

Recorder 6 Steering Group

Terms of Reference

Aim

The Recorder 6 Steering Group aims to ensure Recorder 6 users are able to preserve the structure and integrity of biodiversity datasets held within Recorder 6, and can continue to manage and use their data-holdings effectively.

To achieve this aim the Recorder 6 Steering Group will work to secure new arrangements for maintenance and development of Recorder 6 in its current form and look to develop a successor system which will replicate the Recorder 6 data model on a modern development platform – providing an easy data migration path for existing Recorder 6 users.

In doing so, the Group will make decisions about how funding from Recorder 6 users is raised and spent, to best address the Recorder 6 user community's requirements and priorities.

Steering Group Objectives

- Establish a shared understanding of strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities in relation to Recorder 6 maintenance and development – through working closely with the Recorder 6 developer community and listening to Recorder 6 users (/ potential users)
- Identify and monitor risks to continuing maintenance and development of Recorder 6 and (where possible) manage these risks
- Reinvigorate the Recorder 6 user community and oversee the development of systems for capturing Recorder 6 users' needs and requirements, so that this feedback can inform decisions on Recorder 6 maintenance and development, and how funding is allocated
- Identify short-, medium- and long-term priorities in relation to Recorder 6 maintenance and development and work with the Recorder 6 developer community to estimate likely costs of options to address these priorities
- Identify short-, medium- and long-term priorities in relation to how information about Recorder 6 is made accessible to users and potential users (i.e. through websites and user documentation) and work with Recorder 6 user support community to estimate likely costs of options to address these priorities
- Ensure Recorder 6 users have access to the best & latest available information on species names and designations – through close working with the UK Species Inventory project and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee
- Oversee establishment of a new funding mechanism for Recorder 6 maintenance and development through the introduction of an annual licence fee, and keep this under annual review
- Develop and pursue longer-term funding strategies for Recorder 6 maintenance and development

- Oversee the establishment of a management organisation for Recorder 6 which will handle licence fee payments, hold budget, manage contracts with developers and be accountable to the Recorder 6 Steering Group
- Make decisions on how funding from the Recorder 6 licence fee is allocated (based on identified priorities), and instruct the Recorder 6 management organisation accordingly
- Grow the community of developers with the knowledge and skills required to maintain and develop Recorder 6, and encourage development of Recorder 6 as an open-source project.
- Maintain confidence in Recorder 6 as a tool for managing biodiversity data through development of a roadmap for future maintenance and development.

Scope and Exclusions

All existing Recorder 6 functionality is considered 'in scope', subject to further review.

The Recorder 6 Steering Group's immediate focus is on the needs of Recorder 6 users in the UK and Isle of Man. However, we will actively seek opportunities to collaborate with Recorder 6 users in other countries, e.g. Germany and Luxembourg (where Recorder 6 is the main repository of the Luxembourg Museum's collections data)¹.

Exclusions

The Recorder 6 Steering Group is not actively seeking to address the needs of users of other biological recording software packages.

Authority

The Recorder 6 Steering Group **makes decisions** on the design and implementation of the Recorder 6 charging model. It may also decide to pursue other fundraising opportunities.

The Recorder 6 Steering Group **makes decisions** on how funding from Recorder 6 users is allocated.

As the Recorder 6 Steering Group is seeking to encourage development of Recorder 6 as an open source project, it cannot dictate how development progresses (except where the work is being done under contract to the Recorder 6 management organisation). However, the Recorder 6 Steering Group will **recommend and encourage** good practices.

Membership

Steering Group members

The Steering Group will have up to 11 members, drawn from the Recorder 6 user community – including representatives of Local Environmental Record Centre, National Scheme & Society, organisational and individual users. The role of members is to represent the Recorder 6 user community, not just their own organisations.

¹ Current understanding is that the Falkland Islands, Channel Islands (Jersey) and Republic of Ireland are no longer active users, although they may maintain copies of legacy systems for reference or data-exchange purposes?

The Steering Group will seek to avoid having individuals on the Steering Group who work on Recorder 6 development in a paid capacity – simply to avoid any possibility of perceived conflicts of interest.

A Chair will be appointed by members of the Steering Group.

Steering Group members have a right to vote on decisions.

1	Clare Blencowe	Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre	England	LERC
2	Ian Carle	Herts Environmental Records Centre	England	LERC
3	Harry Clarke	Volunteer vice-county coordinator for Butterfly Conservation	England	Individual R6 user, NSS
4	Damian McFerran	Centre for Environmental Data and Recording	Northern Ireland	LERC
5	Janet Simkin	British Lichen Society	Great Britain	NSS
6	David Slade	South East Wales Biodiversity Records Centre	Wales	LERC, NFBR
7	Philippa Tomlinson	Manx Biological Recording Partnership	Isle of Man	Biological Recording Partnership
8	Philip Whelpdale	Yorkshire Wildlife Trust	England	Conservation Org
9	Tania Walisch	Natural History Museum Luxembourg	Luxembourg	Museum
10	TBC (previously Steve Hannah)	<i>Representative of Recorder 6 users in Scotland</i>	Scotland	LERC
11	Vacant	<i>Additional representative of individual Recorder 6 users</i>		

Management organisation

The NBN Trust has volunteered to take on the role of management organisation for Recorder 6, subject to agreeing a Memorandum of Agreement.

A representative of the management organisation will have a standing invitation to meetings and provide a report, but won't be required to attend. The management organisation representative won't have a right to vote on Steering Group decisions.

12	Jo Judge	NBN Trust	UK	
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Regular guests / advisory roles

The following people will have a standing invitation to Recorder 6 Steering Group meetings, and will receive a copy of the agenda, so that they can choose to attend in an advisory role, should they wish.

13	Chris Raper	Manager of the UK Species Inventory	UK	Natural History Museum
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14	Mike Weideli	Recorder 6 developer	-	
15	John van Breda	Recorder 6 developer	-	
16	Sally Rankin	Recorder 6 seller & user support specialist	-	
17	Andy Foy	Recorder 6 developer & user support specialist	-	

Decision making

The Steering Group will aim to make decisions on a consensus basis, but decisions can be made on a majority vote if required. If we come to decisions where the group appears to be split, and there is not a clear majority in favour of a particular course of action, we will look for opportunities to revisit proposals and achieve greater consensus behind them.

Meetings

Meetings will be convened on an 'as required' basis, at least twice yearly.

Meetings may be held face-to-face, or via teleconference. We will aim to make it possible to join all meetings remotely, via Skype or teleconference.

A note-taker will be identified for each meeting.

Reporting

The Steering Group will provide updates to Recorder 6 users via the 'Recorder Announcements' section of the NBN Forum. We will also seek to secure a space on the web where we can share information with Recorder 6 users, as well as stay in touch with users via an opt-in email list.

Resources and budget

There is no budget for Steering Group meetings. Members are therefore asked to cover their own travel and subsistence costs. The meeting venue at the Angela Mormont Centre for UK Biodiversity, at the Natural History Museum in London has been made available for free.

Funds for Recorder 6 maintenance and development, generated through the introduction of a licence fee, will be held by the management organisation in a fully ring-fenced budget. It will be up to the Steering Group to make decisions on how this is spent.

Review

These Terms of Reference will be reviewed in 2020.

April 2019

Steering group membership updated October 2019