

Doncaster Local Records Centre

Annual Report 2016/2017

April 2017

Table of Contents

1. Summary	3
2. Staffing compliment	4
3. Steering Group members.....	4
4. Data handling	5
4.1 Number of records	5
4.2 Records precision	6
4.3. Records distribution	7
4.4. Database maintenance	7
5. Data providers	7
6. LWS resurvey programme	9
7. Phase 1 Habitat Mapping.....	9
8. Data users	10
9. Income.....	10
10. Avenue for the future	10
List of Figures	12
List of Tables	12

1. 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 01/04/2016 to 31/03/2017. The Annual Report can be also found on the DLRC webpage.

Summary of key points:

- The Doncaster Local Records Centre responded to 97 enquiries for biodiversity information. The quotation has been provided within 3 working days.
- 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 the income of £11,604, that is £404 more than year before.
- Data input for this financial year included 34,635 species records bringing it to total of 426,338 records held in the database.
- 27 sites surveyed as a part of 2016 Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) resurvey programme. The data input was 5102 records.

Summary of key activities:

- Preparation for the Local Wildlife Sites resurvey programme for 2016 in conjunction with Biodiversity Officer.
- Preparation of new Payment Schedule for biological requests that will be implemented from 01/04/2017.

2. Staffing compliment

Doncaster Local Records Centre 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 benefit biodiversity. The verified and validated biological records held in our database are provided on a not-for-profit basis to a range of audiences including decision-makers, researchers and members of the public.

The DLRC operates 3 days per week and currently has one permanent staff member. Marta Podsiad (Biological Records Officer) maintains the database, deals with data enquiries and the business of the LRC, and assists with biological recording aspects of the work carried out by members of Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council's Planning section. Marta took over from Bob Marsh in August 2016. Bob was working for DLRC for a number of years and his hard work and commitment to the development of the records centre has been invaluable.

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

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

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

DLRC staff improved technical skills in the job by taking 2-day Recorder 6 software training with Mark Wills and Clare Langrick from The North & East Yorkshire Ecological Data Centre (NEYEDC). Marta attended ALERC (Association of Local Environmental Records Centres) Conference in Birmingham in October, highlighting the forthcoming changes in biodiversity data recording in the UK. In December Doncaster Council hosted Yorkshire and Humber Ecological Data Network annual meeting of constituent Local Environmental Records Centres. The representatives of Doncaster LRC, Sheffield BRC, Barnsley BRC, Rotherham BRC, West Yorkshire Ecology and ALERC discussed during this meeting current issues and sets out the next steps for the network.

3. Steering Group members

DLRC direction and work are guided and scrutinised by the Steering Group which meets annually. Table 2 includes the full list of members. In 2016 the meeting took place on 07th of April during which the Steering Group has heard updates from staff representatives and discussed various issues including the budget for the next financial year, Data Validation/Verification Policy, Data exchange license and ALERC accreditation awarded to DLRC in October 2015.

Table 2: List of Steering Group members

Name	Position
Carolyn Dalton	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
Ken Dorning	Sheffield Area Geology Trust/Sorby Natural History Society
Louise Hill	Doncaster Naturalists' Society
Marta Podsiad	DMBC Biological Records Officer
Melissa Massarella	DMBC Biodiversity Officer
Phillip Whelpdale	Yorkshire Wildlife Trust
Pip Seccombe	Doncaster Naturalists Society
Simon Pickles	Yorkshire and Humber Environmental Data Network
Tim Kohler	Natural England

4. Data handling

DLRC holds three main types of information i.e. species records, habitat information and designated site information. The oldest record dates back well over 200 years.

4.1. Number of records

As can be seen from the chart below, the number of records imported into our database fluctuates widely over the last 10 years (Figure 1). That depends on the work that took place and the datasets we have received. The number of records steady increased from 9018 in 2007/2008 to 29,800 in 2011/2012. 2012/2013 recorded slight decline in comparison to previous year. For three consecutive years starting in 2013/2014 the number of records holds at a similar level with the average, of around 13,600 per year. In the 2016/2017 recording period, a significant rise has been experienced. 34,635 individual records have been added to the database bringing the total to 426,338. Nearly 64% of the records were submitted by David Franklin. His survey included sightings of 118 species of birds recorded in 16 different locations.

The entered data covers a wide range of taxa, with birds, flowering plants and insects accounting for over 98% of the records (Figure 2). The other taxonomic groups are represented by bony fish, harvestman, moss, lichen, millipede, stonewort, crustacean, spider, acarine, horsetail, mollusc, conifer, reptile, amphibian, fern and fungus. Over two-thirds of the records are of species having designation status.

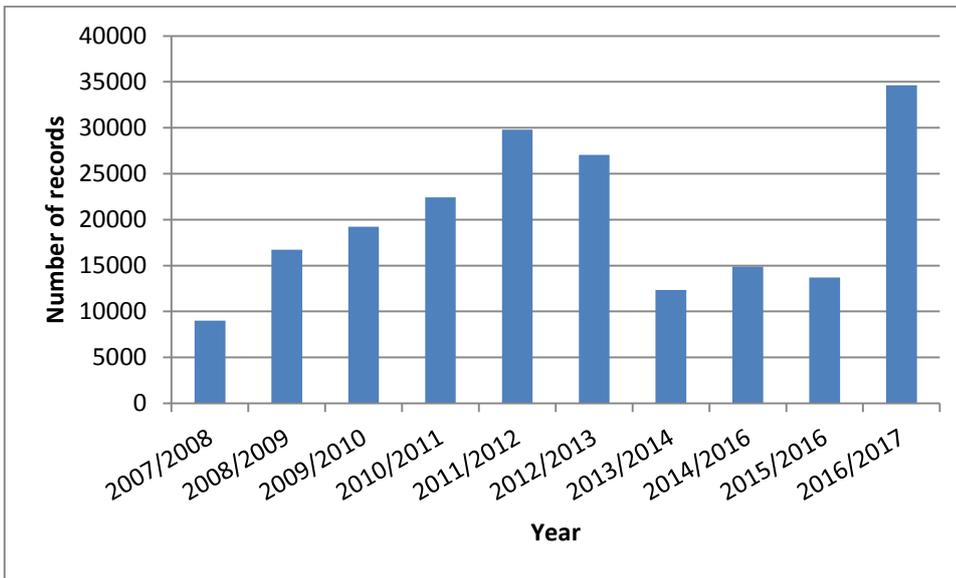


Figure 1: Number of records entered annually into DLRC database since 2007

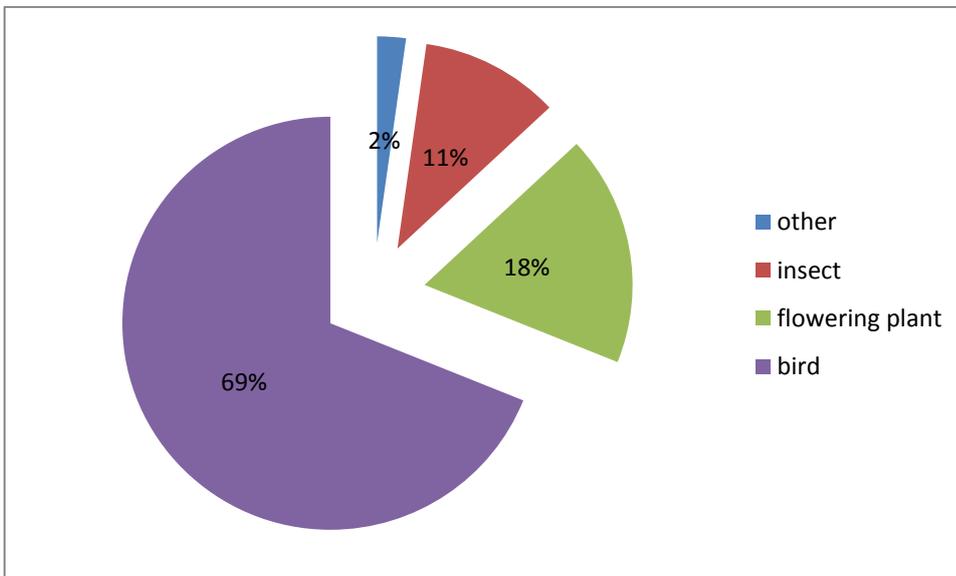


Figure 2: Data input by taxonomic group between 01/04/2016 and 31/03/2017

4.2. Records precision

Figure 3 below shows a summary of the precision of records entered in the database in 2016/2017. The majority of records are at either 1km or 100m precision, with the highest figure for 1km records.

We have observed that over the time the biological data have been recorded with greater spatial precision. DLRC aims to increase the proportion of records with a spatial accuracy of 100m or greater to make the data more accurate and useful for users.

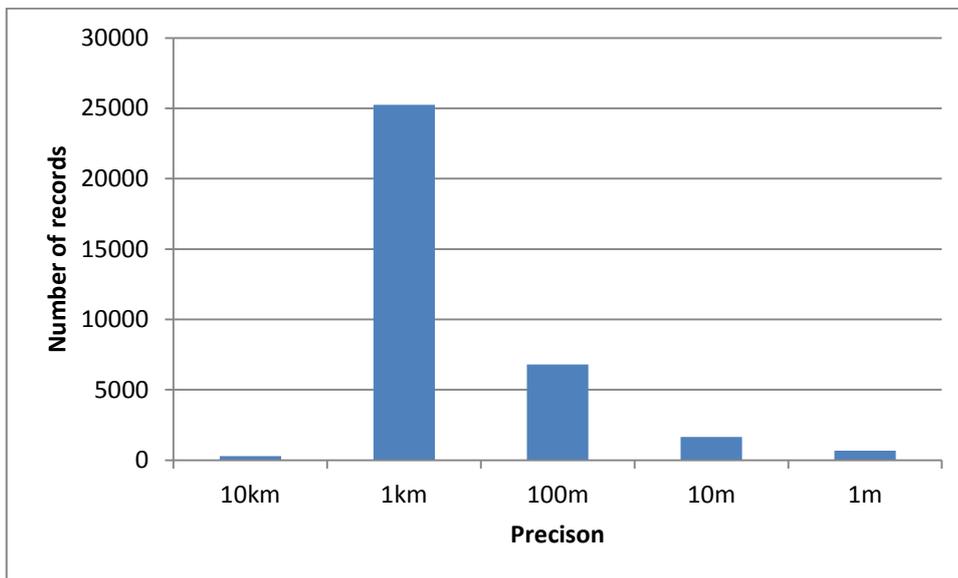


Figure 3: The spatial resolution of the data entered in the database between 01/04/2016 and 31/03/2017

4.3. Records distribution

Figure 4 shows the location and frequency of observations in 2016/2017. For use within the context of this report the data has been presented in a spatial resolution of a 2km grid square. The main hotspot is situated in the north in the proximity to Norton, Norton Common, Campsall and Askern. These records have been submitted by David Franklin. Other areas with the highest density of records are associated with the areas of LWSs resurveyed this year. Thorpe Marsh Nature Reserve and Hatfield Lindholme Hall were also extensively surveyed by Yorkshire Wildlife Trust and Lindholme Old Moor Management Group respectively.

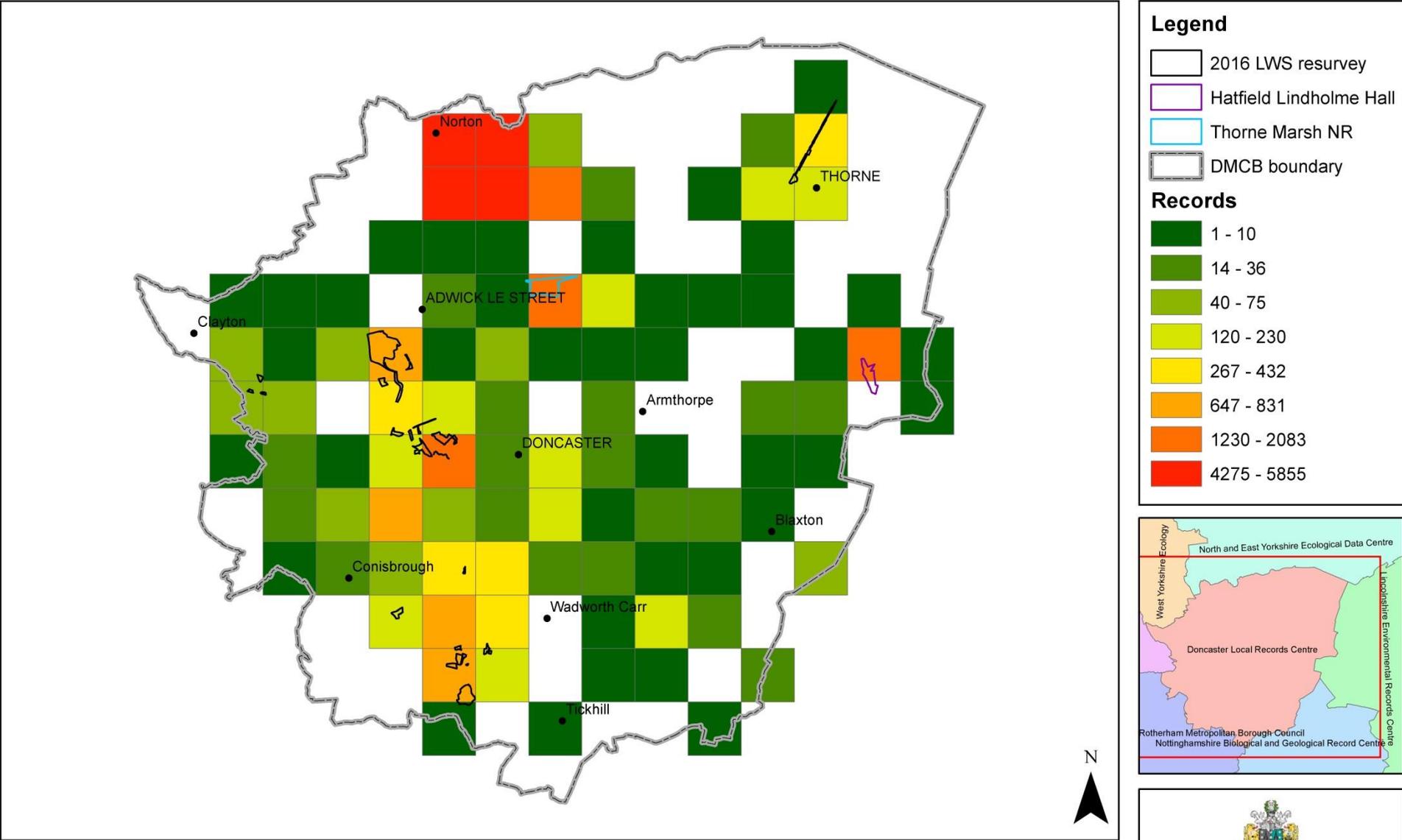
4.4. Database maintenance

The Recorder 6 software was upgraded to version 6.26 in February 2016. Further dictionary updates have been applied to the database culminating in version 0000003T. All details of past and latest software and dictionary upgrades/updates may be found on the Recorder 6 website at <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/recorder>. A great amount of support has been received from the R6 support team, especially Michael Weideli and NBN Forum users.

5. Data providers

The majority of data (78.13%) is coming from David Franklin and the resurvey of Local Wildlife Sites (LWS). In addition to that, the data was provided by local conservation groups and the county recorders. The recording community within Doncaster boundary is well represented by the Doncaster Naturalists' Society. In the reporting period, we received a small number of records from ecological consultancies either in the form of reports or of individual biological records. We would like to thank all the organisations listed below that shared the data with us.

Figure 4: Distribution of the records entered between 01/04/2016 and 31/03/2017



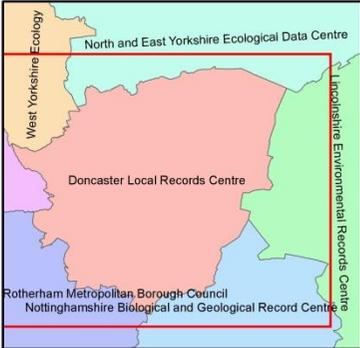
(c) Crown copyright. License Number 100019782. 2016
 (c) Copyright GeoInformation Group 1997, 2002, 2005 and 2007

Completed by:
 Marta Podsiad

Map Reference:
 Doncaster Local Records Centre

Date produced:
 03/04/2017

Scale:
 1:191,074



Data providers between 01/04/2016 and 31/03/2017 (with apologies for any omissions):

- AECOM
 - Barn Hill Ecology
 - British Dragonfly Society Yorkshire Branch
 - DMBC
 - Doncaster Naturalists' Society
 - Ecus Ltd
 - Hazelwood Conservation
 - International Otter Survival Fund
 - JCA Ltd
 - Old Moor Management Group
 - Quants Environmental
 - Ramboll Environ
 - Scarborough Nixon Associates Ltd
 - South Yorkshire Bat Group
 - The Conservation Volunteers
 - Yorkshire Naturalists' Union
 - Yorkshire Wildlife Trust
 - Members of public including: Bob Marsh, David Franklin and Martin Nowacki.
- Names of other individual recorders are not given due to data protection.

6. LWS resurvey programme

Local Wildlife Site resurvey programme constitutes an important aspect of maintaining accurate and up-to-date records of Doncaster's non-statutory sites. It is run annually. Over 50% of Local Sites have been surveyed by suitably qualified surveyors since it has started in 2009.

In 2016 the survey was carried out by MRB Ecology and Environment and comprehensive lists of plants together with the habitat maps, targeted notes and photographic evidence have been provided for each site re-surveyed. For some sites, a list of animal sightings has also been attached. From April to September 27 Local Sites (25 LWS and 2 Candidate LWS) were resurveyed covering a total area of over 300ha. This constitutes nearly 9% of all sites located in Doncaster Council boundary. The surveyed sites were predominantly located in the west part with the exception of Thorne Railway Delves LWS situated in the east. This year resurveys provided 5102 records that were entered onto the DLRC's Recorder 6 database. Within Recorder 6, Local Wildlife Sites were split into sub-sites depending on habitat type using standard Phase 1 nomenclature.

7. Phase 1 Habitat Mapping

Phase 1 Habitat Maps of Local Sites are prepared by the surveyors as a part of LWS resurvey programme. Color-coded paper maps prepared in the field are then digitised by DMBC staff in ArcGIS. This results in habitats within LWS's to be 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.

8. Data users

During this reporting period DLRC received over 20% more requests than the year before. The number increased from 80 requests in 2015/2016 to 97 requests in 2016/2017. Quotations were provided for 80 requests, 16 requests were completed free of charge, 1 request was outside DMBC boundary. Ecological consultancies constitute the largest user group by number of data search requests (89.69%). 48 different consultancies requested between 1 and 13 individual data searches. The remaining requests came from DMBC, public bodies, higher education/students and members of the public.

The average turn-around time for providing a quotation for data was 3 days of the initial enquiry. This is comparable with last year result that was 5 days. One request has been excluded from this analysis, due to complex technical and legal nature of the data request.

The number of requests received monthly varied from 5 in December to 13 in August giving the average of 8 per month.

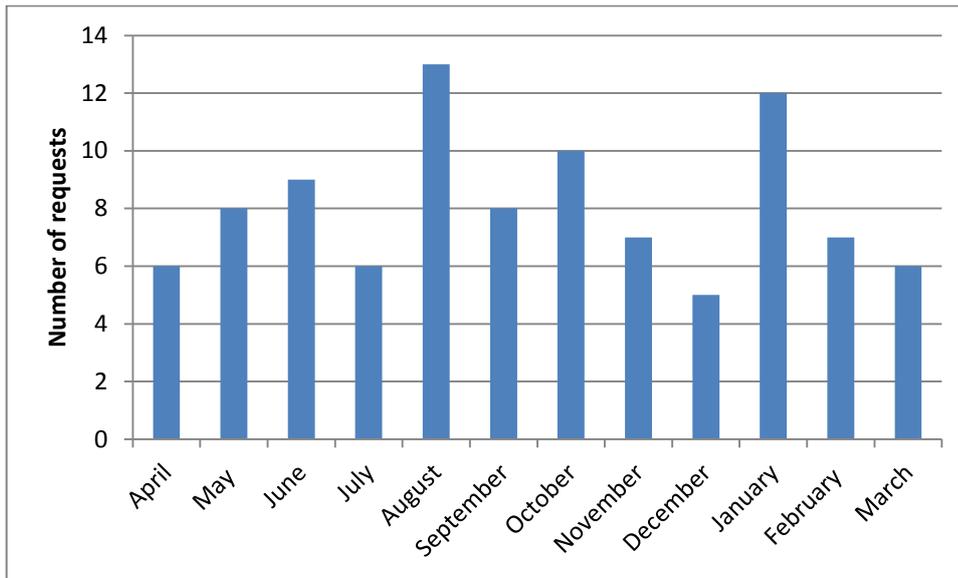


Figure 5: The monthly frequency of data requests between 01/04/2016 and 31/03/2017

9. Income

The current charging structure for data enquiries has been in place since April 2014 and continues to form the basis of the LRC's income. The income of £11,604 including VAT has been made from 59 requests. This is an increase of 3.61% from 2015/2016 period. It is intended that this income is made available to offset the cost of the 2017 LWS resurvey programme.

During this reporting period, biodiversity data has been provided to Yorkshire & Humber Ecological Data Network (YHEDN) which coordinates data provision to Yorkshire Water. In the financial year 2017/18 DLRC will receive £2000 for this service.

10. Avenue for the future

- From the 1st of April 2017, DLRC will implement new charging schedule for the biological data requests. The preparation for this change has started in September 2016 and has been approved by full Council in March 2017. Under this pricing structure, significant

changes have been introduced in terms of the presentation of data and the type of services.

- In 2017 Local Wildlife Sites resurvey programme will be carried out and it will target 31 Local Site covering over 360ha.
- In the coming period, DLRC is intended to increase the number of new records in the database by building relationships with recorders and recording groups and by extracting the information from planning applications that are submitted to DMBC.

List of Figures

Figure 1: Number of records held by DLRC since 2007	6
Figure 2: Data input by taxonomic group between 01/04/2016 and 31/03/2017	6
Figure 3: The spatial resolution of the data entered in the database between 01/04/2016 and 31/03/2017.....	7
Figure 4: Distribution of the records entered between 01/04/2016 and 31/03/2017	8
Figure 5: The frequency of data requests between 01/04/2016 and 31/03/2017	10

List of Tables

Table 1: Planning Team within the Built and Natural Environment Team directly involved in the work of DLRC	4
Table 2: List of Steering Group members.....	5