

OUR YEAR IN REVIEW

NBN Trust Annual Report 2018/19








Robin © Brian Eversham


In this **interactive PDF** you can do many things to help you easily access the information that you want.

Use the section headers along the top of the page and the document controls at the bottom left of each page to help you navigate through this report.


  Back/forward one page


 Go to start

 Go to contents

 Administrative information

There are links to other pages within the report and web addresses for additional information.

 Web links to further reading online

 Links to other pages within this report

If you follow a link to another page, there is a link on the bottom left of the new page, to take you back to where you were.

Business Review	3
Introduction	4
Retiring Chairman's Report	6
Incoming Chairman's Report	8
Chief Executive's Report	10
Our Year in Summary	12
Our Numbers	16
Our Progress	17
Strategic Aim 01	19
Record, collect, diversify, enhance and mobilise biological data	
Strategic Aim 02	21
Make biological data and information available to everyone	
Strategic Aim 03	24
Captivate and engage people about wildlife	
Strategic Aim 04	28
Provide the best biological information management infrastructure	
Strategic Aim 05	32
Support the development of the NBN, its Board and its members	
Our Valued Members	37
Our Valued Data Partners	42
Our Future	52
Our Governance	55
Our Financials	61
Administrative Information	66



BUSINESS REVIEW



Bank vole © Derek Crawley

Introduction

[Retiring Chairman's Report](#)
[Incoming Chairman's Report](#)
[Chief Executive's Report](#)

INTRODUCTION

The National Biodiversity Network (NBN) is a network of biodiversity data partners and users who are working together to make data accessible and usable by others.

The NBN Trust is the charitable body that oversees the development and management of the NBN and its information facilities. It was set up in 2000 and has a Chairman and Board of Trustees who have a leadership role in relation to the Trust in that they collectively own and promote the NBN concept.

The NBN vision is that:

“Wildlife 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.”

To achieve that vision, the Network is working to deliver improvements to the recording, collection, verification, curation, aggregation, analysis and use of wildlife data in the UK.



Himalayan balsam © Dave Kilbey

The NBN Trust's charitable objects are specifically restricted to the following:

The objects of the Charity are for the public benefit, to advance, formally and informally, public participation in and public understanding and enjoyment of, the conservation of biological resources, together with their sustainable and wise use, by providing public access to biological records, data or information pertaining to the United Kingdom, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man (“the Objects”). In these Articles, where the context permits or requires, “biological records, data or information” shall mean records (in any form) of kinds, numbers and habitats of wildlife and assemblages of organisms, living and fossil.

Introduction

[Retiring Chairman's Report](#)
[Incoming Chairman's Report](#)
[Chief Executive's Report](#)

The Network's priority is to grow the national commitment to sharing this data and information. Through this we will provide a comprehensive, unparalleled and authoritative understanding of our natural world and will use that knowledge effectively to educate and inform.

This review of 2018/19 focuses on "Our Year". It not only highlights the work of the NBN Trust, but also reinforces the Network, our partnership ethos and our work as a member organisation to support the [NBN Strategy 2015 – 2020](#). [↗](#)

NOTE

The NBN Trust employs a team, the NBN Trust Secretariat, to facilitate and coordinate the growth and development of the NBN. The NBN Trust Secretariat comprises the staff who work to achieve the objects of the Trust and who provide a range of services and develop standards, in conjunction with Network partners, that enhance the ability of the Network to operate. They manage and develop the NBN Atlas and provide advice on technical matters such as data management and administration. They may also lead on projects designed to develop the Network and promote the Network as a whole, as well as its constituent parts, through the NBN Trust's communication channels. This Annual Report is produced by the [NBN Trust Secretariat](#). [↗](#)



Chalkhill Blue Butterfly © Brian Eversham


[Introduction](#)
[Retiring Chairman's Report](#)
[Incoming Chairman's Report](#)
[Chief Executive's Report](#)

RETIRING CHAIRMAN'S REPORT



It was a pleasant surprise and an honour to succeed Sir Neil Chalmers as Chairman of the NBN Trust in 2012. I confess to not having, at that time, more than a passing knowledge of the history of the NBN and its aims and achievements, but Jim Munford, the CEO at the time, soon put that to rights. I am very

grateful to Jim for his unflagging support and for his dedication to steering the NBN through difficult financial waters (Ha, and what has changed!). At that time, the NBN Trust depended to a considerable extent on a rolling grant from DEFRA, as well as membership subscriptions. But, since then, the reduced funding from the Country Agencies has made the NBN Trust finances more precarious, and the challenge to develop an alternative and sustainable income stream remains the key challenge for the NBN Trust today.

When Jim retired in 2014, he was succeeded by the late John Sawyer. John was an inspirational figure who took the NBN along a new and crucially important path. From the outset he realised that the NBN Gateway (the online data portal prior to the NBN Atlas), while invaluable for several years, had reached the end of its days as a tool for sharing biodiversity information into the future. John immediately saw the potential for an NBN Atlas modelled on the [Atlas of Living Australia](#)  with its open source code as a way forward. Contact was made with the late John LaSalle and with a huge amount of help and goodwill from the ALA team (thanks



Common Poppy © Brian Eversham

to Peter Doherty and David Martin from CSIRO - Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation), the UK Atlas project was borne; a hugely significant step for the NBN.

At the same time, John was concerned that our annual one-day conference at the Royal Society in London, whilst popular, should have a wider reach and move around the UK. So, two-day conferences were introduced, first in York, followed by Edinburgh, Cardiff and, most recently, Nottingham. The two-day format also allowed us to introduce the UK Awards for Biological Recording and Information Sharing, which have proved so popular. Sadly, in November 2015, just before the Conference in York, disaster struck, and John tragically died in his sleep while in his cottage on Mull. The whole community was shocked and deeply saddened. John will never be forgotten, and we now have a special award given in his memory, at the NBN Conference each year – The John Sawyer NBN Open Data Award.

[Introduction](#)
[Retiring Chairman's Report](#)
[Incoming Chairman's Report](#)
[Chief Executive's Report](#)

Our new CEO, Jo Judge, therefore came to the NBN Trust at a difficult time, but quickly grasped the mantle and was determined that the Atlas project should not stall. First came the NBN Atlas Scotland [🔗](#), followed by NBN Atlas [🔗](#), NBN Atlas Wales [🔗](#) and NBN Atlas Isle of Man. [🔗](#) Indeed, further Atlases were in development up to the point of writing, with NBN Atlas Northern Ireland [🔗](#) due to launch in May 2019. At the same time, the rest of the world has eyed these developments and many countries are developing their own Atlas projects using the same ALA open code. In fact, Atlases are now being developed in 15 countries including Sweden, Germany, Brazil, Canada and Russia, with Jo being more and more in demand to pass on our experiences with developing the NBN Atlas. It may still be a dream, but we can look forward to a world-wide and unified Atlas framework for recording species distributions.

What is most remarkable to me is that this development in the UK has been achieved on a shoestring that has involved a continual battle for funds. Just enough has been provided to develop the basic UK Atlases, but not nearly enough to capitalise on this and provide the sophisticated templates and overlays which the Atlases need to be truly productive tools. And that is where the major challenge for Jo and the NBN Trust Board now lies. ***A sustainable financial model for the NBN Trust is essential; otherwise the UK loses its leadership in this field,*** which should be unthinkable for a country with our tradition for understanding and recording our wildlife.

I shall certainly miss being directly involved with the NBN, although I will hope to keep in touch with the community, mainly

via the annual Conference. The NBN Trust Secretariat team of Mandy, Sarah, Giselle, Purba, Christine, Sophia, Reuben and Katie, and of course led by Jo, have been a delight to work with – always efficient, helpful and cheerful. There are now additional team members, who I have not yet had the pleasure to meet and look forward to doing so at the Conference in November.

I would also like to thank the NBN Board of Trustees over the past years. The current Board, with Neil Hodges as its Chair, is very impressive and has just the right mix to tackle the challenges ahead – no pressure then! But they are lucky to have our new Patron, Sir John Lawton, to help them.

With best wishes for the future,



Professor Michael Hassell



Michael Hassell handing over the Chair of NBN Trust to Neil Hodges

[Introduction](#)
[Retiring Chairman's Report](#)
[Incoming Chairman's Report](#)
[Chief Executive's Report](#)


INCOMING CHAIRMAN'S REPORT




It is a pleasure and an honour to be writing my first report as NBN Trust Chairman. It came as a surprise to be approached about the role after joining the Board in early 2018 prior to Michael's announcement that he would be stepping down. However, whilst Michael may have lined up his arguments to persuade me

to accept the post, he was pushing at an open door. The needs of the natural environment are greater than ever and NBN's purpose, to ensure top quality biodiversity data are available and at the heart of decision making to protect the environment, is critical. I want to play my part in helping the NBN to achieve that ambition.

That said, it is daunting following in the footsteps of such a successful Chair as Michael, not to mention his predecessors. As you will see from his retiring Chairman's Report, Michael has seen the organisation through a critical stage in its evolution. Aligned to his deep knowledge of the issues surrounding the effective compilation and use of biodiversity data he has Chaired NBN Trust with clarity and resolve and achieved so much for which he must be duly proud. We all owe him huge thanks.

A key role of Chair is obviously the governance of an organisation and at the top of the governance tree is an effective board. It will make my role so much easier that the team of current Trustees  has a great mix of talents and is a balance of new members with new ideas and experienced

members who, as I have already appreciated, bring the much needed qualities of tried and tested wisdom.

It is early days, but I have started to speak to as many of our stakeholders as possible so that I can understand the trials and tribulations of Network members and understand how we can work together to achieve our joint environmental goals. Most pleasing so far is a recognition of the collaborative approach that our CEO, Dr. Jo Judge, brings to her role. NBN Trust must vigorously pursue its [Strategic Aims](#)  but in order to do so, collaboration is essential. The power of collaboration has been clearly demonstrated during the first NBN Stakeholder Advisory Group meeting where key stakeholders representing different parts of the Network shared constructive views on ways to approach important topics facing us all. These range from the SBIF Review to the NBN Trust's work priorities, not to mention the hot potato of promoting open data whilst not undermining





Oyster catcher © Dave Kilbey

[Introduction](#)
[Retiring Chairman's Report](#)
[Incoming Chairman's Report](#)
[Chief Executive's Report](#)

the business models of Network members. This forum can be an important conduit for sharing ideas and action between the Network and the NBN Trust Board.

As we move to the end of the 2015 – 2020 strategic cycle we will need to turn our minds to the direction of the NBN Trust and the NBN for the next stage of its development. But before doing that we need to know we are on a sound financial footing. On that, *I am pleased to note that the hard work of Jo and her team, and that of my predecessor, has paid off in the form of National Lottery Heritage Funding.* This will enable us to put in place a sustainable business model that best serves our ambition.

I hope you all like the new format of this Report. The aim is to make it a more interactive and less static document. I draw your attention in particular to our summary of the year, highlighted on [pages 12 to 15](#).  These range from the launch of a new NBN Atlas and further developments of the NBN Atlas functionality and new datasets, to the fabulous news of the [Heritage Lottery Fund](#)  and the extra resources this will help cover. It has been quite a year and there is plenty to report on.

I look forward to working with you all during my time as Chair and hope I can be as successful as my predecessor in pushing forward the work of this vital organisation for the benefit of a more healthy environment.



Neil Hodges



Nether Stewarton Pools © Mike Beard

[Introduction](#)
[Retiring Chairman's Report](#)
[Incoming Chairman's Report](#)
[Chief Executive's Report](#)

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT



Another year has flown by and, as with the previous two years, it started with the launch of another member of the NBN Atlas family, the NBN Atlas Isle of Man. We have continued to develop and improve the NBN Atlas and all its portals, with the major additions to functionality being enhanced access to

sensitive species and the ability to flag an issue on individual records. In addition, we have been working with Network members to improve the usability of aspects of the NBN Atlas and this work will continue over the coming months.



Bog asphodel © Brian Eversham

This year saw the convening of the NBN Stakeholder Advisory Group, which has been formed to provide an opportunity for Network members to guide, advise and inform the NBN Trust on strategic matters affecting the Trust and the Network. The members of the group are volunteers and they are there not only to represent themselves and their organisations, but others within the Network as well. The first meeting, which was held in January 2019, had great engagement and lively discussions. I am very much looking forward to working with this Group to help improve the NBN Trust and Network going forward.

Michal Hassell stepped down as NBN Trust Chair in February, after seven years in the role. The Trust benefitted greatly from his guidance over the years and especially through a period of transition. On a personal note, I am immensely grateful for the guidance and support Michael gave me as I navigated my way through not only the early stages of my employment with the Trust, but also my first Chief Executive role. His input will be greatly missed; however, I am delighted that he will continue to support the NBN and will be in attendance at the NBN Conference.

As one chair steps down, another steps up. Neil Hodges has taken on the mantle of Chair of the NBN Trust, with effect from February 2019. Neil was appointed initially as a Trustee, but his skills and passion made him an obvious candidate for the role of Chair. He brings a fresh perspective to the Board, informed by his years of experience of governance and management at executive and board levels. I am looking forward to working

[Introduction](#)
[Retiring Chairman's Report](#)
[Incoming Chairman's Report](#)
[Chief Executive's Report](#)


Grass snake © Dave Kilbey

with Neil and the rest of the Trustees through what could be a game changing period in the NBN Trust's history as we look to increase our resilience and sustainability while keeping up with the rapid technological changes that could have a massive impact on how data are collected, shared and used.

The Trust also has a new Patron, Sir John Lawton. Sir John will be well known to many of you and has a wealth of knowledge and experience that will be of great use to the Trust. It is fantastic to get such a well-known and respected figure to help us champion the Trust and the vital work of the entire Network.

Looking forward, we are extremely grateful for the funding provided by the Heritage Lottery Fund to enable us to build the NBN Trust's resilience and sustainability and to develop the NBN Atlas into a world leading source of biodiversity data. This grant

has already enabled us to employ a dedicated NBN Atlas Project Manager and a second NBN Atlas Systems Developer and I am very pleased to welcome Caroline van Dierksen and Stephen Page to the team.

Over the course of 2019/20 we will be investigating the possibility of providing income generating services in collaboration with data partners and developing the NBN Atlas to allow us to provide those services. The aim is to bring in new income for both the NBN Trust and the data partners. I genuinely believe that if we can work together to provide these services it will make the Trust, the Network and individual organisations within the Network stronger and more resilient in the future. This can only be of benefit for the UK's biodiversity and the natural world, which is ultimately, as I am sure you will agree, why we all do what we do.

With apologies to Sir John for misappropriating his words, I am excited about the prospects for the Trust and the Network, and through our collaborations making the NBN bigger, better and more joined up!

Jo Judge

OUR YEAR IN SUMMARY



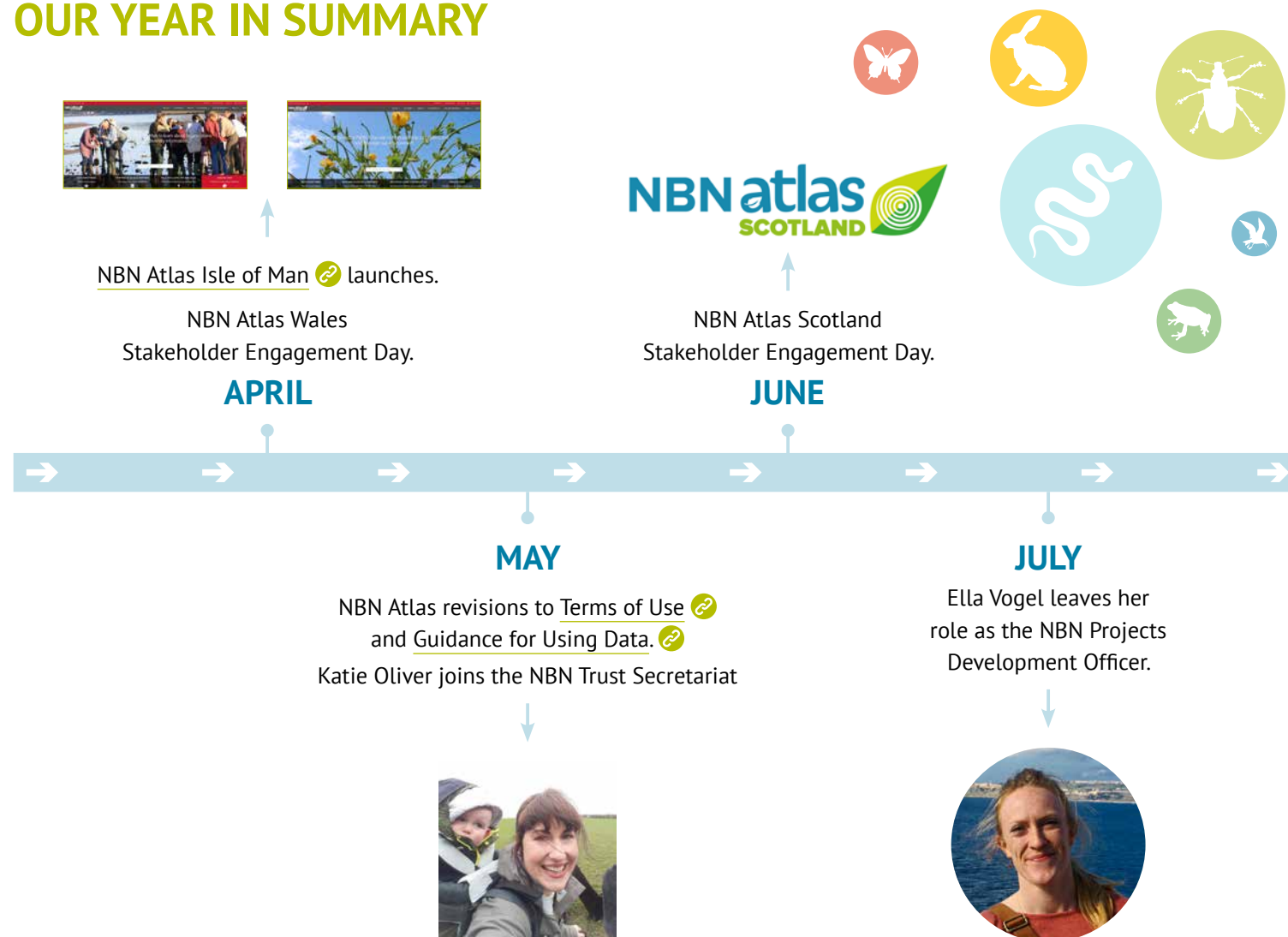
Waxwing © Brian Eversham

Our Year in Summary

Our Numbers

[Go back to Incoming Chairman's Report on page 9](#) 

OUR YEAR IN SUMMARY



Our Year in Summary

Our Numbers

OUR YEAR IN SUMMARY



NBN has 5,000 Twitter followers.

AUGUST



UK Awards for Biological Recording and Information Sharing shortlist announced.

OCTOBER



NOVEMBER

18th NBN Conference and AGM.

The NBN Trust has a new Patron, Sir John Lawton.

UK Award winners announced.

NBN Trust Honorary Membership presented.

Sir John Burnett Memorial Lecture delivered by Professor Jane Memmott.

New Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS) Portal [in Wales](#) launched on NBN Atlas Wales.

[SBIF Review](#) published.

SEPTEMBER

NBN Stakeholder Advisory Group announced.

Scottish Biodiversity Information Forum (SBIF) Review shortlisted for a Nature of Scotland Award.



SBIF
Scottish Biodiversity
Information Forum

Our Year in Summary

Our Numbers

OUR YEAR IN SUMMARY



NBN Trust has a joint stand with [Global Biodiversity Information Facility](#) (GBIF) at the British Ecological Society (BES) annual meeting, in Birmingham.

DECEMBER



Michael Hassell retires as Chairman of the NBN Trust after seven years at the helm and Neil Hodges takes over.

FEBRUARY

JANUARY

First meeting of NBN Stakeholder Advisory Group.
NBN Atlas records added to the UK Lakes Portal.



MARCH

NBN Trust is awarded £190,500 from the National Lottery Heritage Fund to build its resilience and sustainability.

Two vacancies announced as part of the implementation of the NBN Trust's business plan - NBN Atlas Project Manager and NBN Atlas Systems Developer.




Our Year in Summary

Our Numbers

OUR NUMBERS

All figures relate to the period ending 31 March 2019 unless stated otherwise:

203 

Number of Network members

70 

Number of new datasets uploaded to the NBN Atlas

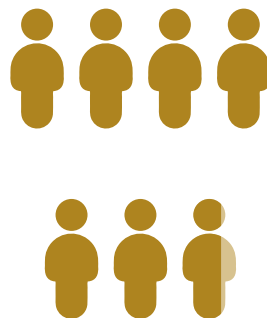
4,854,754

Number of biological records loaded onto the NBN Atlas in the year



262

Number of updated datasets uploaded to the NBN Atlas



6.8

FTE Number of staff employed by the NBN Trust in the year 2018/19

5,447

Number of registered, active users of the NBN Atlas



141

Number of data partners supplying data to the NBN Atlas

222,885,992

Number of records shared on the NBN Atlas



OUR PROGRESS



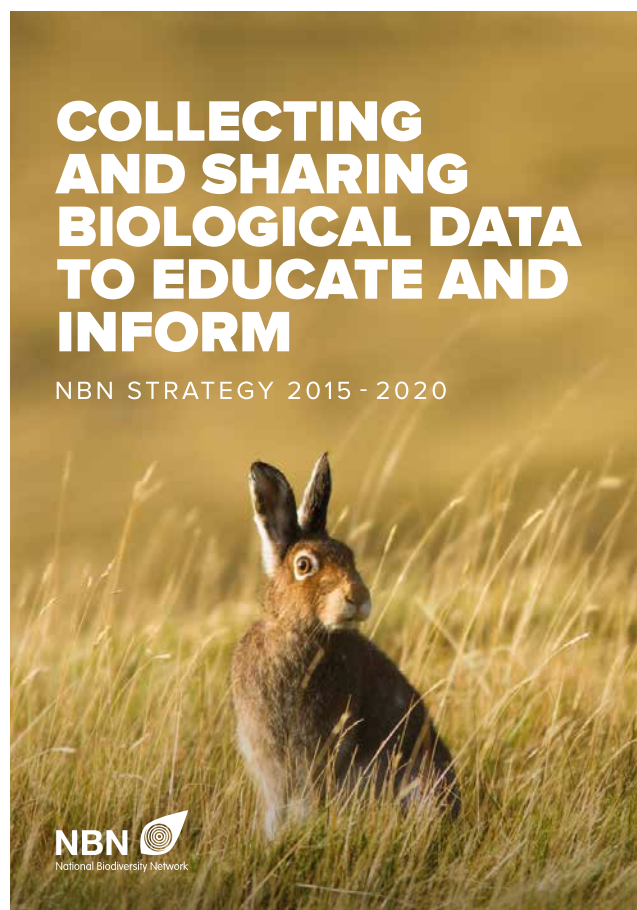
Dryad's saddle © Brian Eversham

Our Progress

[Strategic Aim 1](#)
[Strategic Aim 2](#)
[Strategic Aim 3](#)
[Strategic Aim 4](#)
[Strategic Aim 5](#)

OUR PROGRESS

This section of the Report looks at the key activities carried out by the NBN Trust during the year in support of the five NBN Strategic Aims.



PURPOSE OF THIS STRATEGY

“OUR BIOLOGICAL RECORDS ARE NOT WORKING AS HARD AS THEY COULD. WE WILL TURN THE UK’S BIODIVERSITY DATABASES INTO A TREASURE TROVE RATHER THAN A HOARD”

STRATEGIC AIMS

“WE MUST DELIVER IMPROVEMENTS TO THE RECORDING, COLLECTION, VERIFICATION, CURATION, AGGREGATION, ANALYSIS AND USE OF BIOLOGICAL DATA.”

Our Progress

Strategic Aim 1

Strategic Aim 2

Strategic Aim 3

Strategic Aim 4

Strategic Aim 5

STRATEGIC AIM 1

Record, collect, diversify, enhance and mobilise biological data



Bluebells © Brian Eversham

“We will grow our capacity and capability to record and collect high quality biological data.”

Increasing NBN Atlas data holdings

During the year ending March 2019 three museum collections uploaded some of their digitised collections:

- Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh Herbarium uploaded their UK records
- National Museums Scotland added their marine strandings dataset
- Glasgow Museums BRC updated their mammal dataset and added four new insect collections.

A team of volunteers for Manx Natural Heritage is digitising the Calf of Man (Isle of Man) Bird Observatory Daily Logs. The first instalment, years 1959-64 and 1974-5, were uploaded with future updates planned for each year digitised. Outer Hebrides Biological Recording added a data resource of published insect records in the Outer Hebrides obtained from scientific literature.

Our Progress

Strategic Aim 1



Strategic Aim 2

Strategic Aim 3

Strategic Aim 4

Strategic Aim 5

We also saw the start of regular monthly updates of records from

iRecord  *to the NBN Atlas*, which included two new data partners: the Silphidae Recording Scheme and the Weevil and Bark Beetle Recording Scheme. We now update more than twenty data resources each month from iRecord, with the support of Martin Harvey from the [Biological Records Centre](#). 

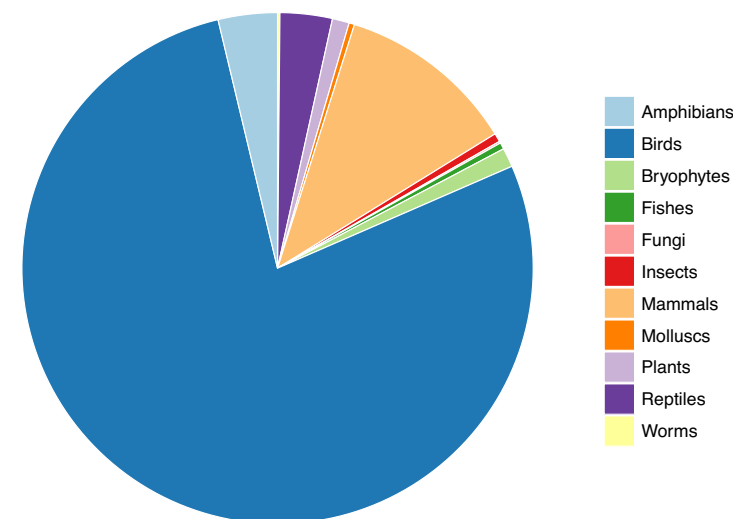
In addition, the following organisations added new data resources:

- The Biodiversity Information Service for Powys & Brecon Beacons National Park added five new data resources of records from local Wildlife Trust sites and reserves.
- In continuing to prepare for the launch of the NBN Atlas Northern Ireland, CEDaR added several terrestrial data resources of records across Ireland of lichens and dragonflies, and Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) collated species records.
- West Wales Biodiversity Information Centre added three new insect datasets for Diptera, Hemiptera and Orthoptera.
- Greenspace information for Greater London added tree records dating from mid 1980s to present.
- The Wildlife Information Centre added seven new data resources of records from public surveys, casual records and records from a local naturalist.

We also received data resources from Natural England for their great crested newt presence records from Class Licence return documents and Scottish Natural Heritage's Tayside beaver records from 2017-18.

The Earthworm Society of Britain added records from two research projects undertaken by Forest Research, Three Hagges Wood-Meadow added botanical and invertebrate survey records and the RSPB added five data resources of Capercaillie surveys and casual records.

Records on NBN Atlas at March 2019 by taxonomic group



Note: Record numbers were standardised by the number of taxa in each species group to give a truer comparison between species groups

Our Progress

[Strategic Aim 1](#)
[Strategic Aim 2](#)
[Strategic Aim 3](#)
[Strategic Aim 4](#)
[Strategic Aim 5](#)

STRATEGIC AIM 2

Make biological data and information available to everyone



Girrick Meadow © Michael Scott

“We will continue to collaborate to embed our collective data and knowledge creation at the heart of biodiversity learning and environmental decision-making.”

One of the main hopes for the NBN Atlas is that data will be increasingly used and cited in peer reviewed publications and research. This already happens, as evidenced by the use of NBN Atlas data in two recent publications.

Inferring status changes of three widespread British reptiles from NBN Atlas records

From the Herpetological Bulletin 143, 2018 - Paper written by Trevor J C Beebee and Sophia Ratcliffe

Records from the NBN Atlas were investigated to assess relative trends in population trajectories for three widespread reptiles (the slow-worm, *Anguis fragilis*, the northern viper, *Vipera berus* and the viviparous lizard, *Zootoca vivipara*) from 1970 to 2017.

In summary, unique 1 km² (U1KM) records for slow-worms and viviparous lizards increased over time whereas after the 1970s those for vipers did not. Viviparous lizard U1KM records increased concordantly in southern England and northern Scotland

Our Progress

[Strategic Aim 1](#)
[Strategic Aim 2](#)
[Strategic Aim 3](#)
[Strategic Aim 4](#)
[Strategic Aim 5](#)

suggesting that climate warming has not influenced population trends for this species in recent decades. In southern and eastern English vice counties with high proportions of arable farming, U1KM records for slow-worms and vipers trended downwards since the 1990s. These declines were not seen in the less intensively farmed west and north of Britain.

The opportunities, as well as some of the limitations, with using NBN Atlas records for this research were covered within the paper and the full paper can be viewed [online](#). [🔗](#)

Invasive alien shredders clear up invasive alien leaf litter

In April 2018, research scientist, Thomas Doherty-Bone, prepared a peer-reviewed paper on the combined impacts of invasive riparian trees and invasive crayfish. In its production he used a map derived from the NBN Atlas to show how these invasive species overlap in distribution.

The full paper can be viewed [online](#). [🔗](#)

“Surviving or Thriving” – NBN Atlas maps included in important exhibition

Royal Botanic Gardens Kew launched an exhibition “Surviving or Thriving: An exhibition on plants and us” at the Wellcome Trust Millennium Building, Wakehurst (home of the Millennium Seed Bank), on 21 March 2019. Running for 18 months, the specially-curated exhibition brings together information on the state of the world’s plants and what this means for us all.



UK Maps based on NBN Atlas data are being used in the exhibition and cover four species: Japanese Knotweed, Water Hyacinth, Himalayan Balsam and Rhododendron Ponticum.

Feedback on the exhibition is extremely positive and visitor numbers have reached 1,700 on some days.

Maintaining our global links

As the UK node for GBIF, the NBN Trust, and therefore the Network, has always had strong links with its global counterpart. Indeed, the UK is the second-largest national contributor of data to the global index.

Our Progress

[Strategic Aim 1](#)
[Strategic Aim 2](#)
[Strategic Aim 3](#)
[Strategic Aim 4](#)
[Strategic Aim 5](#)

In December 2018, the two organisations combined at the British Ecological Society's Annual Meeting and had a joint stand to promote our work to the over 1000 delegates. This event is a great opportunity to raise an organisation's profile within the global ecological science community and is an opportunity to be part of Europe's largest gathering of ecological scientists.

The stand was well visited over the three days with particular interest in the NBN Atlas, data flows and general information about the Network.

NBN Atlas & Hydroscape Integration

The UK Lakes Portal [🔗](#) was launched in March 2016 to showcase the wealth of physical and environmental data that's been collected on lakes across the UK, helping to make it easily accessible to the public and for anyone using the underlying data from the portal for their research.

Following the decommissioning of the NBN Gateway and the release of the NBN Atlas, the [Centre for Ecology and Hydrology](#) [🔗](#) (CEH) needed to do some work to ensure the Portal continued to connect to our vast biological data resource. With the combined efforts of CEH and the NBN Trust Development team, last year a major update was carried out which incorporated NBN Atlas data and now, one of the new and key components of the Portal is that it allows users to query the NBN Atlas for every lake, showing the flora and fauna that's been recorded there.

Liaison with NBN Atlas stakeholders

A successful stakeholder engagement day was held for the NBN Atlas Wales on 25 April 2018 at the National Library in Aberystwyth.

At the event, 21 stakeholders from across Wales attended in order to share their views on further development and uses of the NBN Atlas Wales.

Likewise, in Scotland, a successful stakeholder day was held for the NBN Atlas Scotland on 21 June at the Battleby Conference Centre, near Perth. At this event, 23 stakeholders from across Scotland attended to share their views of the NBN Atlas Scotland.

At both events, after a series of talks, the attendees worked together to create and prioritise a wish-list of development suggestions. In Wales this produced a list of 18 suggestions and in Scotland 40. These suggestions were then taken to the NBN development team and the NBN Atlas and NBN Atlas Scotland steering groups to discuss, prioritise and identify the next steps in taking them forward.

These events were a great opportunity to hear from new voices in the Welsh and Scottish recording communities and have helped shape the future direction of the NBN Atlas Wales and NBN Atlas Scotland.

Our Progress

[Strategic Aim 1](#)
[Strategic Aim 2](#)
[Strategic Aim 3](#)
[Strategic Aim 4](#)
[Strategic Aim 5](#)

STRATEGIC AIM 3

Captivate and engage people about wildlife



Brown hare © Derek Crawley

“We will promote the natural world, the enjoyment and importance of observing nature and biological recording and the utility and power of our shared data.”

The NBN Trust Secretariat is responsible for all communications from the NBN Trust and aims to promote the work of the Network. Some of the main ways in which we do this are highlighted in this section.

Network News

Network News continues to be one of the NBN Trust's main communications channels and is published every month. It contains articles from the NBN Trust, NBN Trust members, NBN data partners as well as any relevant stories which are of interest to the Network.

It is now sent to just under 1000 Network colleagues and has an exceptionally high click and open rate. The average email open rate¹ is 15 - 25% and the click rate average is 20-30%.

The figures overleaf show how Network News performs in comparison to these averages.

¹ Source - Campaign Monitor

Our Progress

[Strategic Aim 1](#)
[Strategic Aim 2](#)
[Strategic Aim 3](#)
[Strategic Aim 4](#)
[Strategic Aim 5](#)

For the period June 2018 (after GDPR came into effect) - March 2019 we had:

- Average number of recipients = 886
- Average open rate = 51%
- Average click rate = 39%

For the period April 2017 – March 2018 we had:

- Average number of recipients = 2116
- Average open rate = 31%
- Average click rate = 38%

In relation to all emails sent out using our email system during 2018/19:

- Total campaigns sent = 172
- Delivery rate = 99% (+0.7% on previous year)
- Open rate = 44% (+14%)
- Click rate = 14% (+2.8%)
- Unsubscribe rate = 0.4% (+0.1%)

This goes to show that the introduction of GDPR didn't adversely affect interest levels within the Network, in fact it helped. We now have a more engaged audience and in the time since GDPR came into effect, when subscribers had to opt-in to continue to receive Network News, over 100 additional people have signed up to receive the newsletter.

Media and social media

Achieving media coverage and gaining healthy numbers of followers of the NBN's social media channels continues to be key for the NBN Trust. These platforms help us to implement the Strategic Aim to captivate and engage people about wildlife and also to raise the profile of the Network, the UK Awards for Biological Recording and Information Sharing and the annual NBN Conference.

During the year 2018/19 the launch of the NBN Atlas Isle of Man received media coverage in the 'Isle of Man Courier', the 'Manx Independent' and the 'Isle of Man Examiner'. In addition, the NBN Atlas was mentioned in newspapers as diverse as 'The Yorkshire Post', the 'Yellow Advertiser' and the 'Ipswich Star'. Furthermore, the UK Awards for Biological Recording and Information Sharing 2018 gained coverage in media such as 'The Oban Times', 'The Bucks Herald' and the 'Isle of Wight County Press', showing that local and regional support for the NBN is as important as national.

NBN Trust's following on social media continued to grow this year, with the following increases from April 2018 to March 2019:

- 10% increase on Twitter from 4,808 to 5,309
- 18% increase on Facebook from 1,186 to 1,404

Looking in a little more depth, on Facebook the average post reach increased by 63% from 145 people to 237 people. This is encouraging, given that we rely on organic posts that are free of charge and not boosted by paying advertising fees.

Our Progress

[Strategic Aim 1](#)
[Strategic Aim 2](#)
[Strategic Aim 3](#)
[Strategic Aim 4](#)
[Strategic Aim 5](#)

On Twitter, the number of NBN Tweets seen by others (Tweet impressions) has decreased by 4% from 21K to 20.1K. However, the number of followers mentioning the NBN has increased by 43% from 70+ mentions to 100+ mentions. Similarly, the number of followers visiting NBN Trust's Twitter profile has increased by 40% from 555 to 776. Once again, this is a good performance considering that we are not boosting Tweets by paying advertising fees.

Social media continues to be an important communications channel and we are launching an NBN Trust Instagram page in 2019/20.

UK Awards for Biological Recording and Information Sharing 2018

The fourth UK Awards for Biological Recording and Information Sharing celebrated the achievements of individuals and groups of wildlife recorders and their contribution to conservation efforts in this country. This year the Award prizes were again sponsored by Opticron, Paramo Directional Clothing and the Field Studies Council. In addition, three new organisations – Nature Photographers Ltd, British Wildlife and NHBS – sponsored the Award prizes for the first time. We are very grateful to all our sponsors for their support.

We received 35 nominations – which was disappointing – as it was fewer than in the previous year. However, the level of information on the nomination forms was more in depth and the calibre of the nominees was extremely high.



© NBN TRUST

Our Progress

[Strategic Aim 1](#)
[Strategic Aim 2](#)
[Strategic Aim 3](#)
[Strategic Aim 4](#)
[Strategic Aim 5](#)

We received:

- 18 nominations for the Gilbert White Adult Award for recording terrestrial and freshwater wildlife
- Two nominations for the Gilbert White Youth Award for recording terrestrial and freshwater wildlife
- Three nominations for the David Robertson Adult Award for recording marine and coastal wildlife
- No nominations for the David Robertson Youth Award for recording marine and coastal wildlife
- Seven nominations for the Lynne Farrell Group Award for wildlife recording
- Five nominations for the Adult Newcomer Award for wildlife recording

For the first time, we were pleased to announce the shortlist of nominees in each category and thanks to the generosity of our sponsors were able to present the runners up with prizes at the Awards ceremony in November.

The five winners and runners up were:

Gilbert White Adult Award 2018

Winner – Trevor James

Runner up – Sarah Whild

Gilbert White Youth Award 2018

Winner – Mya-Rose Craig

Runner up – Dylan Jenkins

David Robertson Adult Award 2018

Winner – Bryony Chapman

Runner up – Hannah Grist

Adult Newcomer Award 2018

Winner – George Greiff

Runner up – Fiona Rock

Lynne Farrell Group Award 2018

Winner – Capturing Our Coast

Runner up – LERC Wales

In addition to the publicly nominated awards, the 2018 John Sawyer NBN Open Data Award was presented to the Wildlife Trusts.



Minnow © Dave Kilbey

Our Progress

[Strategic Aim 1](#)
[Strategic Aim 2](#)
[Strategic Aim 3](#)
[Strategic Aim 4](#)
[Strategic Aim 5](#)

STRATEGIC AIM 4

Provide the best biological information management infrastructure



Sundew © Dave Kilbey

“We will ensure stability, security and usability for an increasingly mature data management infrastructure”

This Strategic Aim predominantly relates to the NBN Atlas and so it provides a great opportunity to give an update on the main work strands from 2018/19.

Responding to need

During 2018 a range of improvements and new functionality were incorporated into the NBN Atlas. Having recruited a Systems Developer and a Technical and Data Partner Support Officer in the latter half of 2017, we have been able to further customise the NBN Atlas, engage with users to address some of the more pressing bugs and website issues, as well as to load and process a wide range of datasets.

While our capacity is still limited, we will be able to further enhance our technical team in the coming year thanks to the National Lottery Heritage Fund grant.

Our Progress

[Strategic Aim 1](#)
[Strategic Aim 2](#)
[Strategic Aim 3](#)
[Strategic Aim 4](#)
[Strategic Aim 5](#)


A new NBN Atlas

On 27 April 2018, during Manx Wildlife Week, another new NBN Atlas, the NBN Atlas Isle of Man, was officially launched.

This new NBN Atlas came about through a partnership between Manx National Heritage, Manx Biodiversity Partnership, Manx BirdLife, Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture (DEFA) and the NBN Trust.


Much of the data comes from surveys carried out by these lead organisations, but also includes records from individual wildlife recorders and several specialist groups including Manx Bat Group, Isle of Man Fungus Group, Manx Basking Shark Watch and Manx Bird Atlas (non-avian records).

Invasive Non-Native Species

In November 2018, the NBN Atlas Wales released the [Invasive Non-Native Species \(INNS\) Portal](#).  The Portal supplements the GB Non-native Species Information Portal and its Alerts mechanism by providing a new facility to view and search for INNS specifically of interest to Wales. This portal includes new functionality, such as the mapping of the list of species results and filtering results by species list, which is in turn available to be taken up into other NBN Atlas tools.



Species dictionary update

In April 2018 we updated the species dictionary which is used by the NBN Atlas. This dictionary is based on the [UK Species Inventory database](#)  (UKSI), which is curated by the Natural History Museum. In future we intend to update the species dictionary every four months to keep the NBN Atlas closely aligned with the taxonomic backbone for the UK.

Annotations


In January 2019 we added functionality to allow users to annotate records, in order to flag-up potential problems with particular data records. These annotations are then referred to the data owners to review, with the intention of improving the quality of the data holdings on the NBN Atlas and providing a space to respond to data queries.

The new functionality has been well received by both data partners and general users of the NBN Atlas.

Our Progress

[Strategic Aim 1](#)
[Strategic Aim 2](#)
[Strategic Aim 3](#)
[Strategic Aim 4](#)
[Strategic Aim 5](#)

Conservation Evidence plugin

In July 2018, we added the Conservation Evidence plugin, developed by Cambridge University, to the Literature references for our species pages. This plugin provides easy access to relevant studies hosted on the [Conservation Evidence website](#). 

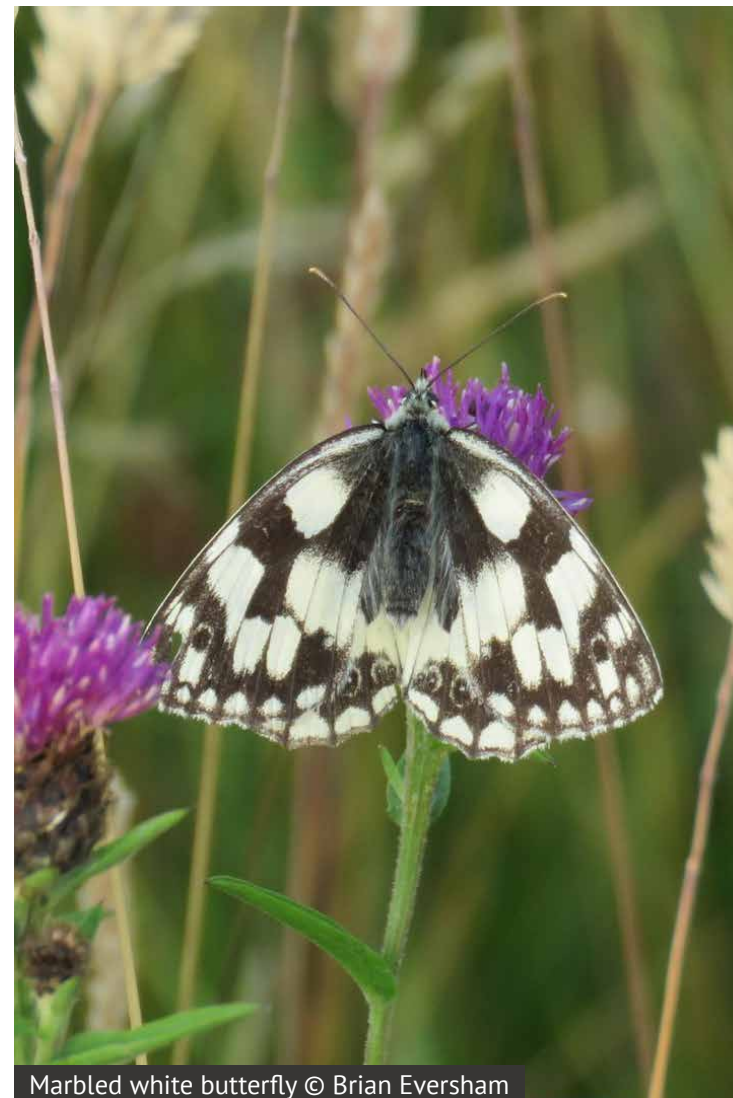
Spatial layer Automatic Data Harvester

With support from the EPCC supercomputing centre at the University of Edinburgh, we developed an Automatic Data Harvester (ADH) to ensure that the 3rd party spatial data that is served by the NBN Atlas is kept up to date. The tool is still under development to fully integrate it into our spatial data publishing workflow, but the components to harvest updated spatial layers (currently drawn from Scottish Natural Heritage) are working well.

Download improvements and change in download reasons

Over the course of the year we have made various improvements to the data download tool, including expanding the range of fields that can be included in custom and Darwin Core downloads, and general improvements to the stability of the download service.

The list of reasons that users refer to when performing a download have also been reviewed. The reasons have been amended to better reflect the types of user in the UK, and to articulate commercial use more clearly.



Marbled white butterfly © Brian Eversham

Our Progress

[Strategic Aim 1](#)
[Strategic Aim 2](#)
[Strategic Aim 3](#)
[Strategic Aim 4](#)
[Strategic Aim 5](#)

Also, in relation to this, in April 2018 we made some changes to the NBN Atlas [Terms of Use](#) and [Guidance for Using data](#).

The main change related to the introduction of a fixed charge notice which can be issued if a data user is found to have breached the Data Partner's Terms, NBN Atlas Terms of Use or the licence conditions associated with data accessed through the NBN Atlas.

All data on the NBN Atlas is governed by one of four data licences with the CC-BY-NC licence not allowing commercial use of the data. Downloading or viewing data available on the NBN Atlas under a CC-BY-NC licence, for the purposes of producing a report or advice for which the data user is receiving any sort of payment (including cost recovery), is considered to be a breach of the licence.



Red deer © Derek Crawley

With the changes to these Terms in mind, when downloading data, the NBN Atlas user now has to check a box to indicate that they understand and accept that any CC-BY-NC licensed records must not be used for commercial purposes without the permission of the data partner and that breach of the licence conditions may result in a fixed charge notice.

Information on the breach of licences and how to highlight them can be found on the [NBN Atlas Help and Documentation Portal](#).

Sensitive species enhanced access

In March 2019, we released new functionality to allow designated users to access higher-resolution records for sensitive species, i.e. those species where release of information detailing its location could cause it to be damaged or suffer other related environmental harm. Data owners can manage which users are granted enhanced access to their datasets and these permissions can be granted on a dataset- and taxon- basis, providing a high degree of control over what data are made available. The higher resolution records are not visible on the NBN Atlas interface, but are included in data downloads for the designated users. There will be further enhancements to this functionality in future.

Our Progress

[Strategic Aim 1](#)
[Strategic Aim 2](#)
[Strategic Aim 3](#)
[Strategic Aim 4](#)
[Strategic Aim 5](#)

STRATEGIC AIM 5


Support the development of the NBN, its Board and its members




© NBN TRUST

“ We will support and grow our Network as an indispensable partnership for nature and in the successful implementation of this strategy ”

Becoming more sustainable

In March 2019, the NBN Trust was delighted to receive a [National Lottery Heritage Fund](#)  grant of £190,500 to explore how it can become more financially sustainable.

In particular, this meant that the NBN Trust would have the resources to be more responsive to the needs of users of the NBN Atlas and keep up to date with rapidly changing technological advances, as well as enthusing and engaging more people about the wonders of British wildlife.

Our plans for the future, with the announcement of this new funding, can be found in the section entitled “[Our Future](#)”. 



Our Progress

[Strategic Aim 1](#)
[Strategic Aim 2](#)
[Strategic Aim 3](#)
[Strategic Aim 4](#)
[Strategic Aim 5](#)

A new Patron

In November 2018, we were delighted to announce that Professor Sir John Lawton CBE FRS, would become the new Patron of the NBN Trust. He took over from The Earl of Selborne, who retired in 2017 after 5 years in the role.

Professor Lawton will be known to many within the Network for his work as an environmental scientist, educator and science administrator. He was Chairman of the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution from 2005 until 2011, and formerly Chief Executive of the Natural Environment Research Council (1999-2005), and Director of the Centre for Population Biology at Imperial College (1989-1999). He trained as a zoologist at the University of Durham, and subsequently held posts at Oxford and York Universities. His scientific interests have focussed on the population dynamics and biodiversity of birds and insects, with emphasis over the last three decades on the impacts of global environmental change. He was chair of the Making Space for Nature report to Defra (2010) that led to the establishment of Nature Improvement Areas in England.

John is a Past President of the British Ecological Society, a former Chairman of RSPB Council (and currently a Vice-president of RSPB), and currently President (and formerly Chairman) of the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust; he is also currently Chairman of the York Museums Trust. He was elected FRS (Fellow of the Royal Society) in 1989, awarded a CBE in 1997 and knighted in 2005 for his contributions to ecological science. He has been awarded numerous other national and

international prizes, including the Japan Prize 2004, and was elected as a Foreign Member of both the US National Academy of Sciences and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 2008.

We look forward to the support of our new Patron over the coming years.



Sir John Lawton © Yorkshire Wildlife Trust

Our Progress

[Strategic Aim 1](#)
[Strategic Aim 2](#)
[Strategic Aim 3](#)
[Strategic Aim 4](#)
[Strategic Aim 5](#)


NBN Stakeholder Advisory Group

Following a governance review, and as part of our strategic aim to engage and involve NBN members in delivering the strategy, *we have created a new NBN Stakeholder Advisory Group. This group will provide the opportunity for Network participants to share their views and expertise and will act as a line of communication to the Board of the NBN Trust.* The Stakeholder Advisory Group can also discuss strategic decisions on the direction of the NBN and NBN Trust.

Representatives on this group must be NBN Trust members, either individual or organisational, and between them embody the diversity of the NBN membership and all aspects of the Network including recorders, LERCs, schemes and societies, NGOs, consultants, academia, museums and government statutory bodies.

Scottish Biodiversity Information Forum report for the year

Written by Rachel Tierney, SBIF Development Officer and Christine Johnston NBN Scottish Liaison Officer

Many of you will, we hope, have seen the final output from the SBIF Review, [A Review of the Biological Recording Infrastructure in Scotland](#),  which was launched on 14 November 2018. This document “... is the most comprehensive appraisal of citizen science wildlife recording and data management to-date²” and is a cumulation of almost two years of stakeholder engagement and information gathering.

It was a busy year finalising the business case and supporting evidence from the questionnaire, workshops and interviews as well as the lead up to the publication of the Review itself. The Review concluded with 24 recommendations to transform Scotland’s biological recording infrastructure through addressing problems associated with data flows, services, governance and funding. Fundamentally, the Review articulated the need for substantially greater investment in our biological recording community and presented a costed business case for public funding to cover perennial core operating costs.

We were delighted to be shortlisted for the Nature of Scotland Awards, recognition of how our community came together with energy, innovation and passion to create our blueprint for the future. It has been a huge community effort and we are grateful to everyone who contributed their valuable insights into the biological recording community. We would also like to thank Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) for funding the SBIF Development Officer and Scottish Wildlife Trust for hosting Rachel Tierney in this role. This additional capacity ensured we could maintain momentum while publishing and advocating the outcomes of the Review across a range of sectors including government.


Over the next year, the SBIF Advisory Group, in partnership with SNH, will be developing an implementation plan and exploring the options for delivery. We will be working closely with the

² Francesca Osowska, SNH Chief Executive Officer:
<https://www.nature.scot/not-too-late-act-climate-change>

Our Progress

[Strategic Aim 1](#)
[Strategic Aim 2](#)
[Strategic Aim 3](#)
[Strategic Aim 4](#)
[Strategic Aim 5](#)

Scottish LERCs, NBN Trust, Biological Records Centre and other stakeholders throughout this exercise and look forward to continuing to work with the biological recording community both in Scotland, and further afield, to realise our vision together and make our community a world leader in collecting, sharing and using biodiversity information.

If you haven't yet seen the SBIF Review, download your copy from the SBIF pages³ on the NBN website, and keep up to date with progress via the SBIF Blog⁴ and on Twitter [@SB_info_forum](#). 



18

Presentations



4

Stakeholder meetings



14

Articles



5

Advocacy events



5

SBIF blogs



1

Award Shortlisting

Honorary Members 2018

As has become our tradition, we were delighted to bestow this year's Honorary Membership award during the NBN Conference. In 2018 the Board once again decided to award it to two very worthy recipients – Sue Townsend and Dr. Sarah Whild.

These two individuals have made valuable contributions whilst working apart, but their collaboration over twenty plus years has been enormously important for the wider NBN in many ways.

The collaboration, steered by them, between the Field Studies Council and the University of Birmingham (and, latterly, Manchester Metropolitan University) has resulted in hundreds of students passing through Certificate, Diploma and Masters' courses in biological recording. This has benefited volunteer recorders, professional surveyors, conservationists, consultants and local authority staff (to identify just a few) and those with whom they work, raising standards and helping to promote the value of and need for biological recording much more widely.

³ <https://nbn.org.uk/about-us/where-we-are/in-scotland/the-sbif-review/sbif-review-archives/>

⁴ <https://nbn.org.uk/blogs/sbif-blog/>

Our Progress

[Strategic Aim 1](#)
[Strategic Aim 2](#)
[Strategic Aim 3](#)
[Strategic Aim 4](#)
[Strategic Aim 5](#)

Dr. Sarah Whild

Sarah has been a leading light within the Botanical Society of Britain and Ireland for many years and has been tireless in her efforts to foster support for education and training, also, successfully, arguing that the National Forum for Biological Recording introduce a student membership fee, which has helped boost Forum member numbers. She was also one of the lead authors on the Flora for Shropshire.

Sue Townsend

After long service as Head of Centre at Preston Montford, which also included setting up the first grant-funded projects to help fill not only gaps in invertebrate recording, but gaps in expertise, Sue persuaded the Field Studies Council to give her a new role as Head of Biodiversity. The most obvious result has been a series of major grant-aided projects, following on from Invertebrate Challenge: Tomorrow's Biodiversity and, most recently, Biolinks which will have huge impacts across London and the West Midlands. She has also managed to influence the extent to which the FSC supports and engages with biological recording at and around its residential centres.

18th NBN Conference – “The NBN in a changing climate”

Over 160 delegates attended the 2018 NBN Conference, which was held in Nottingham, the home of the NBN Trust Secretariat, for the first time in its history. A cross section of organisations were represented and included delegates from wildlife NGOs,

academia, local environmental records centres, national recording schemes, consultancies, students and individuals all interested in biodiversity data and biological recording.

There were two keynote addresses, given by Professor Adam Hart, Professor of Science Communication at the University of Gloucestershire and Deborah Boobyer, Defra Scientist; the annual Sir John Burnett Memorial lecture, given by Professor Jane Memmott; 18 presentations and an afternoon of Network Knowledge Exchange sessions - so we believe we offered something for everyone!

As well as the popular opportunity to network at these events, social media buzzed for the two days, thanks to our active audience, and was also helped by the transmission of three Facebook Live broadcasts.



© NBN TRUST



© NBN TRUST

OUR VALUED MEMBERS



Common frog © Dave Kilbey

Our Valued Members

Scottish Natural Heritage

Countryside Jobs Service

RECORD

OUR VALUED MEMBERS

As mentioned in our main introduction to this report, the NBN Trust is a membership organisation. *Our members are diverse with their own aims and objectives, but they are playing their part in the Network through supporting the NBN Strategy and Vision* and helping to contribute in additional ways to the work of the Network. The Network is strengthened by the ability of its partners to work together and, as a charity, the NBN Trust relies on membership income to help it continue its work.

Members of the NBN Trust may also be data partners, but being a data partner doesn't necessarily mean that an organisation is also a member of the NBN Trust. Members pay an annual fee to the NBN Trust or, if their organisation meets certain criteria, membership is available free of charge, or at a reduced rate, to organisations which supply data to the NBN Atlas.

On the following pages we bring you reports from a cross section of a few NBN Trust members who give an insight into their work and their support for the NBN.

As at 31 March 2019



121

Organisations



51

Individual



16


Award



15

Honorary

203 Total

A list of NBN Trust members can be found on the [NBN website](#). 

Our Valued Members

[Scottish Natural Heritage](#)

[Countryside Jobs Service](#)

[RECORD](#)

SCOTTISH NATURAL HERITAGE



Written by Colin McLeod, Data Manager

Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) is Scotland's statutory nature conservation agency. We promote, care for and improve Scotland's natural heritage, we enable a greater awareness of nature and help people to enjoy nature responsibly, and we promote the sustainable use of Scotland's natural heritage. We regularly monitor and report on our progress in reaching the natural heritage outcomes in our corporate and business plans.


SNH oversees Scotland's protected areas, or designated sites, to ensure that their natural features of special interest remain in good health for all to enjoy, now and in the future. SNH directly manages 29 of Scotland's 43 National Nature Reserves, advises on the management of others and monitors the condition of over 1400 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Natura sites. Monitoring the condition of these protected areas helps us to maintain their value.

SNH provides advice on avoiding harm to protected species, and we work to ensure that legislation is enforced, but can licence, for certain specific purposes, actions that would otherwise constitute an offence against a protected species. SNH works

with others to prevent the spread of damaging invasive non-native species and is the lead organisation for non-native species on land. We encourage citizen science initiatives as a way of increasing public engagement, as well as providing data to support science and conservation.

As well as creating a *need* for accurate, up-to-date biological records of a wide range of taxonomic groups across the full breadth of Scotland, all these activities *generate* data, and in addition we have supported various partner organisations in digitising and mobilising valuable legacy data.

SNH is committed to Open Data, and the NBN Atlas allows us to share the biological data that we collect and make use of data from other providers. While most records can be made publicly available at full capture-level resolution, some species are sensitive and records can only be published at lower resolution. However, those involved in, for example, site management or planning casework, have to know the exact location of each record. Along with other agencies, SNH supported the NBN Trust in developing the facility to share full details with those with 'a need to know', while maintaining necessary confidentiality to protect vulnerable species from disturbance or persecution.

www.nature.scot 

Our Valued Members

Scottish Natural Heritage

Countryside Jobs Service

RECORD

COUNTRYSIDE JOBS SERVICE



Written by Kerry Humphreys, CJS Editor

In 1994 a little newsletter for countryside rangers was first posted out. In the 25 years since, Countryside Jobs Service has grown to become the countryside, conservation, ecology and wildlife sectors' leading source of information, news and job adverts for both paid and voluntary roles reaching around 100,000 readers across the country in all sectors every month.

Why would publishers decide to become National Biodiversity Network supporters? Simply because the one thing that has not changed over the years is our desire to make a difference, however small, to the sector and help those working in it.

Whilst we might not be able to feed in sightings data or use the wonderful NBN Atlas for our work, we can help increase people's awareness of the Network, highlight what data and sightings are needed and what information, advice and support is already available through the Network and the NBN Atlas. In this way we can assist in ensuring that those responsible for making decisions about our natural environment and its wildlife have access to the most up to date, accurate data to help guide them towards the best results and shape future policies. It was our

desire to help where we can that was one of the major factors in deciding to become corporate supporters of the National Biodiversity Network Trust.

CJS works with many of the member organisations of the Network as well as directly with NBN Trust and over many years has advertised its jobs, promoted its information, published the latest news and reports and watched the data roll in for the many surveys, all the while quietly supporting everything the Network, and the Trust's member organisations, do and stand for. The collaborative nature of the Network partnership is something that the CJS Team understands and wishes to help succeed.

During our, so far short, time supporting the Network we have published an introductory article highlighting the work of the Network, sent out a call for data recorders to help cover gaps in the NBN Atlas, promoted the many survey opportunities and recording events being run by members of the Network, circulated details of the UK Awards for Biological Recording and Information Sharing and, of course, advertised the few vacancies within the Network itself.

The Team behind CJS may no longer be part of the boots on the ground staff, but we firmly believe in supporting those who are, in whatever way we can and by becoming a corporate supporter of the NBN Trust, we are able to make a small contribution to the important work being done to conserve our landscapes and wildlife.

www.countryside-jobs.com 

Our Valued Members

Scottish Natural Heritage

Countryside Jobs Service

RECORD

RECORD



Written by Eric Fletcher, Manager

RECORD is the Local Environmental Records Centre (LERC) for Cheshire, Halton, Warrington and Wirral and a proud member of ALERC (The Association of Local Environmental Records Centres). It is the local facility for the storage, management and usage of wildlife records; providing real data for environmentalists, ecologists, planners and other organisations upon which, to base decisions. In addition, RECORD provides a wealth of advice, feedback and support to local biological recorders including complete beginners, amateur naturalists, professionals and county recorders.

Over the last year (2018), we have been working on a Postcode Lottery Funded Project called The Community Nature Hub (CNH). The CNH Project was developed as a result of growing interest in wildlife and wildlife recording, shown by local community groups. Many of these groups manage land on behalf of their community and were seeking assistance in understanding what wildlife they had and how they could identify and record it. Ultimately, they were keen to use their new skills to enthuse others and encourage them to identify and record wildlife too, acting as champions for wildlife recording.

The funding from Postcode Lottery provided the means for us to support community groups in developing wildlife recording

initiatives, building a baseline dataset and developing their wildlife recording skills. We also worked with regional and national experts to provide species identification workshops, focussed around under recorded taxa and those where we lacked local expertise. We were able to call on colleagues from across the NBN to provide the expertise needed for delivering the workshops. Despite working as part of the NBN for nearly fifteen years, I am still astounded by the warmth and generosity of the people who make up the Network. There is always assistance and enthusiasm at the end of a phone, email or letter and the willingness to travel, often long distances, to share their knowledge in person.

Although relatively small scale, projects like the Community Nature Hub perform a vital function in offering a local means of public engagement in wildlife identification training and recording. Local opportunities for public involvement in wildlife recording, such as the CNH Project, and the myriad other opportunities delivered by the ALERC membership across the UK, provide an excellent conduit through which to recruit and train future generations of naturalists. In addition, the biological records generated through training workshops and recording days fill gaps in our collective knowledge, inform practical conservation and, fundamentally, inspire people.

For us, the CNH Project was about working alongside expert naturalists to achieve something neither could in isolation. The whole appeal of the National Biodiversity Network is that you are working with people who share the same ideals and aspirations, which makes for an easy partnership and the best outcomes.

www.record-lrc.co.uk 

OUR VALUED DATA PARTNERS



Fennel © Dave Kilbey

Our Valued Data Partners

Biodiversity information Service for Powys and the Brecon Beacons National Park (BIS)

Conchological Society of Great Britain & Ireland


Highland Biological Recording Group (HBRG)

People's Trust for Endangered Species

OUR VALUED DATA PARTNERS

Quite simply, without its data partners, the NBN Atlas would not exist, the NBN Trust would not be able to realise its vision and the Network would not function. Nature would lose out. The NBN Trust values the vital contributions of its data partners and tries to show its appreciation of them as often as it can.

On the following pages we bring you some case studies from a selection of the over 140 NBN Atlas data partners who explain the value of sharing their data in this way.

A list of data partners can be found on the [NBN Atlas](#). 



Our Valued Data Partners

Biodiversity information Service for Powys and the Brecon Beacons National Park (BIS)

Conchological Society of Great Britain & Ireland

Highland Biological Recording Group (HBRG)

People's Trust for Endangered Species

BIODIVERSITY INFORMATION SERVICE FOR POWYS AND THE BRECON BEACONS NATIONAL PARK (BIS)



Written by Jo Milborrow, Data Officer

BIS is the Local Environmental Record Centre (LERC) for Powys and the Brecon Beacons National Park. As the first record centre in Wales, we have been operating since 2000 collating, managing and making biodiversity data available to decision makers, conservationists, taxon experts and members of the public.

Making biodiversity data accessible is at the heart of what we do, so providing data to the NBN Atlas fits with our vision and is something we have been doing for many years. Non-sensitive data are publicly viewable via Wales's online data portal called Aderyn and shared with the NBN Atlas at various resolutions. We are also able to grant additional levels of access to our partners such as Natural Resources Wales (NRW), Local Authorities and Utility companies through Aderyn as well as to county recorders, Wildlife Trusts and conservation projects.

We share various datasets with the NBN Atlas totalling over 850,000 records at appropriate resolutions. We strive to



keep these datasets current and send a complete update including new and recently verified records every six months. We have recently improved how we share Invasive and Non-Native Species records. These are now shared quarterly at full resolution with a CC-BY licence meaning that they are up to date and available for all to use. We feel this is an important step to help inform research and eradication work and demonstrates how LERC's can contribute to this valuable work.

As an example of how data flows through BIS, and how the NBN Atlas helps us to reach more users, we can take one year and examine who has used the records we hold and why. In 2018 just over 2.5 million records were accessed in the BIS area. Figure one (over the page) shows that half of these were used by our national and local partners using Aderyn, plus nearly a third of the total were downloaded through the NBN Atlas. Of these, the majority of users listed 'research' or 'education' as

Our Valued Data Partners

Biodiversity information Service for Powys and the Brecon Beacons National Park (BIS)

Conchological Society of Great Britain & Ireland

Highland Biological Recording Group (HBRG)

People's Trust for Endangered Species

the reason for download. This highlights how the NBN Atlas is enabling wider use of the data we hold and further contributing to conservation research and education.

BIS also values the NBN Atlas as a source of data, having accessed and downloaded over 63,000 records with OGL and CC-BY licences since the creation of the Atlas. These records cover several taxa for which we would otherwise hold few records. In Wales we also use the NBN Atlas as a method of downloading Natural Resources Wales (NRW) Headquarters records to the Welsh LERC's, and although this route is not perfect and presents significant challenges around sensitive species records, we are pleased that the NBN has started to address this by introducing a tool to manage and allow enhanced access.

BIS is one of four LERC's in Wales and we have all joined forces to create the first consortium of LERCs. We pool the data we hold and provide seamless and consistent data provision across the whole of Wales. This enables us to work with several national partners and to streamline our data exchanges with National Schemes and Societies and researchers. Last year LERC Wales was honoured to be runners up for the NBN Lynne Farrell Group Award for wildlife recording for the work we have done developing and supporting the recording community in Wales. This is work that we continue to do through recording days, training events, forums and tools such as the bilingual LERC Wales app for wildlife recording. We are also pleased to welcome the addition of the NBN Atlas Wales to the suite of NBN sites, giving a specific view on biodiversity data in Wales and supporting some functionality in the Welsh language.

Figure 1. Records accessed in 2018 in the BIS area, categorised by user.



www.bis.org.uk

Our Valued Data Partners

Biodiversity information Service for Powys and the Brecon Beacons National Park (BIS)

Conchological Society of Great Britain & Ireland

Highland Biological Recording Group (HBRG)

People's Trust for Endangered Species

CONCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN & IRELAND



The
Conchological
Society
of Great Britain & Ireland

Written by Ben Rowson – Conchological Society's Honorary Non-marine Recorder

One of the Conchological Society's preoccupations, ever since it was founded in Leeds in 1876, has been the purposeful recording of geographical distributions of both marine and nonmarine molluscs. Non-marine molluscs comprise terrestrial



Part of a collection of freshwater snails
© Amgueddfa Cymru National Museum Wales

snails (now totalling approximately 150 species), terrestrial slugs (45 species) freshwater snails (40 species), and freshwater bivalves (30 species). A few of these are strictly coastal animals in which the boundary between a marine and non-marine life history is blurred – but only a few. The Society's two recording initiatives have thus been separate for over 140 years, although in practice many members are equally fond of both. Many mollusc species have to be collected and examined for accurate identification, so there is a strong overlap with the pastime of shell collecting and (as with other invertebrate schemes) with natural history museums.

The founding members enthusiastically adopted the Watsonian vice-county system for their "Census" of non-marine species. Several members were already keen Yorkshire recorders, but the Society's first record was of *Unio tumidus* (the Swollen River Mussel) from the River Frome at Stapleton, West Gloucestershire (VC34) by Miss F. M. Hele on 12 October 1876. A contemporary record would probably include a grid reference, and omit the "Miss", but the Scheme was otherwise off to an excellent start. All first vice-county records were strictly checked and had to be supported by voucher specimens sent to the Society. Recording continued throughout both Britain and Ireland in this and supplementary ways, with the 10km grid square system being adopted in 1961. Michael Kerney's indispensable Atlas was published by the Society in 1976 and 1999, and included records dating part of a collection of freshwater snails back to 1670. Digitisation began in this era and now most records are received digitally. Twenty years later, the non-marine scheme now supplies over 275,000

Our Valued Data Partners

Biodiversity information Service for Powys and the Brecon Beacons National Park (BIS)

Conchological Society of Great Britain & Ireland

Highland Biological Recording Group (HBRG)

People's Trust for Endangered Species

accepted records at 10km or better resolution to the NBN Atlas. Here they are freely available and form the backbone of the distribution maps of virtually all our non-marine mollusc species. This allows very wide access to the Society's datasets, from the local to the national and international level (the data from the Society's Marine Mollusc Recording Scheme are also accessible in this way). This makes it easier for the data to be included in research and conservation initiatives, and helps the Society meet its objective of promoting the study of the Mollusca in its widest aspect for the benefit of the public.

A significant number of non-native slug, snail and bivalve species, new to our fauna, have been reported in recent years. These form one of the most dynamic areas of recording. One conspicuous snail species that is established and has begun to spread, potentially to almost any populated area, is *Helix lucorum* (the "Turkish Escargot"). This very large and highly edible snail species is a close relative of the protected *Helix pomatia* (Roman Snail) of southern England, but can be distinguished by the colour and pattern of the shell. Found in west London in the late 2000s, it has also spread to Gloucestershire and Glamorgan. Records of this species are still being compiled and can be submitted on iRecord. Following verification, such records will be included in the Society's dataset and, in due course, will also be available via the NBN Atlas.

www.conchsoc.org



A recent non-marine field meeting
© Amgueddfa Cymru National Museum Wales

Our Valued Data Partners

Biodiversity information Service for Powys and the Brecon Beacons National Park (BIS)

Conchological Society of Great Britain & Ireland

Highland Biological Recording Group (HBRG)

People's Trust for Endangered Species

HIGHLAND BIOLOGICAL RECORDING GROUP (HBRG)



Written by Murdo Macdonald, HBRG Data Manager

In 2004 the Highland Biological Recording Group (HBRG) was asked by Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) if we would be interested in placing our data on what was then the infant NBN Gateway. It seemed a good idea, as the database started by HBRG in 1986 had lost its resourcing. SNH funded us from then to the present, augmented at times by the Highland Biodiversity Partnership. We had no idea that we would, in 2019, still be funded by annual grants or that the ever-growing database would still be on a laptop in a spare room operated by someone well on the wrong side of middle-age. But that is another story!

The opportunity to have our data placed in the public domain was embraced enthusiastically by the Group, which comprises highly skilled, amateur (in the best sense) naturalists with wide taxonomic expertise working in a large area filled with interesting species. Our members were delighted to see that their activities were expanding the boundaries of knowledge and being used by the wider naturalist, academic and educational

communities. Some simply enjoyed seeing 'their dots' on the maps. Others saw filling blank spaces on maps as a challenge.

HBRG now has nearly a quarter of a million records on the NBN Atlas, and all are available in full (except for sensitive species) and with CC-BY licences. We hold a relatively small number of vascular plant and bird records locally, leaving these to the better-resourced specialist organisations. In the last few years we have formed an alliance for funding with our neighbouring groups in the Argyll Biological Records Centre and Outer Hebrides Biological Recording, very similar organisations to HBRG, together covering almost half the land area of Scotland. Between us we have nearly 400,000 records on the NBN Atlas and update twice a year. This allows the use of the wonderful EasyMaps widget in websites and other applications. We use it a lot to present NBN Atlas maps in a simple and flexible form,



© The late Abby Rhodes

Our Valued Data Partners

Biodiversity information Service for Powys and the Brecon Beacons National Park (BIS)

Conchological Society of Great Britain & Ireland

Highland Biological Recording Group (HBRG)

People's Trust for Endangered Species

which is appreciated by some of our members who find the NBN Atlas interface difficult to use.

This provides a huge resource for wildlife information in the north, but the efforts of our members have produced some rather misleading maps. One of my favourites is that of the Heath Bumblebee *Bombus jonellus*, which, taken at face value, suggests that there is a bee-proof fence along the Highland Council border. As with so many species, the dots show the distribution of interested naturalists (and organisations that provide data to the NBN Atlas), or difficulty of identification, rather than the wildlife itself.

Resident naturalists in the north have the advantage of accumulating records of species active outside the main holiday periods for English entomologists. The unsuspected presence of species like the flies *Lispocephala pallipalpis* (new to Scotland) and *Botria subalpina* (new to the UK), now known to be common spring fliers, can be disseminated rapidly through the NBN Atlas, not only in the UK, but globally through its links to GBIF.

www.hbrg.org.uk



Saxifraga oppositifolia Purple Saxifrage, © Dave Genney

Our Valued Data Partners

Biodiversity information Service for Powys and the Brecon Beacons National Park (BIS)

Conchological Society of Great Britain & Ireland

Highland Biological Recording Group (HBRG)

People's Trust for Endangered Species

PEOPLE'S TRUST FOR ENDANGERED SPECIES



Written by Emily Marnham, Key Species Monitoring and Data Officer

People's Trust for Endangered Species (PTES) has been standing up for wildlife for over 40 years. We protect some of our most threatened wildlife species and habitats, and provide practical conservation support through research, grants, wildlife surveys, publications and public events. Our current priority species and habitats include hazel dormice, hedgehogs, water voles, stag beetles, noble chafers, traditional orchards, native woodlands, wood pasture and parklands and hedgerows.

Everything we do is based on scientific evidence. One of the ways we gather these data is through the many wildlife surveys we run. They range from collecting one-off sightings of stag beetles and hedgehogs through to collating detailed biometric data on dormice at monitoring sites and assessing the habitat condition of traditional orchards. Our surveys are conducted by thousands of people each year and every record adds to our knowledge and underpins our efforts to conserve wildlife.

As well as using the data to inform our conservation strategy, we believe it's important to share the information gathered with as many organisations and people as possible. We submit our data to statutory organisations so they can use it for their reporting purposes and give academics access for scientific research. However, as a small charity we have a limited capacity to disseminate data, so we use the NBN Atlas to ensure the data can be accessed by the public and other organisations. Being able to direct interested members of the public to the NBN Atlas to access the data and produce tailored maps of those records, makes life a lot easier for us.

However, when our data transferred over to the new Atlas, we made the decision to continue having our records on at 1km resolution and under a non-commercial licence, as we strongly believe that Local Environmental Records Centres are best placed to deal with commercial data enquiries. To that end we share full resolution data directly with Record Centres we have data exchange agreements with, so they can be incorporated into their datasets and inform local decision making.

We currently have over 168,000 records on the NBN Atlas and this continues to grow by about 20,000 records annually, mainly due to the large number of hedgehog and stag beetle sightings submitted by our wonderful volunteers each year. Our records were downloaded over 1,600 times last year, with over a third of those being for educational purposes, which is fantastic, and highlights how beneficial the Network is to us, as we would never be able to deal with all those data requests ourselves.

Our Valued Data Partners

Biodiversity information Service for Powys and the Brecon Beacons National Park (BIS)

Conchological Society of Great Britain & Ireland

Highland Biological Recording Group (HBRG)

People's Trust for Endangered Species

Our aim for the next year is to collate and format the data from our long running Mammals on Roads survey, so that they can be added to the NBN Atlas, meaning all records from our species surveys are freely available to interested parties.

www.ptes.org



Two male stag beetles © Helen Gara

OUR FUTURE



Slow worm © Dave Kilbey

Our Future

OUR FUTURE

Becoming more sustainable

In March 2019, the NBN Trust received the excellent news that it had been awarded a National Lottery Heritage Fund Grant to 'Build the Resilience and Sustainability of the NBN Trust'.

The main focus of this project is to investigate what other sources of income may be available to the NBN Trust so that it is not so reliant on its current, narrow, funding base. The most promising idea is to provide income generating services in collaboration with data partners, particularly at the multi-regional and national scale.

The Resilient Heritage Fund Grant provides partial funding for the work required to investigate and implement new income generating services, along with the recruitment of two new members of staff. The new roles are a dedicated NBN Atlas Project Manager and a second NBN Atlas Systems Developer. The addition of these posts will enable the Trust to increase the speed of development of the NBN Atlas and be more responsive to user needs, as well as develop and implement functionality that would be necessary to provide income generating services via the NBN Atlas.

“It is great that, thanks to National Lottery players, we have been able to help the NBN Trust build its financial resilience, a vital facet of any organisation. The type of greater understanding achievable through an improved NBN Atlas, utilising latest technology and well-maintained data, will in turn support the resilience of the UK's nature and wildlife. Supporting the UK's natural heritage is a priority for The National Lottery Heritage Fund”

Jonathan Platt, Head of The National Lottery Heritage Fund, East Midlands

Developing the NBN Atlas

There are a number of developments in the pipeline for the NBN Atlas over the coming year.

General improvements

In response to user feedback, there are a number of areas where we would like to improve the interface of the NBN Atlas. These include:

- the species pages
- the occurrence records page, and
- the species search, among others.

This will further tailor the NBN Atlas towards the specific needs of UK users.


[Go back to Incoming Chairman's Report on page 9](#) 

[Go back to Strategic Aim 5 on page 32](#) 



Our Future

Beautiful Burial Grounds

In collaboration with [Caring for God's Acre](#),  the NBN Trust is working to develop a portal showcasing the biodiversity of burial grounds and churchyards in the UK. The portal will provide access to the records in the NBN Atlas that have been collected in these sites, as well as images, statistics and other biodiversity information for each burial ground. The intention is to develop the portal in such a way that the underlying code can be reused to provide a similar focus on other types of place in future, such as nature conservation areas, rivers, etc. as desired.

NBN Atlas Northern Ireland

At the time of writing, the NBN Atlas Northern Ireland  was due to be launched in May 2019. This new NBN Atlas comes about through a partnership with Centre for Environmental Data and Recording (CEDaR), working in partnership with Northern Ireland Environment Agency, National Museums NI and the local recording community.

NBN Atlas Dashboard

The NBN Atlas Dashboard will provide a snapshot of all the data hosted on the NBN Atlas. This will include views and maps relating to taxonomy, collecting intensity and data quality. It will be possible to drill-down into specific areas to see more detail. Currently undergoing beta testing, we hope to launch the Dashboard during 2019.

Automatic upload of records from iRecord

To further streamline the data publishing process, the NBN Atlas aims to provide an automated method of loading data from iRecord. Data will be uploaded by the data owner as DarwinCore Archive files and will then be automatically processed to appear in the NBN Atlas during the following monthly database refresh.

All the latest information on updates throughout the year can be found on the NBN website, NBN Forum and the NBN Atlas Newsletter, which launched in April 2019.



Banded demoiselle © Dave Kilbey

OUR GOVERNANCE



Grey seal © Derek Crawley

Our Governance

OUR GOVERNANCE

The National Biodiversity Network Trust is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 3 April 2000 and registered as a charity on 25 August 2000. It is governed by a Board of Trustees.

When it was established, the Board of Trustees was formed from the membership organisations, but this was changed in 2018, following a board governance review in December 2017.

At this governance review a new process for selecting Trustees was also implemented. Trustee vacancies are advertised and anyone is eligible to apply. Shortlisted applicants are invited to interview and appointed based on the skills and experience they can bring to the Board. Trustees may serve a three-year term, with the potential for a further three years at the discretion of the Chair and other Trustees. The Trustees may, at any time, co-opt any personnel duly qualified to be appointed as a Trustee to fill a vacancy in their number or as an additional Trustee, but a co-opted Trustee holds office only until the next general meeting.

Meet the NBN Trust Board

In order to demonstrate the experience that is held across the Board, we are pleased to highlight each of the NBN Trust Board members who served during 2018/19.



Neil Hodges

NBN Trust Chairman

Day job: Lawyer/Executive

Chair since February 2019

Neil's background is in law, having trained and practiced at the law firm Allen & Overy and subsequently holding senior in-house roles at Barclays and, most recently, Zurich Insurance where he was General Counsel for ten years. He has significant experience of governance, commercial, compliance and management issues at team, executive and board levels.

Reflecting his interest in the natural world and environmental issues, in 2019 Neil was awarded a postgraduate certificate (with distinction) on Environmental Law and Practice with a focus on biodiversity and species/habitat protection. Otherwise, this interest is satisfied in a purely casual capacity by absorbing himself in the natural world through activities such as fishing, gardening (for wildlife, of course!), birdwatching and photography and taking advantage of the green and watery spaces of his South West London "patch".

[Go back to Incoming Chairman's Report on page 8](#) 



Our Governance



Dr. Roddy Fairley

Day job: Area Manager – Southern Scotland, Scottish Natural Heritage
Trustee since February 2012

After graduating in ecology from the University of Edinburgh, Roddy's studies of the below ground ecosystem led to a PhD from Aberdeen University.

Between 1998 and 2008 he was a Director/Chair of Reforesting Scotland; between 2007 and 2009 he was a Director of Paths for ALL, and sat on Scotland's National Access Forum; between 2003 and 2011 he was a Director of the Central Scotland Forest Trust and since 2005 has been a Director of the Cairnhead Community Forest Trust. He is on the Advisory Board for the OPAL team (the Open Air Laboratories UK-wide citizen science initiative) at Imperial College London.

Roddy has a long history of working for Scottish Natural Heritage. Between 2007 and 2009 he was acting Director of Operations following 10 years in area management. This came after several years in charge of corporate planning and organisational development. Before joining SNH in 1992, he was in charge of policy development in the Countryside Commission for Scotland. This all followed early work for the Nature Conservancy Council on various aspects of nature reserve management, survey and monitoring.

Roddy lives in rural south west Scotland where he sings in choirs, cooks for the family, writes poetry, keeps bees and walks the hills.



Wilma Harper

Day job: Chartered Forester and Chartered Environmentalist, Director and Trustee
Trustee since February 2018

Wilma is an experienced director, having held senior positions in the Forestry Commission and now has a portfolio of board positions. She is a Director of The Wildlife Information Centre, the local record centre for South East and Central Scotland, and President of the Edinburgh Natural History Society. She is also a Trustee for Scotland's Finest Woods Awards and a board member of the Royal Scottish Forestry Society.

Alongside this broad environmental background, she brings considerable experience of corporate governance, strategy and change management. She has led the development of major computer systems and is now helping a number of groups develop their websites and improve the use of social media.

She has a particular focus on areas which help people improve their understanding and appreciation of their environment. She regularly leads excursions for the "Edinburgh Nats" and enjoys the exploring and discovery these field trips bring. Having become a runner five years ago, she has learned the value of being outdoors for improving health and wellbeing.

Image © David Palmar www.photoscot.co.uk

Our Governance



Dr. Belinda Howell

Day job: Managing Director at Decarbonize Ltd
Trustee since February 2018

Belinda is a Chief Executive and Non-Executive Director with extensive international experience in sustainability and climate change strategy across a wide range of sectors from agri-commodities, fisheries, natural resources and energy and water utilities through the supply chain to consumer goods and retail.

Belinda founded, and is managing director of, sustainability consultancy, Decarbonize Ltd. As well as being an NBN Trustee, she currently serves as a Non-Executive Director on the Boards of the Marine Management Organisation, the National Centre for Atmospheric Sciences and two sustainable oilseed commodity standards associations. She holds a Diploma in Company Directorship and an MBA.

Passionate about the natural environment, Belinda volunteers for Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust, checking on conservation grazing cattle on a site of special scientific interest.



Matt Postles

Day job: Acting Chief Executive at the Natural History Consortium
Trustee since February 2018

After completing his degree in Zoology at Cardiff University and a couple of years working in academic research, Matt joined The Natural History Consortium (NHC) in 2011 and took over the lead of the BioBlitz strand whilst studying for an MSc in environmental management.

NHC is a Bristol-based and nationally active charitable partnership, engaging people with the natural world through collaborative action. It ran its first 'BioBlitz' in 2009 and has since been working with partners across the UK to promote and develop the concept, coordinating the National BioBlitz Network. Matt has continued to champion formats for public participation and engagement with biological recording as a positive action for nature, helping to convene discussion and support BioBlitz events locally, nationally and internationally. Recently Matt has supported a network of UK cities participating in the international 'City Nature Challenge' leading the Bristol and Bath effort to secure the most wildlife observations in Europe two years running.

Combining public engagement practice with professional development and communications theory, Matt's interests include emergent theories of change, social ecology, behavioural science, mass participation initiatives and strategic communications all wrapped up in a natural history/environment context.

Our Governance



Liz Proctor

Day job: Liz Proctor Fundraising Ltd
Trustee since February 2018

Liz has been fundraising since 2000, when she took her first fundraising role at the Wildlife Trust for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire. She now runs her own consultancy, Liz Proctor Fundraising Ltd, and works with a wide range of charities of varying sizes, most of which are in the conservation sector. She has experience and expertise in all areas of fundraising, with a particular interest in fundraising from trusts and foundations.

She has enjoyed conservation and the outdoors all her life, spending as much time as possible walking in the countryside with her husband and son, and getting her hands dirty growing organic veg in the garden.



Common gromwell © Brian Eversham



Mandy Rudd

Day job: Chief Executive of Greenspace Information for Greater London CIC (GiGL)
Trustee since 2017

Mandy started working in the local environmental records centre (LERC) sector almost by accident. Having taken on a temporary admin role with London Wildlife Trust (LWT) in 1997, she immediately found something more interesting to do in the form of manually creating stag beetle distribution maps. This led to a role as assistant biological recording officer on LWT's Biological Recording Project, and in 1999, she took over as the project's Manager. From this, she led the establishment of Greenspace Information for Greater London, initially as a records centre hosted by LWT in 2006, and as an independent, not-for-profit community interest company in 2013.

Mandy has been a keen advocate of LERCs being regional NBN delivery nodes since 1998. She represented the LERC community on the National Forum for Biological Recording council for 11 years and was involved in the establishment of the Association of Local Environmental Records Centres (ALERC) in 2009. She also served on ALERC's board of directors and was co-opted to represent ALERC on the NBN Trust Board in 2016.

Mandy lives in south London, works in central London and escapes to green and blue spaces close to home and further afield whenever she can.

Our Governance



Helen Wilkinson

Day job: Manager – Knowledge and Information Management, Natural Resources Wales
Trustee since July 2014

Helen has worked and studied in the environment sector for 30 years; working for private, public and voluntary sector organisations including time spent living and working on Ynys Enlli National Nature Reserve and Flat Holm Island Local Nature Reserve.

Helen's background is in ecology and countryside management. She is also a Certified Data Management Professional and a member of the Institute for Leadership and Management. Her interest (and motivation) is in the application of environmental evidence to help solve real life environmental challenges and to help raise awareness and enjoyment of our natural world.

Helen's day job is leading Natural Resources Wales' Knowledge and Information Management Group with a responsibility for steering NRW's work in data management, GIS, records management and information services. This includes NRW's evidence partnerships with LERCs, NBN and national schemes and societies. Helen has been involved with the NBN Trust since 2006 as a member and contributor for several NBN committees.

Helen lives in the hills of North Wales and spends much of her time cycling, running or simply sitting, watching and enjoying the landscapes that North Wales has to offer.



Andrew Wood

Day job: Former Public Servant and Experienced Non-Executive
Trustee since July 2007

Andrew is a professionally qualified coach, working with people in leadership roles at all levels, supporting them in bringing about desired change in their lives and careers. As well as working with NBN, Andrew is a Board member of the Shropshire Hills AONB and has a number of volunteer roles in the Diocese of Hereford. He was previously a Trustee of the League Against Cruel Sports and an independent member of Shropshire Local Nature Partnership.

From 2006 to 2015 Andrew was an Executive Director at Natural England (NE), most recently as Executive Director for Science & Evidence. During this time, he has been variously responsible for NE's Biodiversity, Landscape, Marine and Regulatory programmes, whilst also leading the organisation's science and evidence work. Prior to this he managed elements of the Countryside Agency's change programme in relation to the Modernising Rural Delivery Programme, bringing the Agency's work on Landscape Access and recreation into NE.

Throughout his career, Andrew has held a variety of policy development and implementation roles. In particular, he was responsible for the childcare policy in Wales for three years and was responsible for the Local Government reorganisation in Wales in the mid-1990s. Prior to joining Natural England, he worked with the Audit Commission; his last role there was Director of Policy.

OUR FINANCIALS



Autumn crocus © Brian Eversham

Our Financials

Administrative Information

OUR FINANCIALS

The Trustees are pleased to present their annual directors' report, which includes the financial statements of the charity for the year ending 31 March 2019 which are also prepared to meet the requirements for a directors' report and accounts for Companies House.

The financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006, the NBN Trust's Memorandum and Articles of Association, and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP2015) applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities.



Thick-legged flower-beetle © Brian Eversham

Our Financials

Administrative Information

Financial summary for the year ended 31 March 2019

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2019 £	Total 2018 £
Income and endowments from:				
Donations and legacies	190,632	254,415	445,047	390,581
Investments	1,409	-	1,409	846
Other income	20,576	-	20,576	24,791
Total income	212,617	254,415	467,032	461,218
Expenditure on:				
Raising funds	392	-	392	149
Charitable activities	196,769	193,230	389,999	406,213
Total resources expended	197,161	193,230	390,391	406,362
Net income/(expenditure) for the year	15,456	61,185	76,641	9,856
Fund balances at 1 April 2018	126,002	33,369		149,515
Fund balances at 31 March 2019	141,458	94,554	236,012*	

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

*The total fund balance for 2019 includes £95,250 received from the Heritage Lottery fund with the majority of this being expended during 2019-20

Our Financials

Administrative Information

Balance Sheet

As at 31 March 2019

	2019		2018
	£	£	£
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets		107	1,676
Investments		2	2
		109	1,678
Current assets			
Debtors	30,523		35,946
Cash at bank and in hand	226,360		170,787
	<u>256,883</u>		<u>206,733</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	(20,980)		(49,040)
Net current assets		235,903	157,693
Total assets less current liabilities		236,012	159,371

Our Financials


Administrative Information

Trust reserves

The unrestricted funds not committed or invested in tangible fixed assets ('the free reserve') held by the Trust will be £141,349. The Finance and Management Committee (FMC) believes this amount would enable the Trust to sustain its current activities for three months.

Risk Register

The FMC has reviewed the major risks to the Trust and has systems designed to manage them.

Details of the principal risks are available in the financial statements, a copy of which can be found on the [NBN website](#). 

BioD Services Ltd

NBN Trust has one wholly owned subsidiary company, BioD Services Ltd, which was set up to help the Trust develop the Network through contractual work. It was incorporated as a company limited by shares on 13 March 2001.

The Articles of Association allow the company to transfer profits or income to the NBN Trust as gift aid. For 2018/19 there were no profits from BioD Services to be donated to the NBN Trust as gift aid.

Its income in 2018 was £141 and its net assets are £10,603.

More detailed financial statements are available for either the NBN Trust accounts or BioD Services Ltd. Please contact the NBN Trust's Finance and Business Officer on 0115 850 0177 if you would like a copy.



Common river snail © Brian Eversham

Our Financials

Administrative Information

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

The National Biodiversity Network Trust is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 3 April 2000 and registered as a charity on 25 August 2000.

The company was set up under a Memorandum of Association, which established the objectives and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its Articles of Association.

Directors/Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2019

The Trustees, who are also the directors for the purpose of company law, and who served during the year and up to the date of signature of the financial statements were:

Dr. R Fairley
Mrs W Harper
Mr N Hodges
Dr. B Howell
Mr M Postles
Mrs E Proctor
Ms M Rudd
Ms H Wilkinson
Mr A Wood

Dr. A Clements (Retired 21 November 2018)

Prof. M Hassell CBE FRS (Retired 13 February 2019)

Registered office

NBN Trust
Unit F 14-18 St Mary's Gate
Lace Market
Nottingham
NG1 1PF

Accountants

Rogers Spencer
Chartered Certified Accountants
Newstead House
Pelham Road
Nottingham
NG5 1AP

Our Financials

Administrative Information

Acknowledgements

The NBN Trust Secretariat would like to thank the following people and organisations for their contributions to this report:

Eric Fletcher, RECORD

Kerryn Humphreys, Countryside Jobs Service

Murdo Macdonald, Highland Biological Recording Group (HBRG)

Emily Marnham, People's Trust for Endangered Species

Colin McLeod, Scottish Natural Heritage

Jo Milborrow, Biodiversity Information Service for Powys and the Brecon Beacons National Park (BIS)

Ben Rowson, Conchological Society of Great Britain & Ireland

Rachel Tierney, SBIF Development Officer

nbn.org.uk

nbnatlas.org

Front cover photo credits

From left to right:

Crocus © Dave Kilbey

Mute swan © Dave Kilbey

Sand lizard © Dave Kilbey

Bombus hypnorum, tree Bumblebee © Brian Eversham

Xanthoria parietina lichen © Brian Eversham

Marine recording © David Fenwick

Red fox © Derek Crawley



NBN Trust