



Doncaster
Council

Doncaster Local Records Centre

Annual Report for year 1/4/2018 to 31/3/2019

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1.0 Summary

This Annual Report focuses on the main issues and activities with which the Doncaster Local Records Centre (DLRC) has been involved during the period 01/04/2018 to 31/03/2019. This Annual Report will be included in the DLRC webpages. Previous Annual Reports are also available to view in the same location.

Summary of key points:

- The Doncaster Local Records Centre responded to 110 enquiries for biodiversity information. Quotations were supplied within 5 working days of receipt of enquiry;
- The majority of enquiries came from commercial organisations. The remaining requests were submitted by DMBC, public bodies, members of public and education establishments;
- DLRC generated an income of £17150 including VAT, that is £2125 less than the year 2016/17;
- Data input for this financial year included 28200 species records making a total of 471000 records held in the database;
- 44 sites were surveyed as a part of 2018 Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) resurvey programme. The data input comprised 4714 records, mainly of botany.

Summary of key activities:

- Preparation for the Local Wildlife Sites resurvey programme for the forthcoming 2019 survey in conjunction with the Biodiversity Officer;
- Yorkshire Water – data supplied in response to terms of SLA;
- Data input to database in response to records received;
- Data supply to partners as records become available;
- Data supply to clients in response to data search enquiries.

2.0 Staffing Complement

Doncaster Local Records Centre (DLRC) forms part of a wider network of Local Records Centres in the UK. The Centre's main role is to collect, manage and share information about wildlife and habitats within the Doncaster Metropolitan Borough administrative area to the benefit of biodiversity. The verified and validated biological records held in our database are provided as part of a service on a not-for-profit basis to a range of recipients including decision-makers, environmental consultants, researchers, educational establishments and members of the public.

DLRC operates on a 3 days-per-week basis and currently has one permanent staff member. R Marsh (Biological Records Officer) maintains the database, deals with data enquiries and the daily business of DLRC, and assists with biological recording aspects of the work carried out by members of Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council's Natural Environment team. Our LRC Manager is Jane Stimpson who oversees the LRC's activities and controls the budget, in addition to her other duties.

The table below shows other members of the Planning Team, within the Built and Natural Environment Team, who contribute to DLRC as part of their role.

Position	Staff	Main tasks
DLRC Manager	Jane Stimpson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall LRC manager • Budget holder/finance manager
Biological Records Officer	Bob Marsh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data requests • Species data – collation and validation/verification • Habitat data – validation • Database management • Day-to-day finance matters
Biodiversity Officer	Melissa Massarella	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LWS survey programme organiser
Principal Officer – Local Plans/Environment	Donna Halliday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase I habitat mapping • Advice to DLRC on GIS matters

Table 1: Planning Team within the Built and Natural Environment Team directly involved in the work of DLRC

3.0 Steering Group Membership

DLRC direction and work are guided and scrutinised by the Steering Group which meets annually and comprises 14 members. Table 2 includes the full list of members at 31 March 2018. During 2018/19 there have been two Group Membership changes, Carolyn Dalton has left the Museum Service and has been replaced by Laura Trinogga, and Mark Wills has replaced Simon Pickles as the NEYEDC representative.

Table 2: List of Steering Group members

Name	Position/Representing
Laura Trinogga	Doncaster Museum
Colin Howes	Independent member
Derek Whiteley	Sorby Natural History Society
Helen Kirk	Thorne and Hatfield Moors Conservation Forum
Helen McCluskie	Principal Planning Officer
Jane Stimpson	DMBC Planning Officer/LRC Manager/budget holder
Louise Hill	Doncaster Naturalists' Society
Bob Marsh	DMBC Biological Records Officer
Melissa Massarella	DMBC Biodiversity Officer
Phillip Whelpdale	Yorkshire Wildlife Trust
Pip Seccombe	Doncaster Naturalists Society
Mark Wills	Yorkshire and Humber Environmental Data Network
Tim Kohler	Natural England

4.0 Data handling

DLRC holds three main types of information - species records, habitat information and designated site information. The oldest records date back well over 200 years. The Recorder 6 database now holds 471,000 species records from nearly 11,000 locations across the Borough.

4.1 Records received

As can be seen from the chart below, the number of records imported into our database has fluctuated widely over the last 10 years (see Figure 1), depending on the volume of records received from contributors and the time available to the Biological Records Officer for computerising historical data from card index and document sources.

The data cover a wide range of taxa, with birds, flowering plants and insects accounting for 94% of the records (see Figure 2). Other taxonomic groups represented are bony fish, harvestmen, mosses, lichens, millipedes, stoneworts, crustaceans, spiders, acarines, horsetails, mollusks, conifers, reptiles, amphibians, ferns and fungi.

Figure 1: Number of records entered annually to DLRC database since 2009

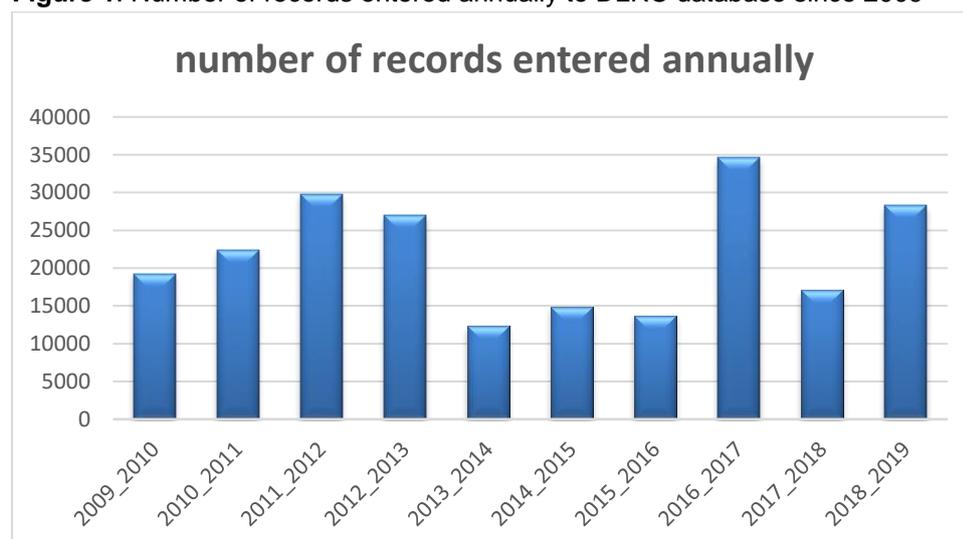
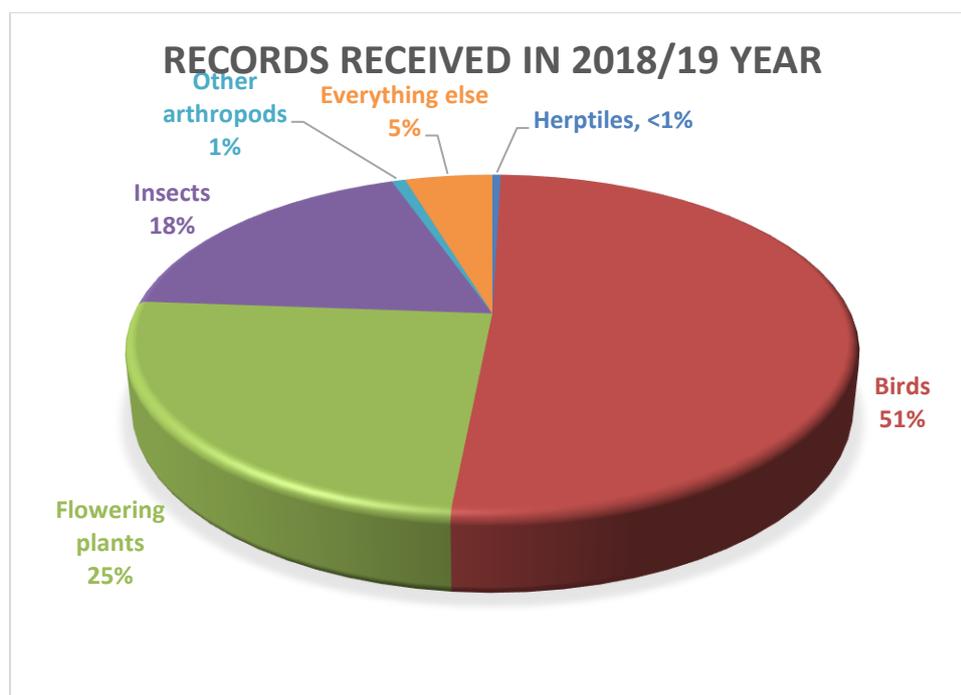


Figure 2: Data input by taxonomic group between 01/04/2018 and 31/03/2019

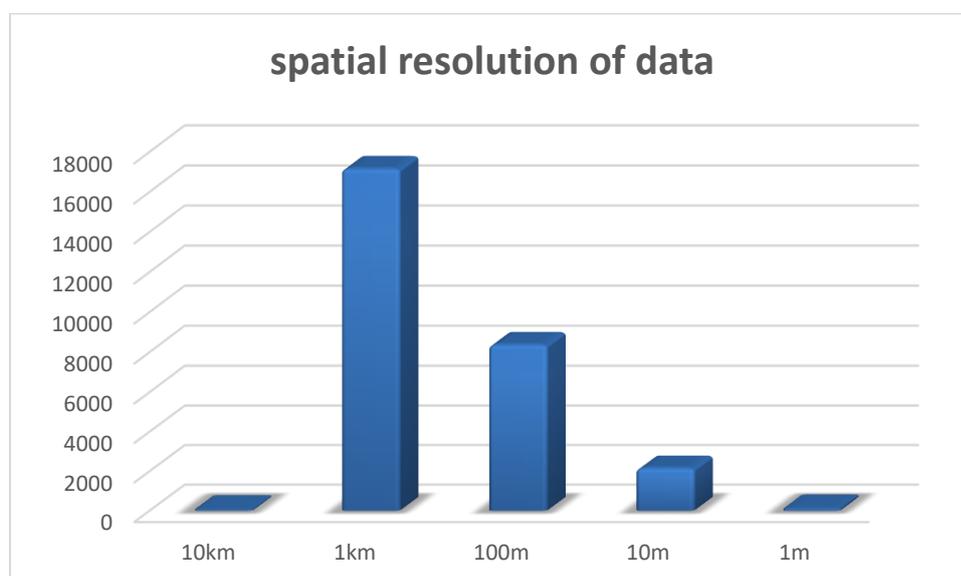


4.2 Record precision

Figure 3 below shows a summary of the precision of records received and entered in the database in the year 2018/2019. The majority of records are at either 1km or 100m precision, with the highest figure for 1km records, a disappointing reversal on last year's results (see the 2017/18 Report).

DLRC aims to increase the proportion of records with a spatial accuracy of 100m or greater by encouraging recorders to include such resolutions in their data.

Figure 3: The spatial resolution of data entered in the database between 01/04/2018 and 31/03/2019



4.3 Database maintenance

The Recorder 6 software was upgraded to the most recent version 6.28.0 in January 2018. During 2018/19 further dictionary updates have been applied to the database which is presently in the latest version 4K. All details of past and latest software and dictionary upgrades/updates may be found on the Recorder 6 website at <http://recorder6.info/>

It will be appreciated that the work we do at DLRC depends completely on the Recorder 6 database. Recently it was announced by JNCC, the prime mover behind the Recorder project, that funding for future development would be withdrawn from 2018. In short, from April 2019 the Recorder 6 working group will be taking forward the notion of R6 users needing to subscribe to obtain a licence to receive the updates to the software and dictionaries, a service that was funded by JNCC until March 2018, and which has been provided in the interim by the R6 Consortium. The Consortium will continue to undertake the development work to keep R6 up to date, but will also recruit further expertise to expand the pool of developers and to develop further the software to ensure it is 'future-proof'. Based on the 'Willingness to pay' question in the recent R6 users consultation organised by ALERC the licence has been set at £25 per year for individuals, and £250 for organisations. This figure should be considered in the light of the fact that support to users of Recorder in its several forms has always been at nil cost to those users (apart from the initial £30 software charge). Full details of the proposed Recorder 6 future support arrangements may be found at <https://nbn.org.uk/news/recorder-6-maintenance-and-development-plan/> As at 31/3/2019 the machinery to implement the licence charging was not yet in place. Members will be informed when up-to-date information becomes available.

5.0 Data providers

Data providers between 01/04/2018 and 31/03/2019 were

AECOM
BCM Environmental
BL Ecology
Doncaster Naturalists' Society – collectively and as individual members
Haycock and Jay Associates
Inspired Ecology Limited
North and East Yorkshire Ecological Data Centre
Scarborough Nixon Associates
Sorby Natural History Society
Yorkshire Naturalists' Union
Yorkshire Wildlife Trust
Dr. Ian Wallace – national Trichoptera recorder
Richard Wilson Ecology

6.0 Data users

The following companies, consultancies and organisations requested our services during the period (see Table 3):

Table 3. List of data users during year ended 31/3/2019

Organisation/Company
Access Ecology Limited.
ADAS
AECOM
Applied Ecological Services Limited
Arbtech Consulting Limited
ARUP
Astute Ecology
Bagshaw Ecology
Bangor University
Brindle and Green Limited
Brooks Ecological Limited
BWB Consulting Limited
CBE Consulting
Crestwood Environmental Limited
DMBC internal
Ecus
Environment Agency
Enzygo
Estrada Ecology Limited
FPCR Environment & Design Limited
Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust
Haycock and Jay Associates
Jacobs
JBA Consulting
JCA Limited
Leigh Ecology Limited
Middlemarch Environmental Limited
Middleton Bell Ecology
Mott MacDonald
Natural England
Naturally Wild Consultants
NatureSpace Partnership Limited
Quants Environmental Limited
RDF Ecology Limited
Red Kite Network Limited
Ridgeway Ecology Limited
RSK

Scarborough Nixon Associates
SLR Consulting
Smeeden Foreman Limited
South Yorkshire Bat Group
The Environment Partnership
Wardell Armstrong LLP
Waterman Infrastructure & Environment Limited.
Weddle Landscape Design
Whitcher Wildlife
Wood Environment & Infrastructure Solutions UK Limited
WSP
WYG
Yorkshire and Humber Ecological Data Trust
Yorkshire Wildlife Trust

The total number of requests received during the period 1/4/2017 to 31/3/2018 was 110. Quotes were provided for 92 requests, 87 of these generating income. Three requests fell outside the DMBC admin/recording area and the enquirer was advised to contact the relevant neighbouring LRC. Ecological consultancies constituted the largest user group by number of data search requests during the period. 43 different consultancies requested between 1 and 9 individual data searches. The remaining requests came from within DMBC, from public bodies, higher education establishments/students and researchers. There were no requests from members of the public.

The average time for providing a quotation for data provision was within 5 days of the initial enquiry.

Doncaster Naturalists' Society continues to operate a log of information requests from members of the public. Any such requests come in via the Museum enquiry desk and any resulting biological records are forwarded to the LRC.

6.1 Data transfer agreements/Service Level Agreements

We continue to operate our data exchange agreements with our partner organisations Doncaster Naturalists' Society, Yorkshire Naturalists' Union, Botanical Society of the British Isles (BSBI) and Yorkshire Wildlife Trust.

We have Service Level Agreements with HS2 and Yorkshire Water. A further update of data will be sent to HS2 during the 2019/20 financial year as part of the SLA with that organisation. Data transfer to Yorkshire Water is being coordinated by Yorkshire & Humber Ecological Data Trust (YHEDT). Data were sent to YW in April and October 2018, revised datasets being forwarded to YW on a biannual basis.

7.0 LWS resurvey programme

The Local Wildlife Site resurvey programme constitutes an important part of maintaining accurate and up-to-date records of Doncaster's non-statutory sites. The programme has been run annually since 2009. 304 Local Sites have now been surveyed by suitably qualified surveyors since the programme began in 2009, and 30 will be surveyed in the spring and summer of 2019.

In 2018 the survey was carried out by MRB Ecology and Environment and comprehensive lists of plants together with habitat maps, target notes and photographic evidence were provided for each site re-surveyed. For some sites, records of other taxonomic groups were also provided as part of this survey. From April to September 44 Local Sites were resurveyed. Within Recorder 6 and for data input purposes Local Wildlife Sites were split into sub-sites depending on habitat type using standard Phase 1 nomenclature.

8.0 Phase 1 habitat mapping

Phase 1 Habitat Maps of Local Sites based on DMBC records and previous field surveys are prepared and then annotated by the surveyors as a part of the LWS resurvey programme. Color-coded paper maps thus prepared in the field are then digitised by DMBC staff in ArcGIS. Habitats within LWSs are thus clearly mapped and areas quantified.

The aim of preparing Phase 1 Habitat Maps is to provide a record of the vegetation and wildlife habitat over a specific area. They provide an objective basis for a determination about a change of the boundary or designation status. Maps also give a clearly defined baseline for monitoring change and support the conservation of threatened habitats and species.

9.0 Income

The present charging structure for data enquiries has been in place since April 2017 and continues to form the basis of the LRC's income. The 2018/19 income of £17150 including VAT has been generated from partly from 87 of 110 requests, and partly from income generated by the data supply arrangement with YW. This is a decrease of £2125 from 2017/2018 period. Part of this income is used to offset the cost of the annual LWS resurvey programme.

From 1/4/2019 fees charged by DLRC for data searches increased by an average 5.2%. A schedule of the new 2019/20 rates implementing these increases now appears in DLRC's webpages from 1/4/2019.

During this reporting period, biodiversity data have been provided to North and East Yorkshire Ecological Data Centre (NEYEDC) which coordinates data provision to Yorkshire Water on behalf of the Yorkshire LRCs. This has generated income according to the terms of the Service Level Agreement.

10.0 Expenditure

Our annual subscription to the Association of Local Environmental Records Centres (ALERC) is now £450 – to put this figure into context this is the equivalent to the income generated by two average data search requests. For this membership we receive recognition that we are an effective and efficient organisation within the LRC community and that we operate to standard guidelines. We also have access to a knowledge base and Forum which enable us when necessary to seek advice on the operation of our LRC and to obtain information and advice on new legislation and software practices as these become available, and we have access to contacts with other LRCs.

There were no other items of direct expenditure during this reporting period.

11.0 LERC cross-boundary data searches.

Yorkshire LRCs are currently engaged in setting up procedures and documentation to enable any of our group of LRCs to conduct cross-boundary data searches. This will offer clients an enhanced service comprising a quicker and cheaper data search where the target area crosses the boundary of a neighbouring LRC. This should benefit the client in that a single search may be commissioned rather than two or more, offering better-perceived value for money. DLRC and NEYEDC now have a working arrangement. Data Exchange and OS End User Licence agreements were signed in March 2019. DLRC is currently formulating a similar agreement with Rotherham LRC.

12.0 DLRC Activities

- In 2019 Local Wildlife Sites resurvey programme will be carried out and it will target about Local Sites;
- We shall continue to build on relationships with recorders and recording groups;
- In October 2018 two DLRC reps attended the ALERC Conference in Birmingham where a range of issues concerning UK-wide LRCs was discussed

13.0 YHEDN

YHEDN (Yorkshire and Humberside Ecological Data Network) is a network encompassing all the regional LRCs – regular (currently biannual) meetings of the Yorkshire LRCs are being hosted by this network wherein current topics affecting the LRCs of Doncaster, Rotherham, Sheffield, West Yorkshire Ecology and NEYEDC are discussed. Meetings during 2018/19 were held in Sheffield and Rotherham. The next meeting will be held at Doncaster in Civic Office in June 2019.

14.0 ALERC

Currently, DLRC is an accredited LRC within ALERC. Our accreditation is due for its 5-year reassessment in 2020. In the year 2019/2020 DLRC will be reviewing its documentation and procedures with a view to this reassessment.

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R Marsh

Biological Records Officer - Doncaster Local Records Centre

16 May 2019