

# Doncaster Local Records Centre (DLRC)

Policy Document – June 2011

## DATA ACCESS AND EXCHANGE POLICY

### Terminology

Below are definitions of the terminology used in this document:

Term	Definition
DLRC	<b>Doncaster Local Records Centre</b> The Local Records Centre for the Doncaster Borough, who collate, manage and disseminate environmental data on behalf of professional local organisations, and amateur naturalists.
YHEDN	<b>Yorkshire &amp; Humber Environmental Data Network</b> A community of the Local Record Centres in the Yorkshire & Humber region who collate, manage and disseminate environmental data on behalf of both professional organisations and amateur naturalists. The term is used to refer to both the network and its member organisations.
NBN	<b>National Biodiversity Network</b> The NBN Trust is a charitable company consisting of partner organisations, which share an interest in the collection and use of biodiversity data and a commitment to making this information widely available. The NBN website, known as the NBN Gateway acts as a “data warehouse” for biodiversity information, which can be quickly and easily accessed to understand the distribution of particular species in the UK.
Data Copyright Holder	In most cases these will be amateur naturalists or ‘Recorders’. The YHEDN network and its member organisations act as the custodians of environmental data but in most cases the data remains the property of the original recorder and they retain any copyright governing its use.

### Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to provide a clear framework for the access, exchange and use of the data holdings in the custodianship of Doncaster Local Records Centre (DLRC). The policy identifies the model for data management and flow under which this DLRC operates locally and as part of a wider network of Local Records Centres and recording systems, specifically the Yorkshire and Humber Environmental Data Network and the National Biodiversity Network Gateway. The policy lays out the roles and responsibilities of DLRC in facilitating the exchange of environmental data, and identifies the accompanying policies which govern these processes. The policy helps DLRC achieve a rational and consistent approach towards the management of data availability and use. It is intended to help data providers and users to understand better the aims and intentions of DLRC. We want those that provide DLRC with data to understand how data will be used and made available to others. We want those that use the data held to understand the rationale behind any constraints placed on the availability of data.

### Policy Statements

Doncaster Local Records Centre is hosted within Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council and exists to collate, manage and disseminate biological data that forms part of the environmental record for the Doncaster Borough. This record includes information on sites, habitats and species and includes historical data dating back to the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, through to the present day. Species data includes records of all terrestrial groups of fauna and flora, while habitat data includes biotope or assemblage data. This information provides the basis from which environmental trends and opportunities can be identified and therefore informs land management, planning and development, conservation, climate change and is an important local record of how the Doncaster environment has changed.

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## DATA ACCESS

### Aims and Objectives

1. It is the aim of DLRC to use this data to benefit the environment and to promote biodiversity within the DMBC boundary. To achieve this DLRC will endeavour to support the needs and efforts of the recording community and to meet the requirements of data users, to establish itself as the main data provider for the recording area.
2. DLRC is committed to making environmental data as widely available as possible, under the National Biodiversity Network data exchange principles and the dissemination of data by DLRC is governed by this policy.

### Data Sources

3. DLRC collects, manages, and archives environmental data and images collected (or collated) by a variety of sources, including public and private organisations and data from private individuals (whether these are professional or voluntarily recorders) who undertake biological surveys. Any biological data is of interest to us provided the data complies with at least minimum standards, and can be validated by DLRC.
4. DLRC will take all reasonable measures to both validate and verify the data which it holds in accordance with this policy.
5. The uptake of data by DLRC will be carried out in accordance with a signed '**Data Transfer Statement**' or '**Data Transfer License**'. Data provided to DLRC without one of the above agreements, will be also be managed in accordance with DLRC policy and procedure. Copyright of the data will at all times remain the property of the originator of the data.
6. DLRC holds what it terms 'legacy data', generally consisting of older datasets for which records have been submitted with no formal agreement to their further dissemination and/or use. Please refer to DLRC's '**Legacy Data Statement**' for information on how such data sources are managed and acknowledged by DLRC.
7. DLRC does not archive physical, chemical or geological data. A limited quantity of data of marine/freshwater nature is held.

### Data Storage and Security

1. DLRC has a dataset comprising about 350,000 biological records, 250,000 of which are held on a computer system (in this case, Recorder 6), the remainder on card index or miscellaneous paper. Original data source publications and supporting literature is held at Doncaster Museum, to complement this service and their resources, which also include a herbarium and natural history collections. To access this supporting information please contact Doncaster Museum.
2. All data and image resources are archived electronically on secure systems. Where possible, a copy of the original data (documents, images, publications) is kept by DLRC for future reference.
3. Database access is protected by a password held by DLRC's Biological Records Officer. The database is held on a stand-alone copy of Recorder 6.

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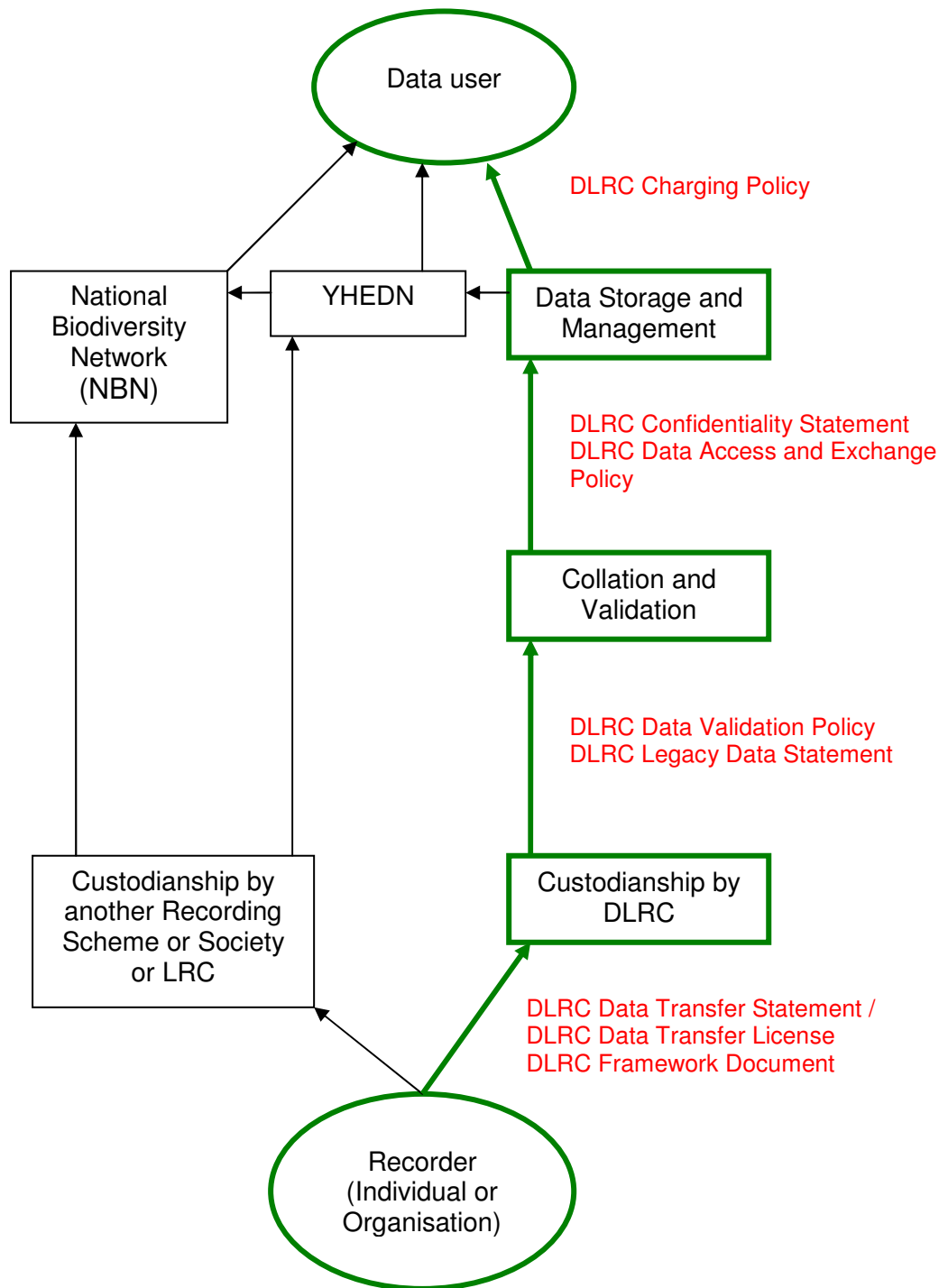
4. The database is backed up by the Biological Records Officer at least on a weekly basis and more frequently if the volume of data input demands. The backup files are stored on a corporate network server and a copy held personally by the Biological Records Officer in a secure place and in a remote location.
5. The DLRC dataset is subject to DMBC's corporate virus scanning programs. Data received from donors in electronic format is likewise subject to our corporate virus scanning programs.
6. DLRC will manage all personal information in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. Management of data including personal data will be described in the DLRC Data '**Confidentiality Policy**', which at all times will be governed by the Environmental Information Regulations 2004, the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and bound by these items of legislation and their guidance.

## Data Use

1. DLRC is committed to promoting the use of the data it holds and supports the principle that wherever possible biological information should be available to benefit the environment. In order to promote the confident use of data and associated metadata, DLRC undertakes processes of validation and quality control prior to storage. The checks differ depending on the type of data or images. For further information view our '**Data Validation Policy and Procedure**'.
2. DLRC can enter into a Data Transfer agreement with the copyright holders of any data it acquires, which clearly confers on DLRC the authority to collate and manage the data and to disseminate it according to this '**Data Access and Exchange Policy**'.
3. DLRC will, where appropriate, accept the custodianship of data collated by other organisations, and manage and disseminate this data on their behalf. Under these circumstances, a clear written transfer of authority to manage and disseminate data will be signed by both parties, through a '**Data Transfer Statement**' or '**Data Transfer License**'.
4. DLRC may copy data and image files to different formats in light of hardware or software changes, to ensure continued accessibility.
5. DLRC will progress metadata and data (in standard format) to the Yorkshire and Humber Environmental Data Network and through them to the National Biodiversity Network (NBN) Gateway, with the permission of the data provider. The YHEDN will act as a node in the National Biodiversity Network, and as such, all policies pertaining to the exchange and management of data will devolve from the NBN data exchange principles and related guidelines. Periodically, policies will be reviewed and amended in the light of emergent good practice. Please refer to the diagram below.

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## DATA EXCHANGE

### Data Sharing

Whilst DLRC is committed to promoting the use of the data it holds, there may be some circumstances in which DLRC, as a responsible data custodian, may need to restrict access to all or part of some data resources. Whenever restrictions are applied the justification and rationale behind the decision are documented and made available.

Reasons why DLRC might restrict access to data holding are listed in this section (and are also discussed in Terms and Conditions below).

- a) If the release of certain data is likely to increase the risk of environmental damage, or put particularly sensitive species at risk. Making the data resources we hold available is designed to improve biodiversity and environmental stewardship.
- b) If the release of data is likely to jeopardise the supply of data and collation of future data resources. Doncaster LRC is a data custodian and does not own the data resources held. We intend that data providers will support this '**Data Access and Exchange Policy**', but are under no obligation to share their data with us.
- c) If the data provider has requested that certain data or information is withheld. For example where data may be commercially sensitive, or where the data is under preparation prior to publication. The restriction may be permanent or temporary depending on the restrictions agreed with the data provider.
- d) If the data contains personal information. Information held by DLRC is managed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. Personal data will be managed in accordance with our '**Confidentiality Policy**'. Personal information (for example, contact details) may be removed from the data resources that we make available.

## Terms and Conditions

### Data supplied by LRC

1. Data supplied by DLRC in response to a data enquiry shall not be copied or sold by the recipient to any third party or published in any form or placed on the internet without written permission from DLRC unless permitted in the clauses below.
2. Documents that include data generated by DLRC may be provided to the recipient's client so long as any requirements regarding confidential data are adhered to and that full acknowledgement is given to DLRC and any named original recorders.
3. The data supplied shall not be entered onto an electronic database or GIS without written permission from DLRC. Any data supplied are for the recipient to utilise in the formulation of reports to clients or as background to a research project. Such data are not intended for long-term storage by the recipient. In such cases permission to use data after 12 months from the date of supply shall be requested from DLRC.
4. The recipient of the data provided by DLRC shall understand that reasonable safeguards are in place to ensure the accuracy of the data supplied, but this shall not cause DLRC or its officers to be liable for any loss caused by errors or omissions in the data supplied.
5. The recipient of biological data supplied by the LRC shall be required to pay an appropriate fee according to DLRC's published scale of rates. Please see DLRC's '**Charging Policy**.'

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## Supplying data to LRC

1. Biological data supplied to DLRC by individual recorders or organisations may be used to provide biological information to third parties including official bodies, local and utility authorities to assist in planning and conservation matters as required by appropriate legislation, to ecological consultants for the purposes of carrying out site surveys in respect of planning applications, to conservation partners for biodiversity projects, and to individuals for private research. In whichever case DLRC will treat such data in accordance with its '**Confidentiality Policy**'.
2. DLRC requests that, where possible, other biological data collected by an enquirer during the course of a project and relating to the DMBC recording area, are sent to DLRC at the end of the project, or as soon as is reasonably practicable. DLRC aims to maintain a comprehensive view of biodiversity in the DMBC recording area.
3. Recorders providing data to DLRC accept that DLRC may hold and use the data in accordance with its policies and procedures. A '**Data Transfer Statement**' or more formal '**Data Transfer License**' can be used to clarify this agreement and provide recorders with an opportunity to specify any restrictions or limitations that they may wish to impose on the use of their data. In receiving data DLRC have clear authority to make use of the data in the course of its business and in accordance with its aims and objectives, whilst the recorder retains the property copyright of the information.

## Refusal by LRC to supply data

1. LRC retains the option not to supply data to an enquirer if:-
  - a) all the data identified in the search is considered to be confidential by DLRC and the copyright holder of the data is not willing for that data to be released for the proposed purpose;
  - b) the enquirer cannot agree to the above conditions or has not adhered to the conditions previously;
  - c) the enquirer is not prepared to pay the appropriate fee;
  - d) the enquirer requesting access to confidential DLRC data declines to show membership of an environmental professional body if asked to do so;
- a) the enquirer is requesting data out of proportion to the case in point. The geographical scope of the enquiry will be matched by the data supplied. For example DLRC would not supply a complete dataset although basic distribution maps across the geographical spread of the LRC area would be considered.

## Charges

1. DLRC has a charging policy for the provision of data. We would not normally charge to supply data to a private individual for private research, a conservation partner, or to a charitable organisation, unless the work involved in producing the required output is very great, or cost of materials (for example hard copy) is substantial. We do not charge for the data that we hold, but we make a charge which contributes to the running costs of DLRC. Please see DLRC's '**Charging Policy**.'
2. Regular users of DMBC's LRC services may with the cooperation of both parties, enter into an appropriate service level agreement.

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## **Further information, advice and interpretive services**

A physical archive has always formed a part of the services provided by Doncaster Museum, and DLRC has always drawn heavily on this as a source of biological records. The archive contains physical media, e.g. naturalist's notebooks, drawings, survey reports, films/slides and CDs, and other documentation where these are relevant to the DMBC recording area. The physical archive has always actively targeted 'legacy data' that is 'at risk', i.e. where the host institution or individual can no longer hold the material, an institution has closed or the scientist/naturalist(s) have retired.

While the funding and space implications of the physical archive are always under consideration, DLRC will deal with requests to hold physical media containing biological records on a case-by-case basis. Please contact the Biological Records Officer in the first instance to discuss your requirements.