



Impact Report 2024/25

ABOUT THE NBN TRUST:

National Biodiversity Network Trust

The NBN Trust is a small charity with a bold ambition: to make data work for nature. Since 2000, as the UK’s biodiversity data backbone, we’ve been making data accessible to inform better decisions about the natural world and connect people with nature.

Our vision is:

“Nature thriving everywhere, in all its diversity”

Our mission is:

“Making data work for nature”

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MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIRPERSON

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“At the NBN Trust, we have set ourselves the challenge to be the ‘go-to’ place for biodiversity data in the UK. This is very simple to say and much more difficult to deliver! Which is why it gives me a real sense of pride to reflect on another year of ‘making data work for nature.’”

The NBN Trust Team has continued to deliver innovative developments, working hard behind the scenes to make collecting, storing and sharing data a much easier and smoother experience for our stakeholders. Among a wide range of updates and improvements, the team has introduced access controls to the NBN Atlas and new data sharing mechanisms for DNA based data, giving data providers more confidence that their data will be used appropriately and ensuring an improved user experience. They have also begun a major transition of the infrastructure that sits ‘under the hood’ of the NBN Atlas, moving to a new, modern, big-data ecosystem, which will ultimately increase the reliability and speed of the NBN Atlas as a whole.

In ecological terms, the NBN Trust continues to be the ‘keystone species’ of the conservation sector, providing access to the data you all need to make good, evidence-based decisions. With nearly a billion records downloaded from the NBN Atlas in 2024/25 alone, the impact and value of our work is felt across academia, research, conservation, public policy and citizen science, with a scope that goes from the hyper-local to the global.

All these achievements reflect the dedication of our team, the strength of our partnerships, the vision of our funders and the shared commitment of our network. Together, we are building a more resilient, responsive, and impactful network for biodiversity data.

Thank you for your continued support.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Pete Tomlin'.

Pete Tomlin, Chairperson of the NBN Trust



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How we are making data work for nature



134,112,294

NBN Atlas records
shared via GBIF



43,808,883

new records added
to the NBN Atlas

299,925,343

biodiversity records
shared on the NBN Atlas

343

peer-reviewed
publications used
NBN Atlas data



25,500

new observers joined

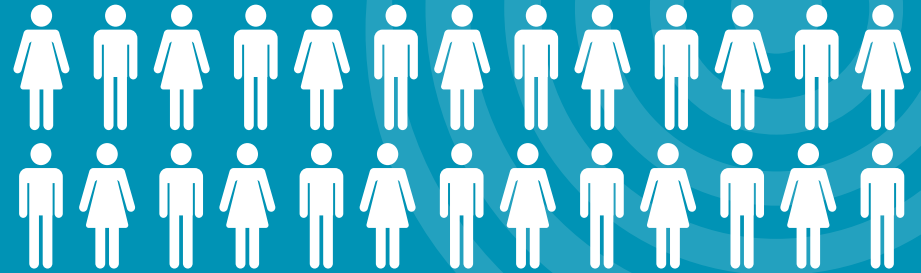


25,000

people engaged on
social media

1.7 million+

new wildlife records shared
via iNaturalistUK



280+ wonderful NBN Trust members
are helping us to achieve our mission



2,000

new species added to
iNaturalistUK



23,911

active NBN Atlas users



987,161,124

records downloaded from the
NBN Atlas

OUR PROGRESS AND IMPACT

About this report

This Impact Report highlights our progress towards the NBN Trust's strategic ambitions from April 2024 to March 2025. It's an ideal opportunity for us to demonstrate the value and effectiveness of our work allowing us to show our stakeholders and funders how resources are being used and what outcomes are being achieved.

“The NBN Trust continues to be the ‘keystone species’ of the conservation sector, providing access to the data you all need to make good, evidence-based decisions.”

Ambition 1

The NBN Atlas is the 'go to' place for sharing, finding and accessing UK biodiversity data

How we are making data work for nature through the NBN Atlas

+25%



4,162

new NBN Atlas users

+146%



111

new or updated data resources

+17%



299,925,343

records shared on the NBN Atlas

+4.6%



183

data partners sharing their data

Our impact through the year

Our data partners and the many volunteers who record what they see are the lifeblood of the NBN. In 2024/25, 183 organisations, including 7 new data partners, made their biodiversity data publicly and easily accessible online. This resulted in an incredible 299,925,343 records shared, supporting better decisions for nature. You can read more about what this means and the impact it has in Ambition 2.

We value the vital contributions of all our data partners enormously. A complete list of those contributing can be found on the [NBN Atlas](#).

Responding to needs and transforming data sharing

The NBN Atlas is the UK's open biodiversity data repository. It's a powerful tool we continually strive to improve to meet growing user needs and increasing volumes of data.

In 2024/25, we focused on major infrastructure upgrades to ensure the NBN Atlas remains fast, reliable, and future-ready.

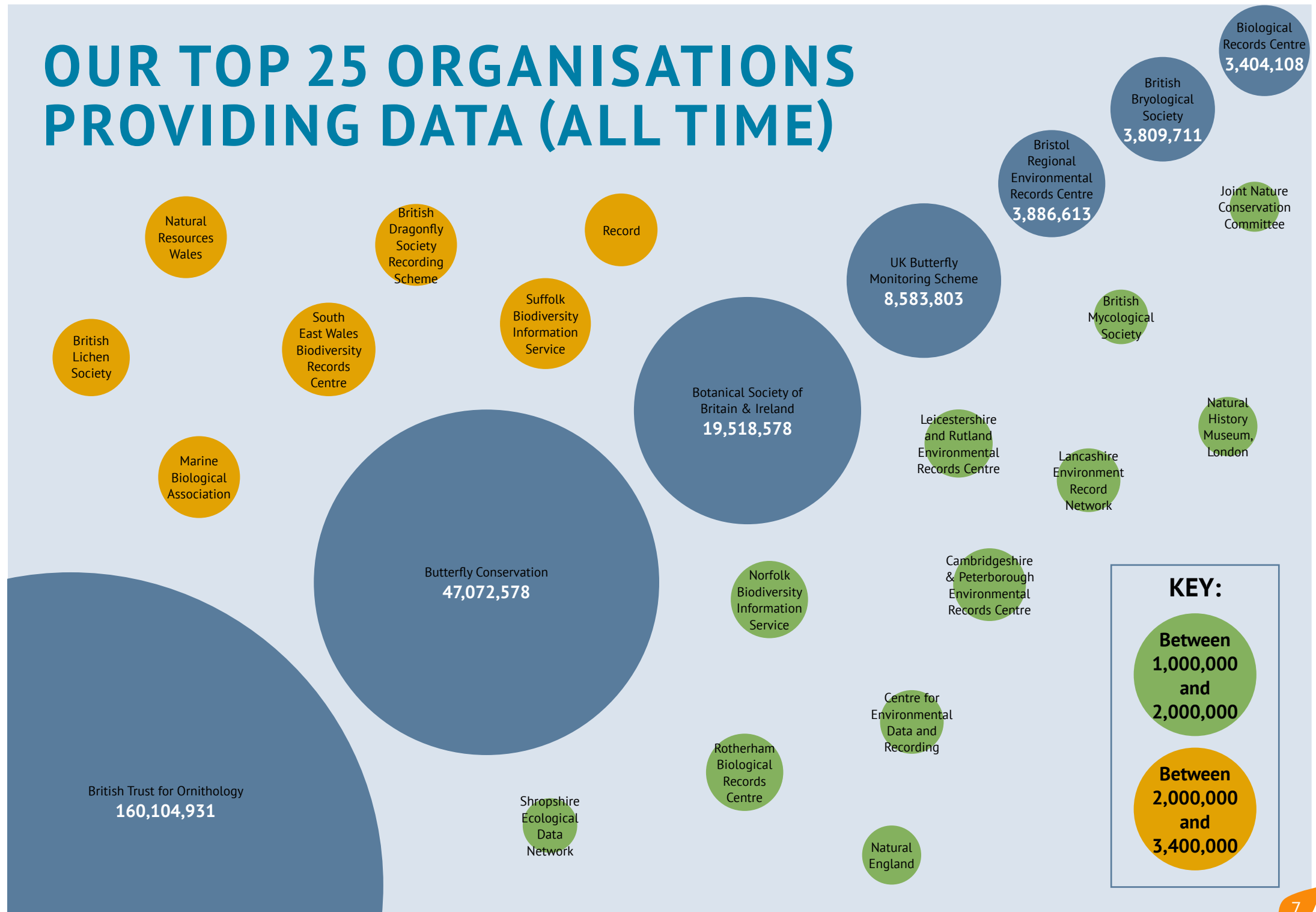
Through the NBN Atlas Accelerator Project¹, we're transforming how biodiversity data drives conservation action and ensuring the NBN Atlas is the 'go to place' for sharing, finding and accessing UK biodiversity data. This is what we've been doing:

-  We wanted data partners to feel confident that their contributions were secure and shared in a controlled way. New access controls have enabled data partners to share location data securely, whilst allowing them to manage what is visible to the public. We have also streamlined workflows to accommodate more complex data types including DNA-derived species records. Both these enhancements will help promote greater data sharing, including from growing research sectors.
-  We wanted to know more about what our users thought of the NBN Atlas maps. Working with [Futures Wild](#), we held workshops and interviews with people who use the NBN Atlas for their jobs, research and volunteering. This information has led us to redesign features of NBN Atlas maps, which will be launched in the second phase of the Accelerator Project in 2025/26.
-  We wanted to increase the impact shared data has sooner, so we've carried out lots of work behind the scenes. Our Pipeline Migration Project is adopting systems from the Atlas of Living Australia and Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF), which will accelerate record publishing, modernise our data infrastructure, and amplify the conservation impact of shared data. After customising and upgrading the data processing system for UK-specific requirements - like grid references and access controls - throughout 2024/25, we're now entering testing phases that will continue into 2025/26 when we plan to release the platform upgrades.

1. Delivered in partnership with Natural England and supported by the Environment Agency and funded by Defra through the Natural Capital and Ecosystem Services (NCEA) programme.



OUR TOP 25 ORGANISATIONS PROVIDING DATA (ALL TIME)



KEY:

Between
1,000,000
and
2,000,000

Between
2,000,000
and
3,400,000

Ambition 2

Biodiversity data is providing the evidence needed for nature's recovery

How we are making data work for nature and demonstrating impact through evidence

-3%

987,161,124
records downloaded from
the NBN Atlas

+10.6%

343
peer-reviewed publications
used NBN Atlas data

+3%

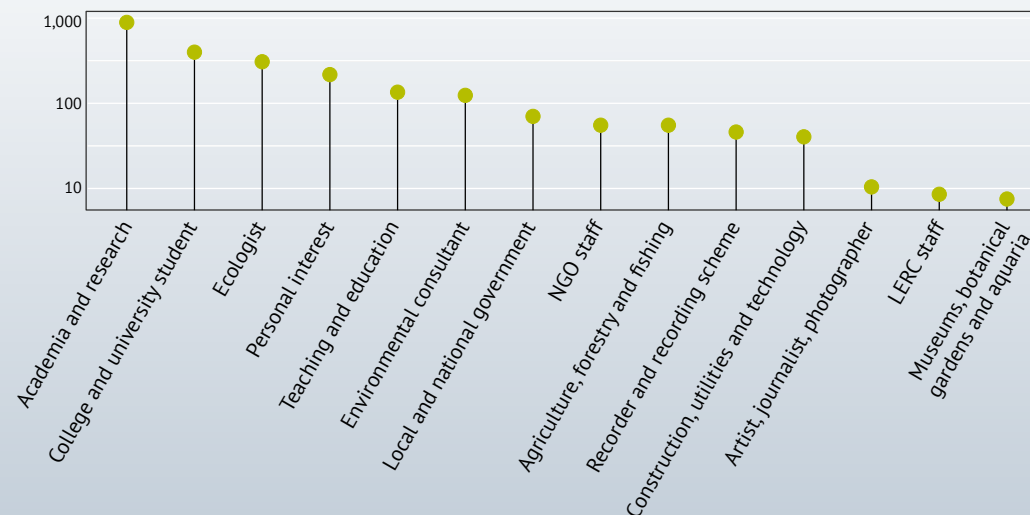
GBIF
134,112,294
records shared via GBIF

Our impact through the year

The NBN Atlas provides a central hub for wildlife data making it easier for planners, ecologists, researchers, students, and others to access the information they need. Last year, nearly one billion records were downloaded, saving users time and money, and helping inform decisions that protect the environment, more quickly.

Although this was actually a slight decrease on the previous year, when just over one billion records were downloaded, we will continue to advocate for the importance of good quality data to ensure that data downloaded from the NBN Atlas continues to be at this very high level.

Number of new accounts 2024/25 (log scale)



Making an impact in Scotland

Since its inception in 2023, the Better Biodiversity Data (BBD) project has been developing a national biodiversity data service model for Scotland, forming the Scottish Biodiversity Services Consortium (SBSC) and establishing a new NBN Scotland Community Interest Company (CIC).

In 2024/25 we:

-  Started development of a new multi-tenanted Data Management System to support Local Environmental Records Centres (LERCs) and Recording Groups. Early testing by partners will ensure usability.
-  Engaged with 30+ partner organisations to shape service requirements, governance, and a vision aligned with the Scottish Biodiversity Information Forum (SBIF) recommendations and the 2024–2030 Scottish Biodiversity Strategy Delivery Plan.
-  Highlighted the role of biodiversity data in delivering the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy and nature restoration goals at a Scottish Parliament exhibition.

The Big Biodiversity Layer (BBL)

NBN Atlas data was used to contribute to this tool being developed by NatureScot, which maps biodiversity across Scotland to identify the most highly biodiverse areas. The BBL is intended to be one tool which helps inform decision making around new 30 by 30 sites in Scotland.

Ambition 2 continued

Making an impact across the UK

NBN Atlas data isn't just valuable for science, it's a powerful tool for organisations and businesses too. It provides snapshots of species distribution across locations and time, supporting a wide range of reports and decisions.

In 2024/25, the NBN Trust data team provided bespoke support to three organisations, helping them maximise their impact and placing further value on the services the NBN Trust can provide.

Exploring Recorder Behaviour – Froglife

We helped Froglife analyse amphibian and reptile records on the NBN Atlas, exploring trends in data sources and species types. Their findings were shared at Froglife's online conference in October 2024.

Biodiversity Audit – River Mun Cluster Group

We completed a bespoke data request to support this report. The resulting biodiversity audit identified land management priorities to aid nature recovery across farmland in the River Mun area. This helped to protect, sustain and expand the full range of threatened and declining wildlife, as an exemplar of evidence-based conservation.

North Norfolk Biodiversity Audit; Rogers, Franky; Crowther, Liam; Gilroy, James; Dolman, Paul (2024).

[Biodiversity Audit of the River Mun. figshare. Online resource.](#)

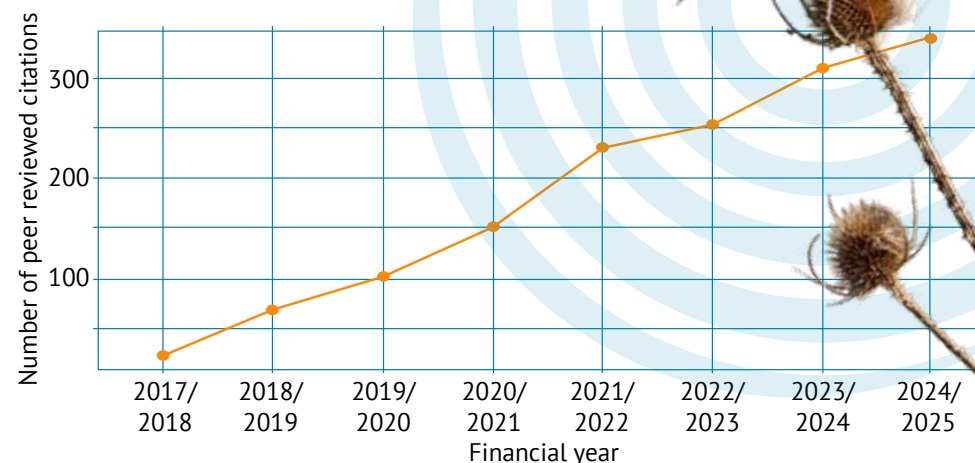
Checklist of aquatic and semi-aquatic Heteroptera in VC55

We supported Leicestershire & Rutland Entomological Society in accessing records from the NBN Atlas for these species' groups. A total of 2,007 records up to the end of 2024 were accessed and compared against other data sources. This included 83 new records which had not been included in any of the other data sources. This added valuable insight to local biodiversity knowledge and highlighted the importance of data accessibility.

[Leicestershire & Rutland Entomological Society, Sue Timms, Kate Nightingale & Alan Cann \(2025\). Checklist of aquatic and semi-aquatic Heteroptera in VC55.](#)

The most cited dataset for peer-reviewed papers with 105 citations was [All taxa records for Leicestershire and Rutland dataset](#), shared by [NatureSpot](#).

Publications citing the NBN Atlas



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Making an impact globally

As the UK node for GBIF, the NBN Trust ensures that data shared via the NBN Atlas meets international standards. With the agreement of our data partners, we shared over 134 million records globally, strengthening the UK's reputation for open data and increasing our global impact.

Making an impact in scientific research

Peer-reviewed publications continue to highlight the value of accessible biodiversity data. Here are two examples that demonstrate how NBN Atlas data are being used in scientific research:

Global impact of the COVID-19 lockdown on biodiversity data collection – This paper explores the global impact on the collection of biodiversity data during the first COVID-19 lockdown (15 March to 1 May 2020) pre-pandemic levels using data from GBIF, finding declines were significantly larger in developing countries compared to developed ones.

Citizen science platforms can effectively support early detection of invasive alien species according to species traits – This paper looked at how the use of citizen science apps, such as iNaturalist and iRecord can help with earlier detection of Invasive Alien Species (IAS). They found for 50% of the time lag records, citizen science platforms reported IAS earlier than or in the same year as the official alien species databases, with vertebrate species typically being recorded earlier than plants and invertebrates.

© Natural England Peter Roworth

Ambition 3

Citizen science is valued, supported and expanded as a major source of biodiversity data

How we are making citizen science data work for nature



+38%



6,431,429

wildlife observations shared
via iNaturalistUK



+22%



139,824

observers in the iNaturalistUK
community



+10%



22,258

species records on
iNaturalistUK

52,982

users affiliated to
iNaturalistUK

+11%



 **iNaturalistUK**



16

individuals and groups
recognised through the NBN
Awards for Wildlife Recording



iNaturalistUK video
developed to support
schools and educators

Our impact through the year

Through our role in iNaturalistUK, the NBN Trust continues to connect with a vibrant and diverse community of wildlife recorders, from those just beginning their journey to seasoned experts. This platform enables us to reach thousands of individuals whose observations contribute valuable data to the national biodiversity picture.

As the number of recording platforms grows, so too does the opportunity to engage a wider audience. These platforms are helping to democratise wildlife recording, making it more accessible and inclusive. For instance, we introduced iNaturalistUK to more than 200 delegates at the Nature Tech Conference in Leeds. The data collected through iNaturalistUK and similar tools is increasingly vital in building a comprehensive understanding of the UK's natural environment.

Our role in empowering the next generation

Launched in Spring 2023, the **National Education Nature Park** is an ambitious initiative from the Department for Education in England, which is helping children and young people make a positive impact on nature and their future.

The NBN Trust is proud to be a project partner, ensuring biodiversity data collected by schools is shared, where possible, via the NBN Atlas.

This year, we:

-  Helped develop a new iNaturalistUK video showcasing the platform's features to support educators
-  Made iNaturalistUK more accessible to 3,200 schools and colleges recording their Nature Park sites.

Encouraging collaboration and discussion

As part of our ongoing commitment to fostering collaboration in the wildlife recording community, the NBN Trust convened and participated in a panel discussion at the NBN Conference 2024 titled *"How do, or can, different recording apps engage people at different stages of their recording journey?"* This session brought together experts in wildlife recording to explore how digital tools can support and inspire recorders at all levels. By encouraging collaboration, shared learning and cross-platform promotion, we continue to strengthen the recording community and enhance the accessibility and effectiveness of biodiversity data collection.



© Natural England Michael Hammond

Ambition 3 continued

Celebrating wildlife recording

Through our revamped NBN Awards' scheme we celebrated 16 people and groups that dedicate their time and expertise to recording wildlife.



NBN Lifetime Achievement Award

Joint winners – Roger Morris and Stuart Ball
Highly commended – Lin Baldock



NBN Verifier's Award

Joint winners – Stuart Roberts and Matt Smith
Highly commended – Mark Cubitt



NBN Award for Terrestrial Wildlife Recording

Winner – Katty Baird
Highly commended – Dave Bentley



NBN Award for Marine Wildlife Recording

Winner - Charlotte Bolton
Highly commended – Lin Baldock



NBN Group Award

Winner – MammalWeb
Highly commended – Amphibian and Reptile Groups of the UK (ARGUK)



NBN Newcomer Award

Winner – Charlotte Shenkin
Highly commended – Karen Fry



NBN Young Person's Award

Winner – Ben Rumsby
Highly commended – Aoife McAleenan McQuaid

We also announced the John Sawyer NBN Open Data Award winner, which is given annually to a member of the NBN Trust. In 2024 the recipient was the Terrestrial Heteroptera Recording Scheme (Shieldbugs & allied species), which shares over 160,000 records of 95 species from the taxon group in three data resources on the NBN Atlas.

The power of citizen science in unusual discoveries



In the summer of 2024, a surge in wallaby sightings across the East Midlands captured public attention and sparked media interest. The NBN Trust was invited to comment on *East Midlands Today*, where we offered advice on what members of the public should do if they encountered a wallaby. This media opportunity allowed us to highlight the importance of biological recording, and the vital role public contributions play in biodiversity data collection.

Another compelling example of the value of recording observations came from an iNaturalistUK user who snapped a blurry photo of an unfamiliar insect on her backpack. The insect was identified as a plane lace bug (*Corythucha ciliata*) – the first UK record of the species in 18 years. Notably, this species poses a serious threat to plane trees and is of significant concern for plant health. This chance encounter became the first alert to the pest's presence and triggered a nationwide monitoring effort.



***“The data collected through
iNaturalistUK and similar tools
is increasingly vital in building a
comprehensive understanding of
the UK’s natural environment.”***



<https://www.inaturalist.org/photos/470003801>

© Natural England/Allan Drevitt

Ambition 4

The National Biodiversity Network is a well-connected and highly collaborative community with a united voice on key issues.

How we are making data work for nature for our community

 **13%** average increase across our social media platforms engaging **25,000** people



“Making Data Work for Nature: Sharing Biodiversity Data Through the NBN Atlas”, was published in *In Practice* magazine. This goes to **8000** Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) members.



6 organisations supported our work by partnering with us for the NBN Conference.

160

delegates attended the NBN Conference.



4 promotional videos showcased the work of the NBN Trust and the importance of wildlife recording.

2,000

subscribers to Network News with open and click rates 10% higher than the industry standard.



Our impact through the year

Through our communication channels we promote the work of our members and data partners from across the network and grow the NBN community. We also promote collaboration and learning by sharing stories of how, individually and collectively, we are all making data work for nature.

Our main event – NBN Conference

The NBN Conference remains a cornerstone event for those involved in wildlife recording and biodiversity data. No other UK event reaches the number of delegates or sector representation that the NBN Conference achieves year after year. Held on 21 November 2024 at the Merseyside Maritime Museum in Liverpool, the Conference welcomed over 160 delegates from across the public, voluntary, private, and academic sectors.

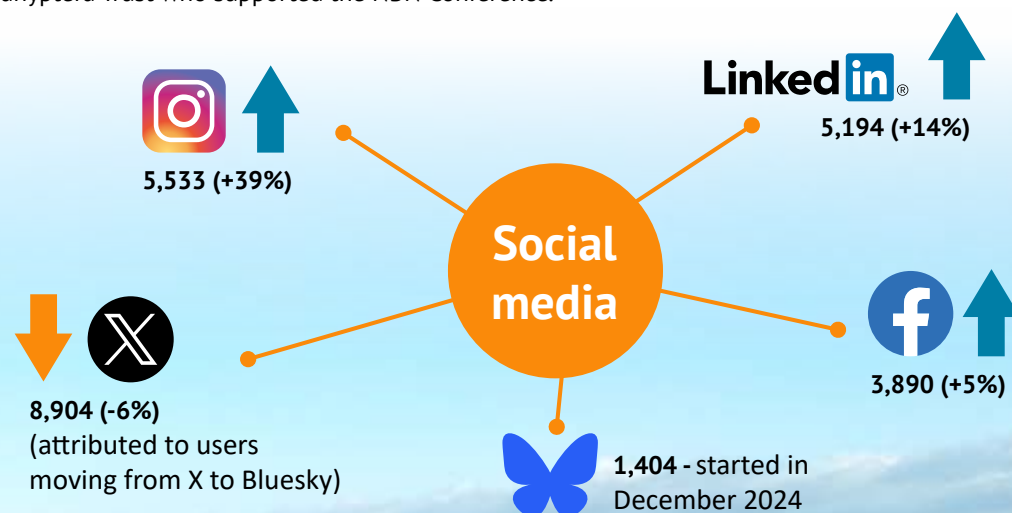
The programme featured eleven presentations, which aligned with the NBN Trust's four strategic ambitions and included two keynotes from Andy Cotgreave of Tableau and Professor Miles Richardson of the University of Derby. We also had the panel discussion referred to on page 10.

For the first time, the Conference included an artistic element, with poet-in-residence **Caleb Parkin** offering creative reflections that added a unique and engaging dimension to the event.

“The quality was really high. Speakers were passionate and delivered informative, interesting information.”

“Headline speakers were brilliant and all engaging and informative. The poet beautifully rounded off the day.”

We were hugely grateful to Dynavics, FuturesWild, Habitat Aid, Zulu Ecosystems, National Museums Liverpool and Tanyptera Trust who supported the NBN Conference.



OUR COMMITMENT TO SUSTAINABILITY

The following commitments underpin our strategy and are essential to its successful delivery.

Financial

Achieving the NBN Trust's strategic ambitions depends on maintaining financial security and enabling sustainable growth. We were delighted to recruit Holly McCain as our Fundraising Lead (Trust and Corporates) in Summer 2024. As a result, we have celebrated several fundraising successes over the past year and actively explored new opportunities to diversify our income streams and strengthen our financial resilience.

The details of all the grants can be found in the [Financial Statements](#)

Social

We take seriously our responsibilities to our staff and volunteers. We want to recruit and develop our team, regardless of an individual's background, and make best use of their talents. We recognise that being a diverse and inclusive employer helps us fulfil our responsibility to staff and meets our commitment to diversity within the NBN Trust strategy.

The NBN Trust is proud to have contributed to the [RACE Report](#) for the first time and is one of the 161 organisations who are represented in the data it contains.

THE
RACE
REPORT

Environmental

We are passionate about the environment and continue to look for ways to reduce our impact on the planet. Progress in 2024/25 and into 2025/26 is seeing us reduce carbon emissions from the NBN Atlas as a result of the new data processing pipeline.

OUR YEAR AHEAD: FOCUS FOR 2025/26

© Natural England Alan Drewitt



As we celebrate 25 years of the NBN Trust in 2025, we're entering an exciting new chapter. Over the coming year, we'll be working closely with stakeholders and partners to develop a new five-year strategy for the NBN Atlas, ensuring it continues to meet the evolving needs of the sector and supports our mission to make data work for nature.

We remain committed to enhancing the NBN Atlas infrastructure, delivering improvements that strengthen accessibility and functionality for all users and therefore improve data mobilisation. Alongside this, we'll be reviewing our membership scheme to better understand which features and services our members value most. This will help us to provide even greater benefits and services, while highlighting the value of being part of the NBN Trust.

Building on the success of the BBD project, we are continuing to partner with NatureScot and Scottish Government to develop the new data management application for Scottish Local Environmental Records Centres, furthering our commitment to support data sharing and collaboration across Scotland.

Underpinning all this work is our focus on strengthening the charity's operational sustainability, ensuring we can continue to serve the biodiversity community for decades to come.

Our commitment to sustainability – We will:

- Successfully recruit and onboard staff members in our new Finance and Operations Team.
- Participate in the Big Give's Green Match Fund, achieving our target
- Submit a bid to the National Lottery Heritage Fund for a Nature Stories Project

Ambition 1 - We will:

- Deliver the enhancements of the NBN Atlas Accelerator Project
- Complete the NBN Atlas data migration to a new processing system
- Publish the NBN Atlas Strategy 2025-2030.
- Work with Living Atlas partners and GBIF on new tools and features to benefit the community.

Ambition 2 - We will:

- Continue development of the new data management system, NBN Record Manager, in collaboration with Scottish data partners.
- Review data insights and services that help people interpret NBN Atlas data to tell stories of the UK's biodiversity and the recording communities.

Ambition 3 - We will:

- Recognise the unsung heroes of the wildlife recording world through the NBN Awards for Wildlife Recording
- Continue to promote the value of iNaturalistUK as a tool for gathering more data from more people

Ambition 4 - We will:

- Celebrate 25 years of making data work for nature
- Develop and launch an updated NBN Trust membership scheme
- Develop and launch a [Business Partnerships booklet](#) to engage Corporate Supporters
- Increase social engagement with more targeted messages across platforms.

THANK YOU

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Our members

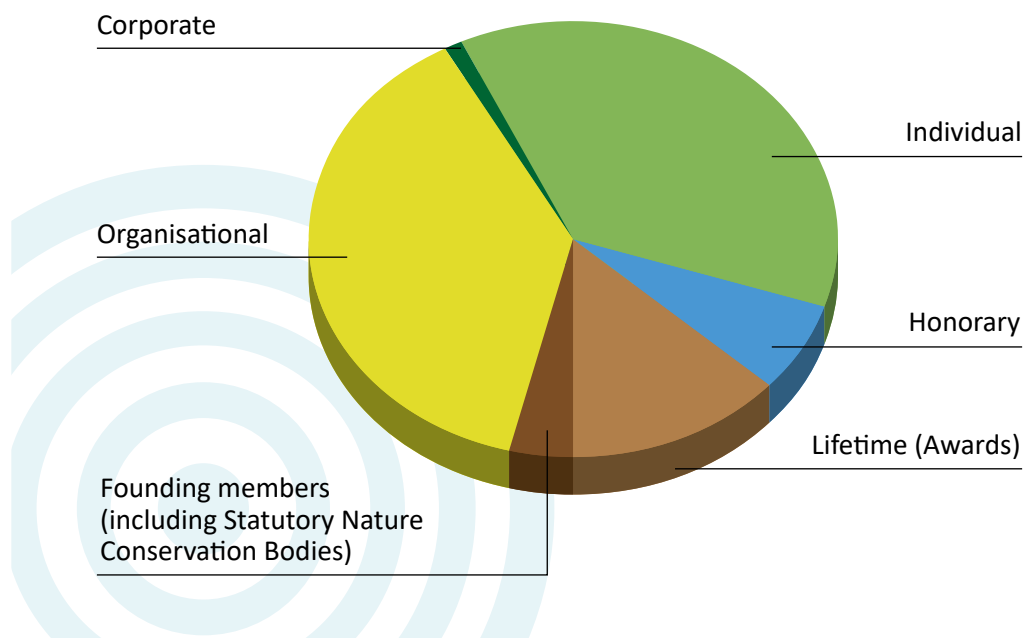
The NBN Trust is a membership charity supported by a diverse network of organisations and individuals who share our mission to make data work for nature. Our organisational members include statutory conservation bodies, charities, Local Environmental Records Centres, wildlife groups and recording schemes and societies.

We're also grateful for the continued support of individual members who help us achieve our goals.

In 2024 we participated in a Pilotlight Insights project to explore and improve the NBN Trust membership scheme. A new scheme will be launched in 2025/26.

You can view the full list of members on the [NBN Trust website](#).

Members by category at 31 March 2025 - total 282



Our supporters

We're incredibly grateful to everyone who contributed to the NBN Trust this year through memberships, donations, sponsorships, grants, or in-kind support. Your generosity powers our mission – thank you.

Charitable Trusts and Foundations



2024/25 saw the first year of the £180,000 3-year grant of core funding kindly provided by Esmée Fairbairn Foundation. This grant is to support the NBN Trust's organisational resilience and sustainability, growth and new collaborations as well as to allow us to assist organisations and individuals supplying data to, and using, the NBN Atlas. We thank Esmée Fairbairn Foundation for their ongoing support to our charity.



2024/25 also saw the first year of a £120,000 3-year grant from the John Ellerman Foundation towards core costs including staff time for software development as we further develop the NBN Atlas. A huge thank you to the John Ellerman Foundation for providing this invaluable support.

Data Partners

Your data drives change. Together, we're unlocking its potential to support nature's recovery. Thank you for being part of this vital work.

Volunteers

Our Board of Trustees generously gives its time and expertise, ensuring strong and sustainable governance. We deeply appreciate the commitment of all our Trustees.

Staff

The NBN Trust team delivers exceptional results with limited resources. Thank you for your skill, dedication, and hard work.

And finally...

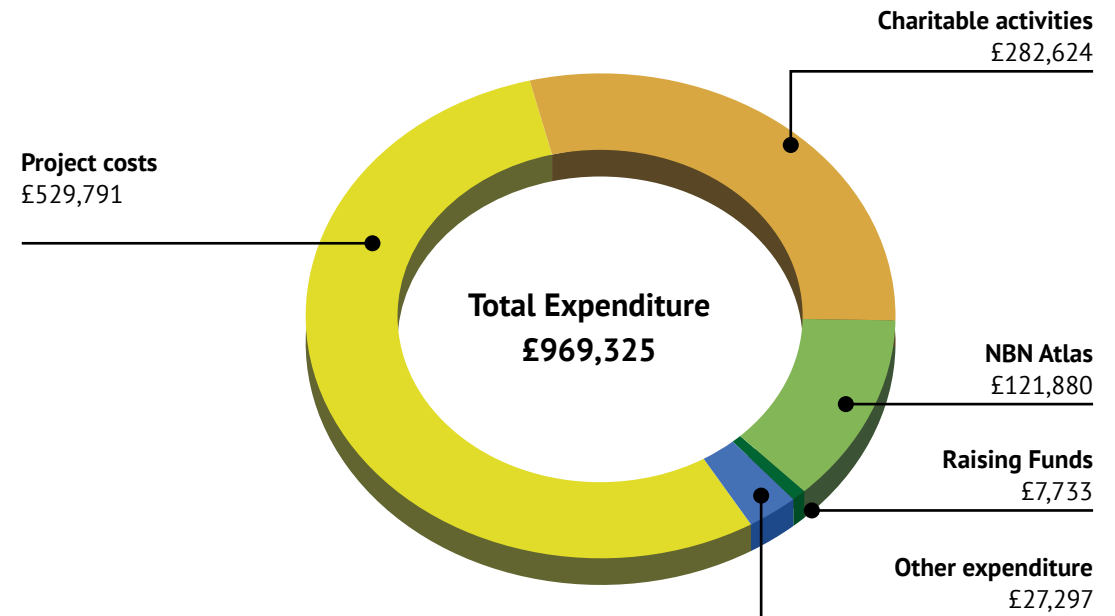
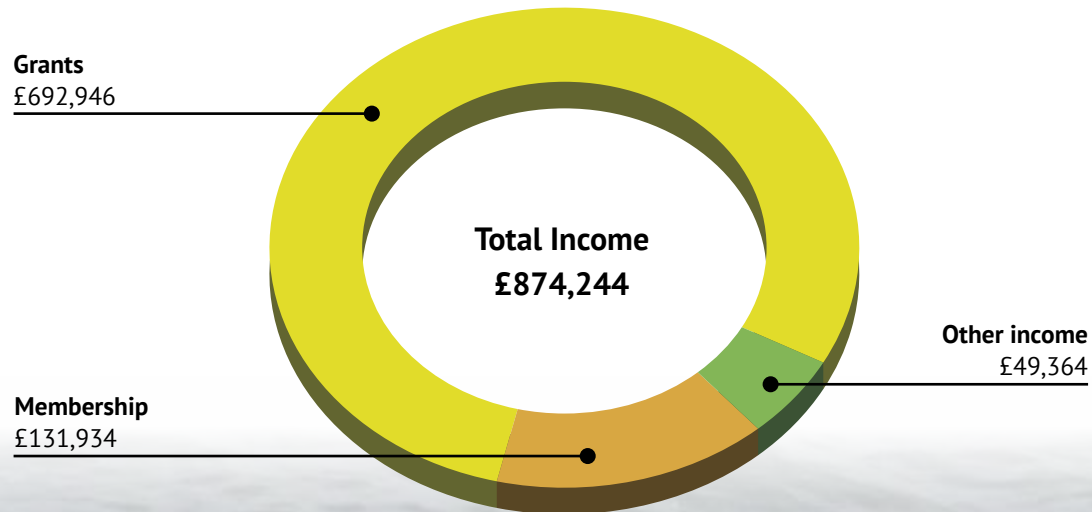
Thank you for reading this Impact Report and for your continued support. We're excited about what we can achieve together in 2025/26 and beyond. Our vision: nature thriving everywhere, in all its diversity. Let's make it happen.

OUR FINANCIALS

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Financial summary for the year ended 31 March 2025

The figures shown are from the unaudited financial accounts. The full, audited financial statements are available on the [NBN Trust website](https://www.nbn-trust.org.uk). You can also contact the NBN Trust's Finance Team if you would like a copy - support@nbn.org.uk





JOIN US

We'd love you to join us in our mission to make data work for nature. You can join us by:

Becoming a member of the NBN Trust

Sharing and accessing data on the NBN Atlas

Recording wildlife and sharing your data

Find out more at nbn.org.uk

Contact us

You can get in touch by email – support@nbn.org.uk
or phone – 0115 850 0177.

Follow us



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.

Charity number: 1082163 / Company number: 03963387

Registered office: 27 Old Gloucester Street, Holborn, London WC1N 3AX
(Address is not for correspondence, please use either phone or email).

“Last year, nearly one billion records were downloaded, saving users time and money, and helping inform decisions that protect the environment, more quickly.”

