

Doncaster Local Records Centre (DLRC)

Policy Document – June 2011

DATA VALIDATION POLICY & PROCEDURE

Terminology

Below are definitions of the terminology used in this document:

Term	Definition
DLRC	Doncaster Local Records Centre The Local Records Centre for the Doncaster Borough, who collate, manage and disseminate environmental data on behalf of professional local organisations, and amateur naturalists.
RDB	Red Data Book An international list, published as the Red Data Book, which classifies species into different categories of perceived risk in the wild.

Data Validation Policy

Contemporary or current data

Records are received from many sources. The great majority of these sources are from trusted natural historians, local naturalists from reputable natural history societies, county recorders or professional ecologists where the persons concerned are widely recognised as being competent in their fields. As a Local Records Centre we rely on the expertise of specialist workers. Records received by DLRC may be questioned and expert advice sought when deemed necessary, especially in the case of RDB, Nationally Notable, protected or otherwise important species subject to legislation.

Historical data

DLRC inputs and manages historical data, in the interests of holding a comprehensive dataset. This is important not only as an archive but to assess changes in conditions of local sites and to assess trends in species loss/gain over time. Reliance on the validity of historical records rests generally on the reputation of the journal entry or literature reference from which the data are drawn, or from the reputation of the individual recorder/determiner concerned.

Data Validation Procedure

1. The quality of taxonomic identifications is critical to the operation of DLRC and therefore record validation is required to ensure data are of the highest quality before submitting to a user.
2. It is essential that data are evaluated and validated before entry to the database and generally this is done by the Biological Records Officer of DLRC in conjunction with the suppliers of the data.
3. Our validation of species records is a checking process to ensure that the data are attributed to the correct taxa. This checking process is a feature of the Recorder 6 (R6) database within which Doncaster Local Records Centre's data are stored. In R6 every Species Observation (a record) may be flagged Correct/Incorrect/ Requires Confirmation/Unconfirmed.

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4. No Local Records Centre can have sufficient in-house expertise to deal with verification of all the taxa it covers, so contact is made with specialist individuals when the Biological Records Officer considers it necessary.
5. DLRC gratefully accepts records from whoever chooses to offer them. Any such records are only entered onto the database if it is considered by the relevant DLRC officers that the source of the records (and by implication the determiner) is a bona-fide one.