NBN Trust

Business Plan

2017-18

Contents

1. Introduction

This business plan describes the delivery against our Strategy 2015 – 2020 pursuing our vision that *Biological data collected and shared openly by the Network are central to the UK's learning and understanding of its biodiversity and are critical to all decision making about nature and the environment* for the year 2017-18.

This plan will set out the current staffing and financial situation and the key points from the Action Plan which will be the main focus for the NBN Trust for this year.

2. Staffing

The budget proposed for 2017-18 maintains the core permanent staff of CEO, Finance and Business Officer and Senior Communications Officer, along with four posts that are currently on fixed term contracts. These are the Scottish Liaison Officer, Project Development Officer, Membership and Business Development Officer and Communications Officer. The budget also includes two additional fixed term contract posts, a Technical and Data Support Officer and a Systems Developer (totalling 7.3 FTE), both of which will hopefully be in post by the end of July.

3. Funding Summary

Table 1 below, provides a summary of the expected income for 2017-18, further detail can be found in the finance report.

Table 1. Summary of expected income

Type	Amount
Unrestricted Secured	£203,190
Unrestricted Unsecured	£26,268
Restricted Unsecured	£175,779
Designated	£21,200
Total	**£426,437**

In addition to the income summarised above, the Trust also has £95,230 in reserves, which is in excess of the required three-month buffer.

Potential new funding streams will be investigated and implemented where possible during this financial year, for further detail see the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

4. Expenditure Summary

Table 1 below, provides a summary of the forecast expenditure for 2017-18, further detail can be found in the finance report.

Table 2. Summary of forecast expenditure

Type	Amount
Staff costs	£258,887
Meetings & T&S	£25,500
Office Costs	£21,500
Professional contracts	£10,900
Communications	£35,140
NBN Atlas	£72,000
Other	£2,690
Total	**£426,617**

5. Action Plan Priorities

The NBN Action Plan 2016-2020 sets out the commitment the NBN Trust members and data partners will make to delivering the NBN Strategy 2015 – 2020. The Action Plan has 21 objectives and 95 actions that should be implemented to achieve the Network's vision. This section sets out which actions will be the priorities in 2017-18. Details on priorities for future years are in Appendix A.

The actions can be split into those that require a 'one -off' review or implementation and those which are critical, but 'business as usual' ongoing work streams without a finite end to the action. These are set out in table 3 and 4 respectively.

Table 3. One-off priority actions for 2017-18

Strategic Aim	Strategic Action	Milestones	Measure of success	Supported by
1. Record, collect, diversify, enhance & mobilise biological data	Increase verification capacity through establishment of a UK Verification Network to share best practice, celebrate success and recruit	Draft ToR for UK verification network by 20/11/2017 ToR agreed by partners by 31/12/2017	A demonstrable increase in verification capacity and "time to market" of verified records by 31/12/2018	Verification & online recording working group
	Maintain and improve NBN Record Cleaner rule sets and identify quality of records across all NBN systems	Preliminary assessment of current situation with Record Cleaner, what updating is required and level of use by 31/10/2017	An updated and fit for purpose Record Cleaner that is compatible with the NBN Atlas by 28/02/2018	Verification & online recording working group
	Prepare an online recording strategy for the UK to ensure system consistency and standardisation	Working group convened July 2017 First draft of strategy circulated by 15/10/2017 Strategy agreed by 28/02/2018	Online recording methods are clear, consistent and interoperable by 31/03/2019	Verification & online recording working group

	Create regional and national sensitive species lists	Workshop to be held in July 2017	NBN data partners understand criteria for inclusion on NBN Atlas Sensitive Species lists so that locations of only species in genuine need of protection are blurred	Taxon experts, National schemes & societies, government agencies, ALERC, BRC, CEH
	Accelerate data flow through NBN systems by publicising the data flow model, establishing data flow agreements and creating a data flow tool to track records through the system	Data flow model to be agreed by 30/11/2017 Data flow agreements established by 31/01/2018 Specifications for data flow tool agreed by 31/03/2018	Data flow "time to market" significantly increased by 31/03/2019	ALERC, BTO, BRC, RSPB
4. Provide the best biological information Management Infrastructure	Prepare and implement a technical vision and strategy for NBN data infrastructure for data capture, management and dissemination (in conjunction with NBN Trust members and international partners)	Initial discussions completed by 31/10/2017 Draft strategy available by 31/01/2018	A clear and transparent vision for the NBN data infrastructure published by 31/03/2018	BRC, RSPB, SNH, NE, NRW, CeDAR
	NBN Atlas: Implementation of a system for identifying and displaying verification status of records on the NBN Atlas	System agreed by 31/10/2017, implemented by 31/12/2017	All records on NBN Atlas include a verification status	Verification Working Group
	Development and implementation of system for enhanced access to capture resolution sensitive species records on the NBN Atlas	System agreed by 30/09/2017, implemented by 30/11/2017	Authorised users able to access capture resolution sensitive species data through NBN Atlas	NBN Atlas Steering Groups
	Hold stakeholder workshops and determine priorities for development of further functionality	Workshops held by 31/10/2017 Priorities agreed by 31/12/2017	Priorities, timescales & costs for further functionality agreed	All network members and funders

	Development and implementation of customisable user pages	Implemented by 31/03/2018	Users able to customise and save their account pages	
	Sourcing and ingesting further habitat, spatial and environmental layers	Ongoing	Increased number of layers available	
5. Support the development of the NBN, its board and its members	Review the NBN membership scheme to ensure it is fit for purpose and accessible to all current and potential members with clear benefits	Continuation of review started in 2016/17	Increase in the number and diversity of NBN members	
	Clarify Network roles and membership to promote ownership and engagement by the member organisations	Initial discussions concluded by 31/12/2017 Paper published by 31/03/2018	Network roles clear, greater engagement & ownership of actions from wider network	All network members and funders
	Review of NBN Trust Board & Governance	Initial discussions with board in July 2017 Findings and proposed approach agreed in November board meeting 'New' board in place by 31/03/2018	NBN Trust board includes Trustees with relevant skills to assist with the strategic aims of the organisation Articles of Association reviewed & updated	
	Develop and implement a sustainable funding model for the NBN Trust and prepare a medium term financial strategy	Medium Term Financial Strategy presented to board in July 2017 Implementation of 3 options with the aim of generation of 10% of income from these sources by 31/03/2018	The NBN Trust generates at least 50% of its income from non-government sources by 31/03/2020	

Table 4. Ongoing priority actions for 2017-18

Strategic Aim	Strategic Action	Supported by
1. Record, collect, diversify, enhance & mobilise biological data	Expand the network of NBN data providers	
2. Make biological data and information available to everyone	Make biological data more visible, freely and openly available (with reduced caveats on data use) Develop and deliver incentives for visible, open data	SNH, NE, NRW, CeDAR
3. Captivate & engage people about wildlife	Promote the value of NBN Trust membership through advertising the data providers, specific projects and events Develop and promote the NBN brand	
4. Provide the best biological information Management Infrastructure	Provide a stable platform for all databases and products in the NBN infrastructure family (including systems of all NBN Trust members) Secure investment in UK infrastructure for biological data management Create and facilitate an NBN Technical and Innovation Working Group to oversee delivery of technical infrastructure Undertake regular security checks of all NBN Trust systems and tools (including member systems) Provide training to users in how to make the most of the current infrastructure Compile, prioritise, action and report back on feedback received from NBN Atlas users	BTO, BRC, RSPB
5. Support the development of the NBN, its board and its members	Provide strong financial and budget control of the NBN Trust funds Maintain a Board of Trustees, representative of the NBN with the appropriate skills and required competencies in order to progress the NBN partnership	

6. Key Milestones
Table 5 below summarises the key milestones for the one-off priority actions for the NBN Trust for 2017/18.

Table 5. key milestones for the one-off priority actions for 2017/18

Activity	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Verification working group			Prep	WG Meeting			WG Meeting	Draft Verification Network ToR	ToR agreed	WG Meeting	Record Cleaner updated	
Online recording strategy				Meeting			Draft & Meeting			Meeting		Strategy agreed
Sensitive Species lists & procedures			Prep	Workshop		Criteria published						
Technical strategy						Initial discussions		Meeting		1st draft completed		Final version completed
Planned NBN Atlas development	Bug fixing & prioritising feedback					Sen. Sp. System agreed	Verification system agreed	Sen. Sp. System implemented	Verification system implemented			Customisable user pages
NBN Atlas further functionality						Stakeholder workshops			Priorities agreed			
Network Roles									Initial discussions concluded			Paper published
Board Review			Initial discussions				Findings of review circulated	Proposed changed to Board				'New' board in place

7. Risks

Table 6 below summarises some of the main risks to delivering the key priority actions within the 2017-18 financial year. For the risks affecting the NBN Trust as a whole, please refer to the Risk Register.

Risk	Description	Risk Rating	Mitigation
Insufficient funding	Majority of funding (both restricted & unrestricted) comes from government agencies, whose budgets are reducing	Likelihood Low / Impact High	Agree MoAs & schedule of works in first quarter of year Develop alternative funding streams
Loss of staff	NBN Secretariat team is small, any loss of staff would have a large impact on delivery of aims and objectives	Likelihood Low / Impact High	Increase resilience by greater knowledge transfer between staff Increase staff benefits were possible to retain staff
Insufficient engagement by the wider network	The NBN Secretariat needs expert input from network members to deliver on the majority of the key actions.	Likelihood Medium / Impact High	Work with engaged partners to help engage those less interested. Highlight benefits of informing decisions affecting network
Diverging views on Atlas development	Lack of consensus about visibility, openness & functionality	Likelihood Medium / Impact High	Develop a collaborative and cooperative approach to decision making

Appendix A.

The following two tables show which of the remaining 'one-off' actions from the NBN Action Plan 2016-2020 are proposed as priorities for 2018/19 and 2019/20.

Table A1. Priorities for 2018/19

Action Plan Code	Strategic Action	Original Priority	Time-scale	Revised priority	NBN Lead?	Who else is involved?
2D.5	Create an NBN Toolbox for data analysis and interpretation and support tool creation	Low	One-off	High	Yes	BRC, RSPB, OU
5C.1	Promote the NBN Strategy as the vehicle for collaboration over biological data collection, sharing and use	High	Ongoing	High	Yes	ALERC
5C.7	Develop NBN Trust data management and dissemination policy for UK	High	One-off with review	High	Yes	RSPB
1A.2	Streamline and standardise data capture processes and promote through use of league tables, data dashboards, summary statistics and data health checks	Moderate	Ongoing	Moderate	Yes	BRC, CIEEM
1B.1	Build platforms for sharing of data types beyond species and habitat data (e.g., to integrate data from Earth Observation, genetic sequencing and eDNA)	Moderate	Ongoing	Moderate	Yes	SNH, NE, NRW, CeDAR, JNCC
1B.3	Develop a UK strategy for mobilising historic survey data and secure resources for historic data digitisation and mobilisation (including crowdsourcing data capture). This includes development and promotion of online citizen data capture systems to support volunteers in the digitisation of historic datasets	Moderate	Ongoing	Moderate	No	ALERC, NFBR, FSC, BTO, RSPB, RSWT, CIEEM, NHM
2A.4	Improve data interrogation and visualisation tools through: workshops with user groups, user-centred design, and interactive collaborative events such as hackathons	Moderate	Ongoing	Moderate	Yes	BTO

2C.2	Communicate regularly with data users and promote and demonstrate the many different examples of how biological data can be used, applied and visualised (through online tutorials, case studies and NBN eNews and other media)	Moderate	Ongoing	Moderate	Yes	NFBR, OU
2C.6	Build a Biodiversity Planning Screening Tool to aid environmental and planning decision-making.	Moderate	One-off	Moderate	No	ALERC, BTO, RSWT, CIEEM, SNH, NE, NRW, CeDAR
2E.4	Establish and promote policies for open invasive species data across Europe.	Moderate	One-off	Moderate	No	CIEEM, BSBI, SNH, NE, NRW, CeDAR, BC
4C.6	Develop an interconnected web between the NBN Trust family of projects and infrastructure (e.g., a unique login system for all NBN Trust data systems)	Mission Critical	One-off	Moderate	Yes	
5A.6	Deliver a programme of training and events to support the network	Moderate	Ongoing	Moderate	Yes	
1E.4	Establish taxonomic group mentoring schemes	Low	One-off	Low	No	ALERC, NFBR, RSWT, BSBI, BC
4C.3	Establish a Tools Standards group to ensure interoperability of NBN Trust systems.	Low	One-off	Low	Yes	RSPB

Table A2. Priorities for 2018/19

Action Plan Code	Strategic Action	Original Priority	Time-scale	Revised priority	NBN Lead?	Who else is involved?
1B.4	Develop strategy for tackling recording bias, search effort and certainty of ID. Promote value of negative records and increase negative record data holdings	Mission Critical	Ongoing	High	No	BTO, BRC, BSBI, BC, CEH
1B.7	Target taxonomic and geographic gaps in NBN data to increase overall coverage in UK (including keystone taxa for ecosystem services and ecosystem data for natural capital assessments)	Mission Critical	Ongoing	High	No	ALERC, RSWT, BSBI, OU, BC

1B.2	Develop and implement a programme of work to capture ecosystem and habitat data	Low	One-off	Moderate	Yes	RSPB, CIEEM, SNH, NE, NRW, CeDAR, JNCC
1E.5	Create a learning pathway to improve 'new recorder' skill levels through training and support from Network members	Moderate	Ongoing	Moderate	No	ALERC, NFBR, FSC, RSWT, NHM, OU
1A.4	Establish an NBN Data Management Accreditation Scheme to improve data quality assurance and promote best practice for data capture and curation systems	Low	One-off	Low	Yes	ALERC, RSPB, CIEEM
1A.5	Create an NBN toolbox of data capture systems and tools that meet NBN standards	Low	Ongoing	Low	Yes	NHM
2B.2	Provide accreditation for data providers and data users	Moderate	One-off	Low	Yes	CIEEM, OU
2C.1	Improve research methods for use of ad-hoc (casual) biological records	Low	Ongoing	Low	No	BSBI, OU, BC