



Lincolnshire Environmental Records Centre

Annual Report 2019-20

June 2020

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NATURE PARTNERSHIP

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1. Introduction

The Lincolnshire Environmental Records Centre (LERC) is one delivery workstream within the Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership (GLNP). Other delivery workstreams within the GLNP are: coordinating the Nature Strategy, Geodiversity Strategy and Local Sites system. LERC is a streamlined Local Record Centre with core functions relating to data collation and provision. All the workstreams within the GLNP dovetail together and work closely but they are considered separate. As such wider functions such as Local Sites are not included within LERC functions or included in this report. For more information on the GLNP see www.glnp.org.uk

LERC formally became a Local Record Centre in October 2007, when the Lincolnshire Biodiversity Partnership (LBP - the predecessor organisation to the GLNP) was officially constituted; it operated informally before this time.

2. Aims and objectives

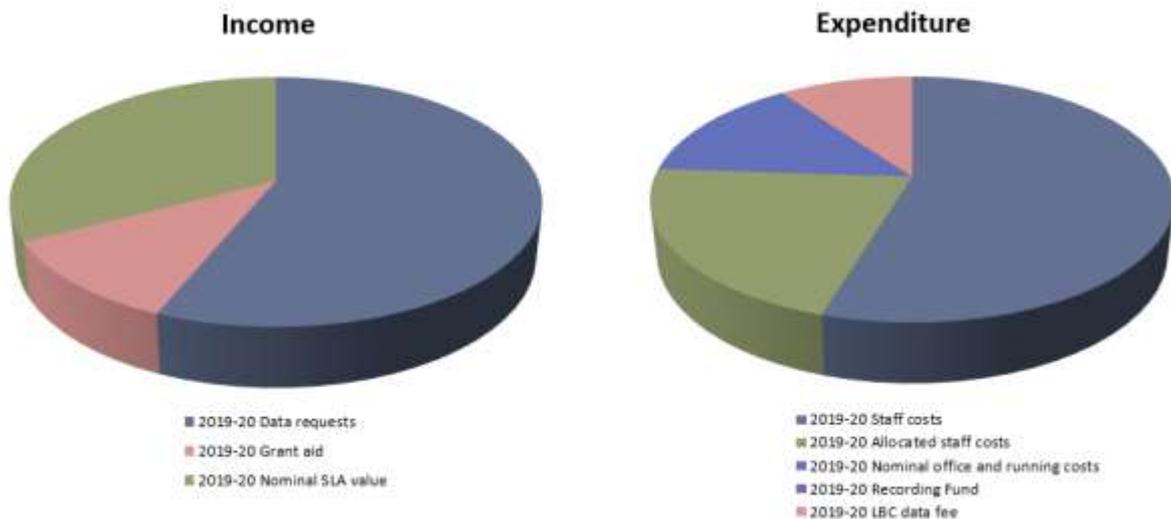
The vision for LERC is to be: *The trusted source of wildlife, habitat and geological information for Greater Lincolnshire*

The rest of this report breaks down this vision into various sections. Some sections of this report are required for ALERC accreditation reporting requirements.

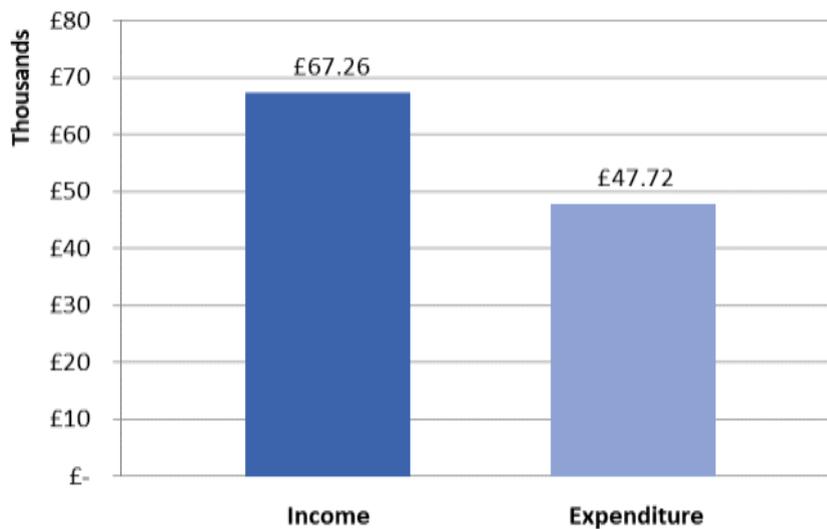
3. Income and expenditure

The GLNP accounts for the 2019-20 financial year are subject to approval by the Partners at the October 2020 Forum. The financial audit is yet to be concluded as it is conducted externally and organised by the GLNP hosting organisation, the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust (LWT). The provisional LERC proportioned finances are shown in the pie charts below.





Income is higher compared to the previous reporting period primarily due to an increase in income from data requests.



Expenditure is also marginally higher due to the estimated cost of LERC Search. Staff costs also form a significant proportion of expenditure and include the time contributions of other Team members as described in 4 below. To discount their contributions would under-represent expenditure but to include them in the direct staff costs would constitute double counting as there are separate funding streams.



4. Staff compliment

Other members of the Team within the GLNP contribute to LERC as part of their role. The contribution of these staff to LERC has been estimated and brings the averaged staff complement to **1.32 annual full time equivalents** according to the following breakdown:

- LERC: 1
- GLNP manager: 0.10
- Local Sites: 0.22

5. Relationships

5.1. Data users

Ecological consultants continue to be the largest user group by number of data search requests, accounting for 79% of the total requests received. Smaller proportions of requests come from directly from local authorities (12%) with the remainder from members of the public, students, charities and other organisations. No significant issues have been raised in this reporting period. The majority (99%) of data requests were fulfilled within five days of the initial enquiry, with all requests completed within 20 days in line with the Environmental Information Regulations.

A new method of accessing the data we hold, LERC Search, was launched in October 2018 with initial responses to the new system very positive. This year surveys were carried out to gain quantitative data on customer satisfaction.

5.2. Data providers

The majority of data is provided by the county recorders, LWT and Lincolnshire Bird Club (LBC). The recording community within Greater Lincolnshire is well represented by the Lincolnshire Naturalists' Union who were fundamental in setting up and supporting LERC.

Details of the current data exchange agreements with data providers are listed in Appendix 1.

5.3. Steering Group

LERC's direction and work is guided and scrutinised by the GLNP Steering Group which meets quarterly. Since the inception of the Partnership (the LBP then the GLNP) the Steering Group has been supportive of LERC and the work that it does. In this reporting period the Steering Group has heard updates from the Team and discussed various issues including LERC Search development.



The GLNP currently has 49 Partners, details of which can be found on the website at <http://glnp.org.uk/partnership/the-partners/>. The GLNP Team has good relationships with Partners and seeks to engage them further.

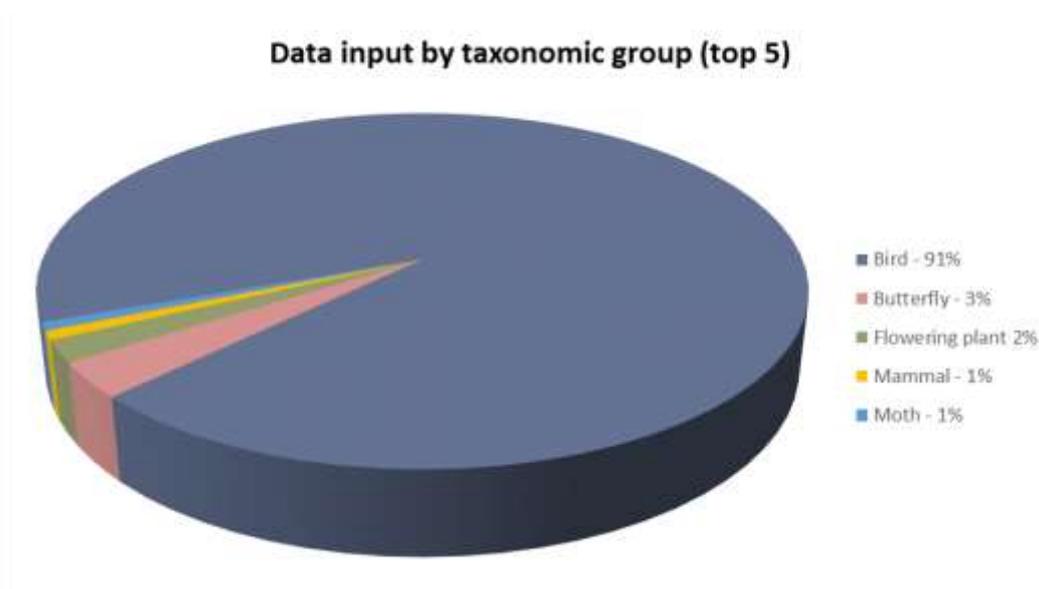
5.4. Hosting organisation

The LWT hosts LERC and the GLNP. The current agreement is that the GLNP will pay 8% of total costs as a fee to LWT for the facilities provided. These facilities include office space and IT equipment, as well as financial and HR services. In the 2019-20 financial year this fee is estimated at £10,336. The overall relationship with LWT is very positive.

6. Data overview

6.1. Summary of data input

In this period 2,480,192¹ individual records have been added to the database bringing the total to 10,980,212. This represents an actual increase of 17% and is primarily due to data provided by the Lincolnshire Bird Club.



6.2. Summary of data quality

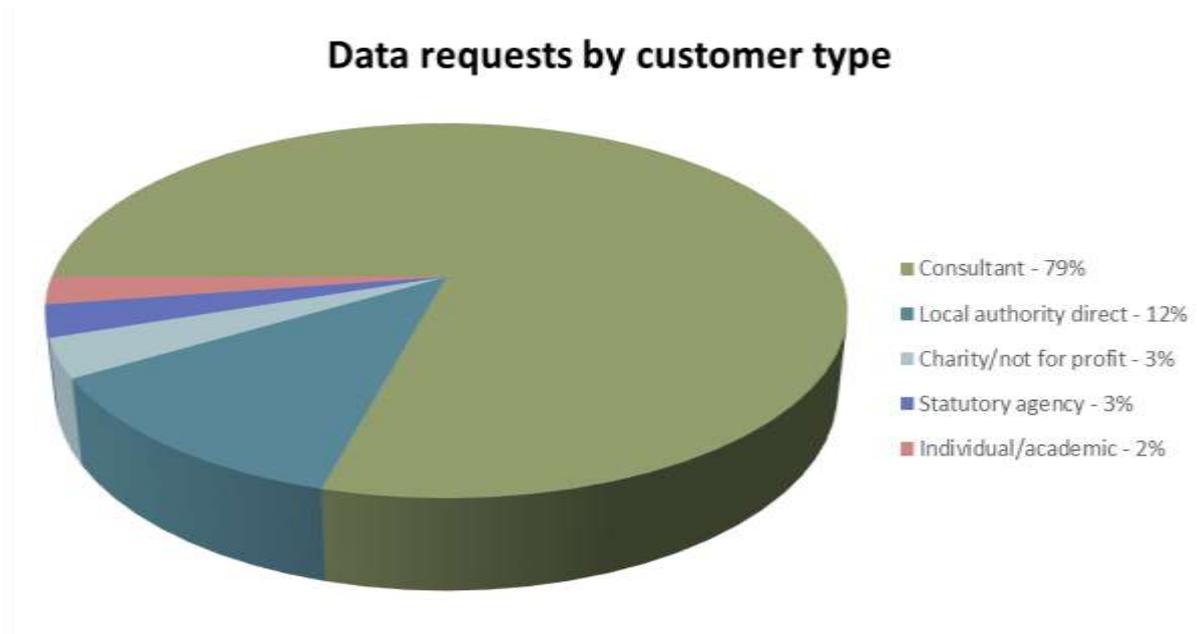
Verified data now makes up 26% of the records in the LERC database. This large drop in the percentage of verified data is due to the addition of the large BTO dataset which has yet to be formally verified. During the year 256,124 records were sent for verification.

¹ This figure includes re-imported data i.e. data that already existed in the database that was re-imported for technical reasons (for example refreshing complete datasets). As such, this figure does not accurately represent the number of records **received** in the reporting period. The **total figure** quoted however does accurately represent the number of records in the database at the end of the reporting period.

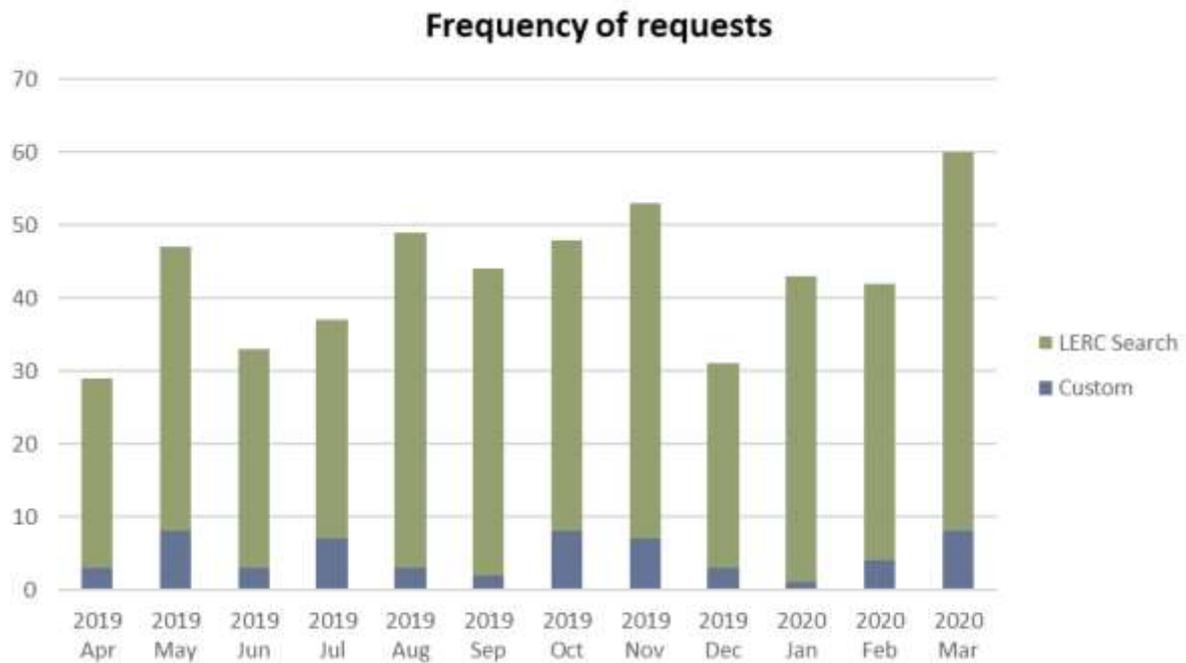


6.3. Summary of data use

A total of 505 requests were received this reporting period, the highest number of requests received to date. The pie chart below gives a breakdown of data users.



Whilst consultants are the most frequent data users, other users may request much larger amounts of data very infrequently - actual data use as represented by amount of data is difficult to determine.



7. Local Recording Fund

The aim of the Local Recording Fund is to promote and encourage environmental recording in Greater Lincolnshire. It is against this broad aim that applications are assessed.

The fund was created from a formalisation of the already existing support made available with monies received through data requests.

One application to the fund was received during the reporting period, but was subsequently withdrawn by the applicant.

8. Objectives 2019-2023

The following objectives are intended to fall in with LERC objectives as set out in the GLNP Business Plan 2019-2023. See the Business Plan for more details.

Action	Assessment for 2019-20	Priority for 2020-21 ²
To provide access to high quality wildlife and geological data.	<i>505 requests for data were received.</i>	High
To increase the number of new records in the database by 200,000 a year.	<i>2,480,192 records were added to the database.</i>	High
To increase the number of verified records in the database by 10,000 a year, excluding pre-verified data.	<i>256,124 records were sent for verification.</i>	High
Maintain good relationships with recorders and recording groups.	<i>Work begun on updating the status of newts report</i>	High
Produce and implement a marketing strategy for the promotion of LERC Search.	N/A	High
Produce and implement a development plan for LERC Search to build in added functionality to further improve the service offered.	N/A	High

² Based on the 2020 priority



Undertake a full review of LERC Search to ensure it is delivering desired outcomes.	N/A	High
Review the Local Recording Fund to ensure it is fit for purpose.	<i>Initial discussions held within Team</i>	High
Review benefits of accredited status and agree whether to reapply.	N/A	-
To increase the coverage of records in the database by targeting taxonomic groups where on average there are less than 50 records per species.	N/A	Low
Use experience of LERC Search to reopen discussions on a national level data request system.	N/A	Low
Rollout of LERC Search to other LRCs.	<i>Some interest in LERC Search from other LRCs</i>	Low
To provide access to analysed, high quality data as required to inform strategic conservation delivery.	<i>Produced biodiversity opportunity maps for a number of local authorities and other groups</i>	Low
Work with Partners to maximise opportunities for proactive species surveys.	N/A	Low

9. Conclusions

Despite technical issues experienced with LERC Search during the year, the system continues to free up staff time and allowed customers to access data instantly, 24 hours a day and 7 days a week. This has allowed staff time to be redirected to other efforts such as producing biodiversity opportunity maps.



Appendix 1: Current data exchange agreements

Organisation/individual	Species group	Year signed
Allan and Annette Binding	Butterflies (County) Araneae (County) Hemiptera (County) Orthoptera Hymenoptera Coleoptera Moths	2006
Bob Merritt	Freshwater invertebrates	2006
Chris de Feu	Slugs	2006
Chris Manning	Mammals (County)	2006
Colin Smith	Moths (County)	2006
Lapwings Consultants Board of Trustees	Various	2006
Neil Pike	Woodlice, Centipedes and Millipedes (County)	2006
Richard Chadd	Freshwater invertebrates (County)	2006
Roger Labbett	Various	2007
Lincolnshire Badger Group	Badgers	2008
Lincolnshire Bat Group	Bats (County)	2010
Alan Phillips	Hymenoptera (County)	2011
Brian Redman	Orthoptera (County)	2011
David Sheppard	Sawflies (County)	2011
British Dragonfly Society	Odonata (County)	2012
British Plant Gall Society	Various	2012
Froglife	Various	2013
Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust	Various	2013
RSPB	Various	2013
Sustrans	Various	2013
Yorkshire Wildlife Trust (as lead body for Humberhead Levels NIA)	Various	2013
Lincolnshire Bird Club	Birds (County)	2014
National Trust	Various	2015
People's Trust for Endangered Species	Mammals	2016

County = County dataset (covers Lincolnshire, North Lincolnshire and North East Lincolnshire)

Most data flow to and from national schemes is via the county recorders. A proportion of the data sent by the county recorders will have been generated by ad hoc records received by LERC and digitisation of records undertaken by LERC.



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