encouraging mentoring with neighbouring ARGs.
- Up-dating and upgrading IT, membership and survey support, including: ARG WEB, Record Pool, ARG UK web-site, ARG Groups mini websites, social media.
- Maintaining and promoting existing programmes including land manager training, 'What's in your Pond?' (NI/HSI) and collaboration with MoJ.
- Expanding 'Adders are Amazing!' to other ARGs through an online resource pack, and workshops/training sessions.
- More support for ARG regional meetings – including 'Vanishing Viper 2019', (June 8-9 with University of Bangor Herp Soc).
- Working with other NGOs on national or specialist projects e.g. ARC Trust on Snakes in the Heather and Dragonscapes in Wales, HSI in Northern Ireland, Froglife on Toads on Roads.



**ARG UK**

# A big 'Thank You' to all our generous sponsors without whom, this would not be possible!



# Thank you – and finally



Farewell to a  
dear friend and  
colleague –  
Archie Lang



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