

Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre
Development Plan April 2006 to April 2009

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Produced for the partners of the Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre

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*Consultees for Draft: September 2005
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Committee for Biological Recording
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*Circulation of final report to all key SxBRC data users and data providers
Document will be available on www.sxbrc.org.uk*

Further copies can be obtained from SxBRC at the above address



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Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre (SxBRC) has gone through many phases; Times of calm, times of growth and times of extreme and frustrating technical problems, to name but a few. There are numerous individuals who have worked extremely hard to push the 'vision' of the Centre forward over the years, most significantly Dr Alan Stewart and Dr Tony Whitbread, Ann Griffiths and Dr Alex Tait. There are also those who have worked incredibly hard with limited resources to bring this vision forward, namely Louise Scott, Simon Curson, Harry Montgomery, Don Baker, Bryan Mitchie, Nadine Russell and Lee Manning. The present staff and volunteers (See Appendix 1) take this responsibility further and their commitment to the Centre and its development is exceptional.

The support of the Sussex data providers and users is fundamental to the current status of the Centre and the voluntary contribution by so many individuals is never taken for granted.

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Henri Brocklebank
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Glossary of Abbreviations

AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
BAPSI	Biodiversity Action Plan Species Inventory
BARS	Biodiversity Action Reporting System
BHCC	Brighton and Hove City Council
BITO	Biodiversity Information Technology Officer
BRCM	Biodiversity Record Centre Manager
BRO	Biodiversity Records Officer
EA	Environment Agency
EN	English Nature
ESCC	East Sussex County Council
ESD	Environmental Survey Directory
FEP	Farm Environment Plan
FWAG	Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group
HAP	Habitat Action Plan
HWAONB	High Weald AONB Unit
IHS	Integrated Habitat System
LA	Local Authority
LRC	Local Record Centre
NBN	National Biodiversity Network Trust
PSR	Protected Species Register
RCSU	Record Centre Survey Unit
RSI	Rare Species Inventory
RSIC	Rare Species Inventory Coordinator
RSPB	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
SDJC/SDCB	South Downs Joint Committee previously Sussex Downs Conservation Board
SEEBF	South East England Biodiversity Forum
SELRCF	South East Local Record Centre Forum
SLA	Service Level Agreement
SNCI	Site of Nature Conservation Importance
SSSI	Special Site of Scientific Interest
SWT	Sussex Wildlife Trust
SxBP	Sussex Biodiversity Partnership
SxBPO	Sussex Biodiversity Partnership Officer
SxBRC	Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre
WSCC	West Sussex County Council

Executive Summary

The Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre is the centre of reference for authoritative information relating to biodiversity in Sussex, working in partnership with both data users and data providers for public benefit.

The aims of the Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre (SxBRC) are:

1. To maintain a secure and effective Biological Record Centre for Sussex.
 2. To collate, manage and supply information on the species, habitats and wildlife sites of Sussex.
 3. To meet and promote the needs of Sussex biodiversity data users.
 4. To ensure that Sussex biodiversity information is presented in appropriate regional and national fora.
 5. To support the Sussex biological recording community.
- An extensive service is already provided by SxBRC to its partners, commercial enquirers and the general public. However the outputs of SxBRC need to evolve continuously to fulfil the needs of its users, and constant attention must be put onto its inputs, both financially and in terms of data. This development plan addresses the changes that need to be made in order to stay abreast of the growing data holdings and the increased demand for data in a climate of escalating technical complexity.
 - This report details the aims of SxBRC and how these may be realistically achieved. The subsequent recommendations have been put into a timetable so that SxBRC staff and partners have a structure to follow over the next three years which will provide sustained growth of SxBRC as a minimum objective.
 - Physical growth within SxBRC will remain limited until 07/08 (estimate) when opportunity will be given to the Centre to move into larger premises at Woods Mill. At this stage SxBRC will be able to increase its material and personnel assets.
 - This report outlines costed options for a sustained or even a decreased SxBRC service, but the main objective of SxBRC is to grow to meet the demonstrated increasing demand for information, and it is this option on which this reports places the most focus.
 - It is proposed that meeting this demand is done through wise management of IT systems, increasing the staffing of the centre and considered use of contractees. The expenditure and income implications of this have been outlined but this development plan plots an increase in activity consistent with **38% increase in turnover in three years** (from £80,500 at present (March 2005) to a turnover of £114,000 in 2008/2009).
 - It is hoped that the partners and staff of SxBRC will be more effective at delivering biodiversity information in Sussex with a cohesive direction and that the clear focus of SxBRC will encourage the commitment of existing and new data users and providers in Sussex.

Chart mapping some aspects of SxBRC enhancement over Development Plan period (as outlined in more detail in this report).

		Jan-06 ¹	May-06	Sep-06	Jan-07	May-07	Sep-07	Jan-08	May-08	Sep-08	Jan-09
Strategic Development	SxBRC Development Plan updates			x			x			x	
	RCSU development plan completed			x							
	Detailed SxBRC IT strategy launched		x								
Finance Development	Service provision to Statutory Agencies reassessed		x			x			x		
	Local Authority service provision reassessed			x			x			x	
	Rolling program of SLA development	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Data Enhancement	Sussex Species statements completed						x				
	Sussex Data into regional IHS Dataset						x				
	Data flow with major data providers documented				x						
	Links with NBN Gateway developed			x							
	All SxBRC habitat data full integrated into BARS				x						
IT Enhancement	New SxBRC Website Launch	x									
	Phase II IT strategy launched					x					
	Recorder 6 fully integrated into SxBRC systems		x								
Service Enhancement	Feedback from Commercial Enquiries assessed			x							
	'Indicator species' service developed				x						
	On-line service provision enhanced					x					
Office Move ²	Relocation to larger Woods Mill venue						x	x	x		
National/Regional contribution	Liaise with NBN Gateway			x							
	Launch of National Association of LRCs			x							

¹ The Dates in this table reflect the dates of the tri-annual SxBRC Steering Group Meetings

² Specific date for office move not known.

Preface – Local Record Centres in context

Nature is dynamic. The idea of recording fauna and flora is as old as human culture, as is witnessed by prehistoric cave paintings, or the story of Noah's Ark. However, formal records of where and when different species occurred, the classification of habitats and vegetation, and related subjects started to be gathered in a systematic way during the 18th century Enlightenment. This was supported by the rise of science, the establishment of museums and collections, the development of taxonomy, the publication of a variety of books and papers dealing with species and other elements of the natural world and for many other reasons.

Quite quickly it was realised that some organisms were increasing while others were decreasing; that habitats were in a state of flux; that there were cyclical changes in climate. Often this was due to natural processes but much was also engendered by human activity and it was soon understood that many changes were a combination of natural phenomena and human intervention.

During broadly the same period from the 18th century until the present day the general public became increasingly aware of the complexity and fragility of much wildlife and developed a stronger appreciation of its wonder and value as more was understood about it and methods of communication improved.

People have always had affinity with nature, especially when they were in direct daily contact with it; when it represented a wide range of opportunities and threats. But the idea of appreciating and conserving/developing it largely for its own sake is a relatively modern development.

With the rise of industrial economies and the growth of cities the pressures on wildlife have also grown. The attitudes of increasingly urbanised populations have changed and are continuing to change. A Local Record Centre (LRC) has a key role in developing a better understanding of what may be termed the biological assets of the area it covers, how the status of these assets has changed over time and the impact, for better or worse, that future human activities may have. It has a crucial role to play in guiding the decisions of politicians, planners, developers, and many others in addition to those directly involved in wildlife and its conservation. It also has an increasingly important input into research, education and the knowledge and appreciation of the natural world by the general public.

The arrivals of the computer and the Internet plus many other advances in communication have begun to produce hitherto unimaginable ways of organising, analysing and manipulating data. But, self-evidently, good quality data has to be available as the raw material with which this work is done. LRCs work at a local level ensuring that the needs of both data users and providers are met, continually endorsing the maintenance of quality and flow of data as well as putting information into a local context whenever possible.

There are currently no statutory funding commitments to LRCs and until there is LRCs must sustain themselves financially whilst meeting the increasing needs of their users. The use of biodiversity information is vital to the progress of a society in a region in which pressures on the shared environment are constantly mounting. Through a strong partnership with its data users and providers a well funded LRC is in a position to offer high quality biodiversity information locally, regional and nationally.

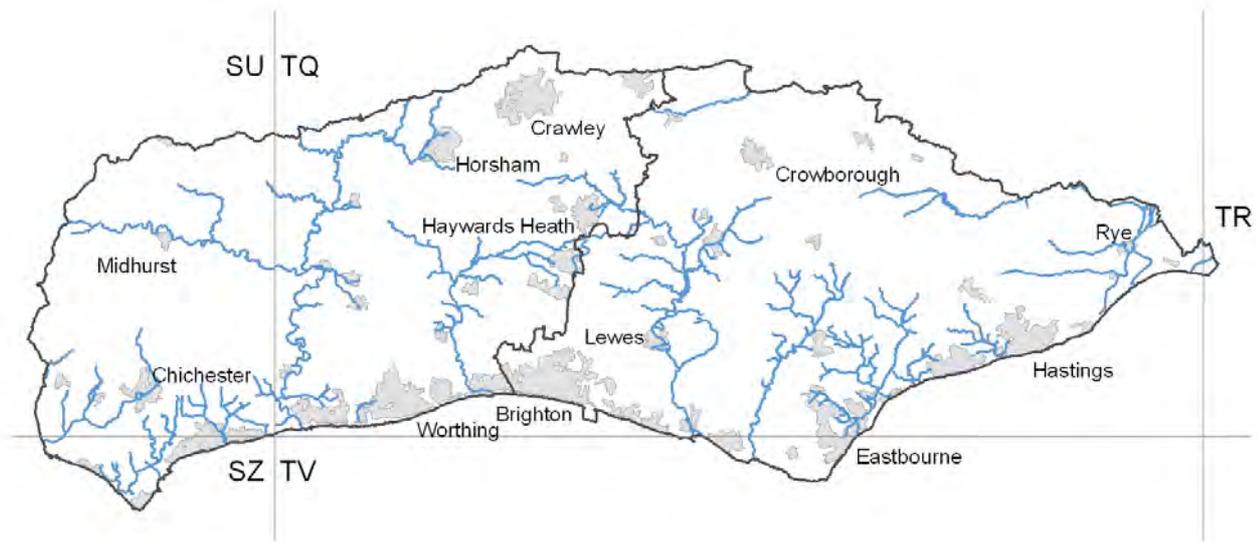
Dr Patrick Roper and Henri Brocklebank

1. Background

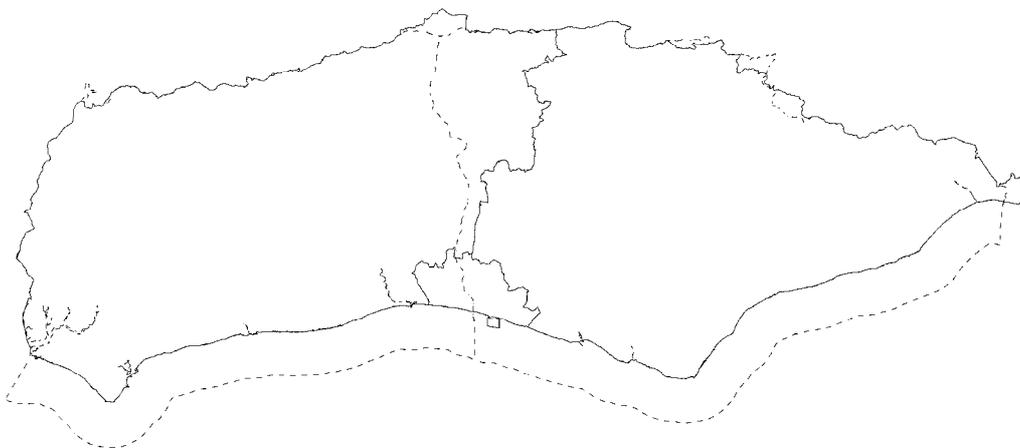
1.1 Defining the area

The Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre (SxBRC) covers the administrative areas of East and West Sussex and the City of Brighton and Hove. In addition SxBRC covers those areas that are in Watsonian Vice Counties 13 (West Sussex) and 14 (East Sussex) that do not fall into 'administrative Sussex'. The Watsonian Vice County boundaries extend some way out to sea, thus including Sussex coastal and, to some extent marine habitats, in the SxBRC area of concern.

The area of administrative 'Sussex' is shown in the map below. Its 35,684 ha represent 19.7% of the South East England region.



Watsonian Vice Counties 13 and 14 are shown below, with the administrative boundaries added to demonstrate the discrepancy between the two systems. All references to 'Sussex' in this document refer to the area covered within the combined boundaries of Watsonian and Administrative Sussex.



1.2 Defining a Local Record Centre

A Local Records Centre (LRC) can be defined as *“A not-for-profit service working in partnership, which collects, collates, manages and disseminates quality information relating to the wildlife, wildlife sites and habitats of a geographical area for the public benefit.”*³

The scope of the subject matter relevant to SxBRC was taken to be all biological records within the area of Sussex. These cover sites⁴, habitats, species and related data types essential or desirable for linkage to biological records⁵. Other forms of environmental data, such as landscape, geology and hydrology are also relevant to SxBRC. Thus the term *biodiversity*⁶ is considered appropriate in describing the information held by SxBRC.

1.3 Origins of SxBRC

There had been considerable activity relating to biological recording in Sussex for many years prior to the creation of the Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre partnership. A number of organisations were involved in different aspects of species, habitat and site recording for different purposes, but the means of access to information was not always straightforward as many groups or individuals held information for the same site but in separate formats and systems.

The concept of a Local Record Centre for Sussex was developed by the Council of the Sussex Wildlife Trust (SWT) in the 1970s. IN the 1980s they hosted the creation of the Sussex Environmental Survey Directory, which is seen as a precursor to SxBRC. Reports on the development of a UK LRC network from the newly formed National Biodiversity Network (NBN) encouraged SWT in promoting the Sussex LRC concept to other organisations. This was eventually rewarded by the inaugural meeting of the Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre Steering Group in 1997.

SxBRC followed the development guidelines set out by its original partners in its tri-annual Steering Group meetings. At the time the NBN had not published development guidelines for Local Record Centres, but the foresight of the original Steering Group representatives ensured that SxBRC developed in a virtually identical manner to most NBN LRC recommendations.

Original funding came from East Sussex County Council (ESCC), West Sussex County Council (WSSC) and English Nature (EN) with the project hosted then, as it is now, by SWT.

1.4 The need for a development plan

SxBRC's growth in the past ten years is best demonstrated by its data output which has increased dramatically over the past decade. Though the number of enquiries appears to be hitting a plateau (see section 4) the complexity and size of enquiries is increasing. Currently over 500 in-house enquiries are handled each year, as well as an on-screen service for partners. This continually increasing output, which once demonstrated the

³ Taken from LRC Handbook; NBN 2000.

⁴ A **site**, for example “Pulborough Brooks RSPB Visitor Centre and garden”, is an area of land with a defined boundary on a map.

⁵ A **record** in this context is normally taken to mean an observation of a species or habitat made at a point in time by an observer at a defined location, e.g. Hemp Agrimony, Pulborough Brooks RSPB Visitor Centre, 25 August 2004, Mrs C. Coull.

⁶ **Biodiversity** can be defined as “all the different plant, animal, and micro-organism species, the genes they contain, and the ecosystems of which they form a part”. Biological records therefore potentially include all flora, fauna and fungi, although micro-organisms are rarely covered. Species are combined into convenient taxonomic groups e.g. reptiles, butterflies, mosses.

success of the Centre, if not properly managed, could be one of the biggest challenges that SxBRC faces in the coming years.

Likewise the large amount of data held by SxBRC is crucial to the ability of SxBRC to fulfil its function. It is the management of these data, and the computer systems which house them that has been the single biggest obstacle to SxBRC development in the past two years.

With 16 financial partners (see Appendix 5) and numerous data providing partners, expectations on SxBRC continue to rise as the need for high quality biodiversity data increases in all sectors. In order to maintain realistic growth and development for SxBRC, guidance is needed, and it is hoped that a development plan, with its timetabled targets and emphasis on SxBRC's core functions, can act as the framework for that growth.

This report covers actions and targets that project over three years. These projections are in line with the real needs of SxBRC. They extend no further than three years as beyond this time it is not practicable to make realistic projections.

Section 3 of this report outlines the extent to which SxBRC needs to grow and looks at the financial implications of that growth.

1.5 The relationship between SWT and SxBRC

Relationships with all its contributing partners are important, but none so fundamental as that with SWT. SxBRC is 'hosted' by SWT and since 2002 has been run as a department thereof. The relationship between SxBRC and SWT is broadly seen as reciprocal. Each provides services to the other.

Below are list of the services provided to SxBRC by SWT

Broad category	Service
Practical	Office Space including utilities Meeting room and Archive facilities
Technical	Space on SWT server and networking of SxBRC computers Maintenance of SxBRC computers on SWT technical platforms. Technical support from IT Officer and IT Volunteer Networked telephone system
Administrative and Financial	Reception service Salary administration Postal service Basic stationery supplies Photocopying facilities Recruitment assistance and support Financial reporting systems and advice Invoice payment Insurance
Management and Support	Steering Group chaired by SWT Trustee Line management by SWT Chief Executive Officer Professional support from SWT Finance Manager and Conservation Director Personnel Officer support Access to legal advice
Volunteers	Support from the SWT Volunteer Co-ordinator
Compliance with relevant legislation and policies	Covered by SWT 'umbrella' for Health and Safety and other policies and legislation
Intangible	Pleasant work environment for staff and volunteers Reliable and solid infrastructure

These are reciprocated as follows:

Broad category	Service
Conservation Director	All mapping for Sussex Eco-net and regional landscape projects Ad hoc enquiry response Record Centre Survey Unit (RCSU) services
Conservation Team – Otters and Rivers Project	Data management for all aquatic mammal data Ad hoc Data provision for specific sites
Conservation Team – Policy Work	Ad hoc Data provision for specific sites
Conservation Team – Wild Call	Data handling and enquiry service as required Signposting to local expertise
Conservation Team – Biodiversity Partnership	Information management and support for all HAP habitat and species monitoring work
Reserves Team	Management of nature reserve data Provision of individual reserve reports Ad hoc reserve mapping Support for the development of the SWT data system Technical Training and support Signposting to local expertise RCSU services
West Weald Landscapes Project	Technical support to SxBRC West Weald data satellite Data provision and management for project area Technical Training and support RCSU services
Life Long Learning Department	Ad hoc enquiry response and map provision
Education Department	Ad hoc enquiry response and map provision
Marketing Department	Ad hoc enquiry response and map provision
Generic	Use of RCSU facilities Support to SWT Slide Library Volunteers Contribution to SWT Management tier Publication and promotion of SWT through Sussex Biodiversity literature

SWT have hosted the SxBRC project since its inception. This has traditionally been perceived as an arrangement that could change if another partner offered viable alternative accommodation. In 2005 it was observed that no offer had been made and that it was important to cement the relationship between SxBRC and SWT so as to give SxBRC firmer footing on a legal basis when entering legal agreements with data users or providers.

1.6 SxBRC contribution to the work of SWT

The aim of the Sussex Wildlife Trust is to conserve the Sussex landscape, wildlife and its habitats, and to use its knowledge and expertise to help the people of Sussex to enjoy, understand and take action to this end.

As a Department of SWT SxBRC ensures its relevance to SWT work. The table above illustrates the practical means by which this manifests. However the table below demonstrates how SxBRC contributes to the delivery of SWT' own strategic directions.

The contribution made by SxBRC to SWT objectives:

C Contribution

C+	Major contribution
C-	Minor Contribution
N	No contribution

SWT Strategic direction	SWT Primary Objectives	SxBRC delivery
Leading the conservation agenda for Sussex	Leading the Wildlife Vision for Sussex	C-
	Setting/influencing conservation policy	C
	Re-naturalising Sussex	C
	Promoting a wildlife vision based on a re-naturalisation theme	N
	Leading environmental education in Sussex	N
Biodiversity monitoring and recording	Identifying information need	C+
	Addressing information need	C+
	Fostering specialist expertise	C+
	Linking people with wildlife information	C+
	Information on SWT Nature Reserves	C+
	Ensuring the future of Biological Skills	C+
Promoting achievement of biodiversity targets by others	Influencing the policies of other organisations	C
	Demonstration of best practice	C
	County Wildlife Sites	C+
	Coastal and Marine	C
	Working Nationally to support Biodiversity Objectives in Sussex	C
	Addressing the trends in a changing Countryside	C-
Delivering progress towards biodiversity targets ourselves	Safeguarding Sussex	N
	Sustainable land management	C+
	Area initiatives around Nature Reserves	C
	Enhancement of wetland habitats and key wetland species	C
Enhancing the desire in people for a healthy, wildlife rich environment	Enjoying and understanding wildlife through life-long learning and active citizenship	C-
	Enjoying and understanding wildlife through wildlife events	C+
	Promoting/explaining wildlife and environmental issues through interpretation	C-
	Celebrating the richness of wildlife in Sussex	C
	Promoting Wildlife/environmental issues through Community work	C-
	Promoting Wildlife/environmental issues to the general public	C
	Engaging a wide range of audiences	C-
	SWT Credibility	C
	Encouraging local communities to achieve their environmental objectives	C-

SxBRC currently fits in the established management structure of SWT as follows.

- The SxBRC Steering Committee is chaired by an SWT Trustee
- The Committee for Biological Recording is chaired by a SWT Trustee
- SxBRC Manager is line managed by the SWT Chief Executive Officer

Methods of reporting to the SWT Trustees remain through:

- Quarterly Digest
- Six monthly Trustees report

- SWT Annual report
- Personal ad hoc liaison with Trustees, the Steering Group/CBR Chairs and SxBRC staff
- Presentations of SxBRC development on request
- Trustees invited to visit SxBRC for a detailed induction
- Trustees invited to the annual Biological Recorders Seminar
- Trustees made aware of new SxBRC publications

The Record Centre is **not** a regular item at either SWT Council or Executive meetings though SxBRC may seek to establish an agenda item at these meetings if required and has used this facility from time to time.

Increasingly SxBRC is entering legal documents regarding either finance, the sharing of data or buying in of services. Each of these documents is an agreement with the data/fund/service provider and SWT as SxBRC does not exist as a legal entity. It would be of great benefit to SxBRC if the status of SxBRC and its relationship to SWT could be readdressed by SWT Council. Ideally a Memorandum of Understanding about the relationship between SWT and the partnership could clear up the complexities each time SxBRC enters into a legal agreement [*]⁷.

The SxBRC partnership evolved from the foresight of the SWT Council in the early 1990s. The Steering Group for the Record Centre was established in 1997, chaired by an SWT Trustee. This situation has not been readdressed for eight years and in this time SxBRC has grown from a part-time member of staff focussing on data entry to the complex 'organisation' that this report describes. Consequently the SxBRC Terms of Reference were last revisited in 1997. Ideally these should be revisited [*].

Recommendation

- A document similar to this report is produced every three years by the BRCM.
- SxBRC position within SWT is formalised by SWT Trustees in a Memorandum of Understanding.
- Revisit the SxBRC Terms of Reference.

⁷ Please note that the symbol [*] when placed in the text refers to a recommendation which will be elaborated on in the table at the end of each section of this document, and if relevant put into the SxBRC timeline at the end of this report.

2. SxBRC aims and direction

The SxBRC Mission Statement, as agreed by its Steering Group (*), is as follows:

The Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre is the centre of reference for authoritative information relating to biodiversity in Sussex, working in partnership with both data users and data providers for public benefit.

The aims of SxBRC are as follows:

1. To maintain a secure and effective Biological Record Centre for Sussex.
2. To collate, manage and supply information on the species, habitats and wildlife sites of Sussex.
3. To meet and promote the needs of Sussex biodiversity data users.
4. To ensure that Sussex biodiversity information is presented in appropriate regional and national fora.
5. Supporting the recording community.

Recommendation

1. SxBRC Mission Statement and aims should be reviewed by the SxBRC Steering Group every two years.

2.1 A secure and effective Record Centre for Sussex – Core Functions and Services

2.1.1 An Effective Centre

To define what an effective Record Centre for Sussex must do, the *core functions* of such a centre must be established. *Core functions* are functions that SxBRC must strive to maintain as a minimum delivery. The *enhanced functions* in the second table are functions which enable SxBRC to deliver a higher quality service to its partners and wider user group. The costs of these enhanced services are not included in SxBRC core costs, which are referred to later. The two tables below are based on LRC functions recommended by the NBN in 2004, but adapted to be Sussex specific. The current rating of SxBRC's fulfilment of each function (out of 3) is given (*).

Core Function	SxBRC Role	Rating Autumn 2004
Hold current local and national wildlife site data.	SxBRC should hold or have access to copies of all citations and relevant detailed site surveys in support of sites of recognised importance (SNCI, LNR, SSSI etc.) Up to date boundaries must be maintained on GIS ⁸ .	++-
Hold detailed and current species data.	SxBRC should hold or have access to all appropriate species data for Sussex. These data should be verified where possible by taxonomic experts.	++-
Hold detailed biological survey information.	SxBRC should be aware of, and hold meta-data for surveys that have been carried out in Sussex.	+++
Document habitat extent and monitor habitat change.	SxBRC should be working towards comprehensive land cover and habitat information for its geographic area and have a strategy for recording change.	++-
Hold wider environmental information.	SxBRC should hold additional information relating to other environmental attributes such as land use, landscape character, geology, hydrology and topography.	++-
Maintain a high quality reporting service	SxBRC should maintain an effective and efficient enquiry response service.	+++
Maintain up to date, efficient IT Systems	SxBRC must stay abreast of developments in GIS and biological recording Software, to ensure professional maintenance and reporting of its data holdings.	+++
Gap Analysis	SxBRC should identify gaps in its species, habitat and survey data and present this to its steering group with proposed solutions for filling gaps.	++-
Data capture service	SxBRC should offer a service to partners of capturing their datasets to agreed standards, making it available to users including export to the original partner's system.	+++
Off site reporting services	SxBRC should maintain and develop regular data updates to partners via web-site, e-link or CD.	+++
Data provision for BAP Outcome reporting	SxBRC should support the Sussex Biodiversity partnership in monitoring and reporting on biodiversity outcomes in relation to Biodiversity Action Plan targets.	++-
Liaison with Recording Community	SxBRC should endeavour to contribute to the Recording Community through the provision of services aimed at enhancing biological recording in Sussex.	+++
Regional/National	SxBRC should contribute to developments to establish	

⁸ GIS – Geographical Information System. SxBRC currently uses a GIS computer mapping system called ArcGIS 9.

contribution	regional and national datasets where appropriate.	+++
Archive	The LRC should act as a secure archive for the data in its care in perpetuity, protecting it from alteration, damage, loss and unauthorised use	++-
Compliance with all relevant legislation	The Environmental Information Regulations and the Data Protection Act, Health and safety legislation etc.	++-

Enhanced Function	SxBRC Role	Rating Autumn 2004
Indicator monitoring	SxBRC should monitor relevant sustainability, performance or biodiversity indicators on behalf of partner organisations.	+-
Habitat monitoring	SxBRC should work with SxBPO on Sussex BAP habitats in terms of quality and extent.	+-
Surveys for Partners	SxBRC should be able to undertake and/or co-ordinate high quality, non-controversial, conservation based, surveys on behalf of its partners.	+++
Promoting a new generation of naturalists	SxBRC should be active in promoting biological recording skills in Sussex.	+++
Working towards regional biodiversity data reporting	All Local Record Centres should be working towards closer links with neighbouring Centres.	+++

- +++ Achieving
- +- Nearly achieving
- +- Starting to achieve
- Not achieving

With these functions established the ability to keep them secure must be considered.

2.1.2 A Secure Centre

Financial Security

SxBRC income currently comes from four sources:

Partners
Enquiries
Projects
Survey Work

- **Enquiry income** 2004 has seen the production of a guidance document to LRCs on charging policy by the National Federation for Biological Recording (NFBR). This document advises that an LRC enquiry charge should be a reflection of the true costs of providing the core functions of the local Record Centre. With this in mind the SxBRC steering Group committed, in July 2004, to raising the enquiry charge of SxBRC from £60.00 per hour (plus VAT) to £100.00 per hour (plus VAT) on 1st April 2005 (See Appendix 5

for calculation) This increment still falls short of the true cost of the enquiry response service (which currently sits at £120 per hour) but it was felt that the £40 increment would suffice, and a further increase would follow in due course after further calculations as to the real cost (*). This increase in enquiry charges will, in the short term, increase the income from this source. This is an unpredictable sector (due to national and regional influences) and SxBRC should not become any more dependent on this income stream. Finances generated from enquiries should be dedicated to SxBRC development. However until Partners fully fund the SxBRC core costs funds from this source will be covering the shortfall.

- **Income from Partners** The number of SxBRC partners varies year on year with some Local Authorities making a fresh commitment to SxBRC and others having to withdraw. Not all partners (Local Authorities or otherwise) have wished to sign a Service Level Agreement (SLA) generally due to financial unpredictability within their own sector. In order to maintain the income from partners, SxBRC needs to ensure that its services are of direct relevance to its partners. The contributing partners, like their needs, are diverse and these needs are continually changing. SxBRC must ensure that it stays abreast of its partners requirements (*). Likewise, in order for partners to fully value their partnership with SxBRC they need to be aware of the status of SxBRC so that supporting the core functions of SxBRC is accepted as an important part of their financial contribution, without over emphasis on tailor-made outputs. In the financial year 2003-2004 SxBRC partners funded 80% of core expenditure. In order to provide a sustainable foundation SxBRC should seek to fund 100% of SxBRC permanent staff costs and core office costs from Partner Contributions (*).
- **Projects** In the last few years SxBRC has generated significant income from projects commissioned by partners. This includes five *Lifescapes* projects with English Nature. Projects that contribute to the core functions of the Record Centre are favoured and SxBRC charges a management fee for work carried out. This fee is calculated at cost recovery with a 10% surplus to further SxBRC development. (This surplus is extended for the Survey and Research Officer as development costs are more significant).

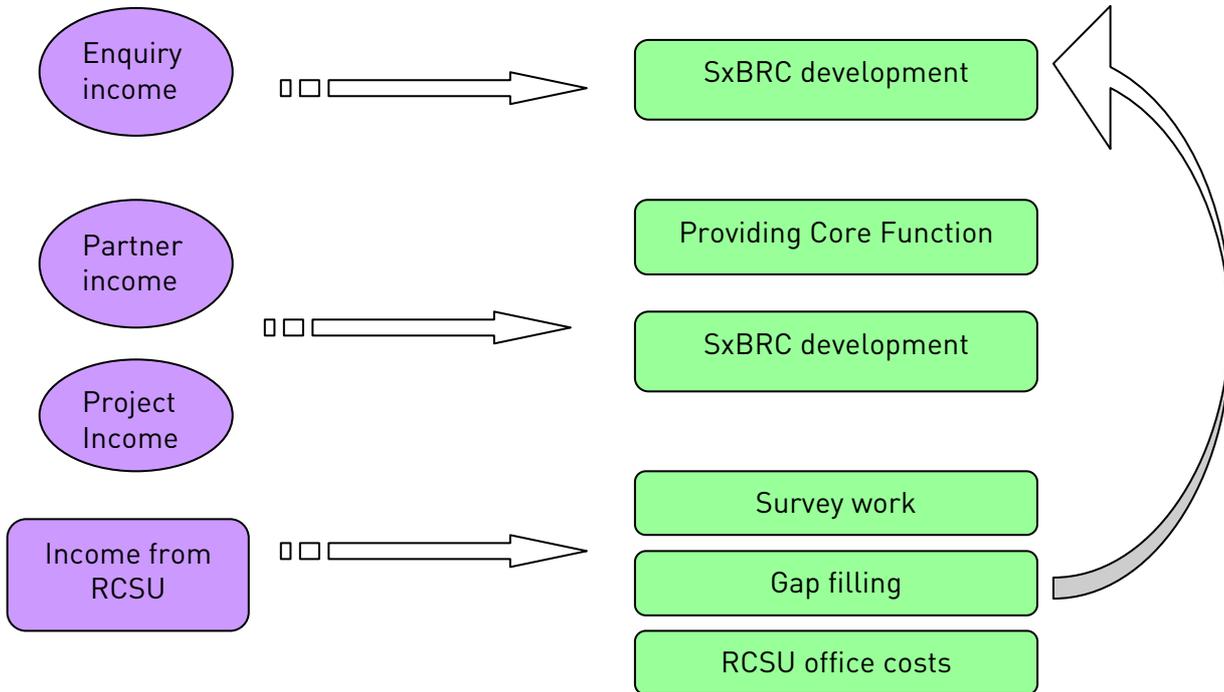
However the income generated from these projects⁹ has been an important new income stream for SxBRC and has allowed some growth in SxBRC enhanced functions from the income that it has generated (*). Income from this source is unpredictable and should not be depended on. SxBRC's daily management rate should be formally reconsidered and set (*). Finances generated from this source should contribute to permanent staff costs and core office costs in the short term, but once partners fund these fully project income should be reinvested into SxBRC development.

- **Surveys** The Record Centre Survey Unit (RCSU) in its first year alone has generated enough income to prove itself to be a financially viable project. The work of the Survey and Research Officer includes gap filling projects for priority habitat data sets and thus this enhanced function is the route by which several core functions are funded and fulfilled. The RCSU Terms of Reference clearly lay out its responsibilities. These should be revisited annually in order to ensure the continued relevance of SxBRC gap filling work to the needs of the SxBRC Steering Committee (*). It is envisaged that the ability to undertake survey work on behalf of partners will generate new SxBRC partnerships for the future.

Surveys undertaken since the inception of the RCSU in 2003 are listed in Appendix 3. A full RCSU development Plan is recommended.

In June 2005, due the increasing need for professional mapping skills for RCSU projects SxBRC offered a 2 day a week role to the already 3 day a week Sussex Biodiversity Partnership Officer post. The gap filling function of SxBRC can now be done in tandem with the Sussex Biodiversity Partnership thus sharing responsibilities and removing the previous duplication of effort.

⁹ Projects include Hants and Sussex data management project, SE England LRC holdings, SDCB indicator species.

Fig.a. Diagram to show the ideal allocation of funds generated.

Data Security

SxBRC data currently sit on the Sussex Wildlife Trust Server. SxBRC's dependence on the speed and capacity of this server has led to challenges for SxBRC and for SWT. SWT take responsibility for server backups and a recent copy is held off site.

As SxBRC's IT needs have developed in the past two years the role of Biodiversity IT Officer (BITO) has been created. It is a role that continually increases in importance as new updates of software and data are made available. The Biodiversity IT Officer will need to have full access to SxBRC hardware and software as the needs of SxBRC could potentially outstrip the time and resources available from SWT IT staff and volunteers. SxBRC needs to consider taking responsibility for its own computer systems, its current dependence on SWT could soon place unsustainable demands on SWT

As a result of its complex technical demands SxBRC will prepare a two phased IT strategy (*).

Staff Security

At the time of writing SxBRC has three full time staff, two part time staff and several temporary contractees working on Core SxBRC services. Additional contractees support the work of RCSU. Meanwhile volunteers make up a crucial aspect of SxBRC's team.

Full Time

Biodiversity Record Centre Manager - BRCM
Biodiversity Records Officer -BRO
Biodiversity IT Officer- BITO

Part time

Survey and Research Officer – S&RO (4/5)
Sussex Biodiversity Partnership Officer – SxBPO (2/5)

Temporary Contractees

ESD Data Entry Officer – ESDO (2/5)
 Rare Species Inventory Co-ordinator – (RSIC 1.5/5)
 Species Data Entry – (Occasional)
 Single project contractees – (Occasional)
 Ad Hoc RCSU contractees – (Occasional)

Key Office Volunteer Posts

Protected Species Register
 Hedgerow Inventory Project Officer
 Hedgerow Support
 Data Entry
 Digitising and GIS analysis
 Technical Support
 Network Support

The current staff structure is demonstrated in fig. b. below. In time it is hoped that something reflecting fig. c can be achieved. N.B. Volunteers are not included in this diagram. Volunteer support is undertaken by BRCM, BRO and BITO, as each staff member has responsibilities towards different aspects of the volunteer's role.

Hierarchies of staff are reflected in day to day management, not in line management as within the Sussex Wildlife Trust Structure the Head of Department takes line management responsibility for all members of the department. SxBPO takes line management from another department, but for the two days a week working in SxBRC the BRCM takes responsibility for day to day management.

Fig. b: Current staffing Structure

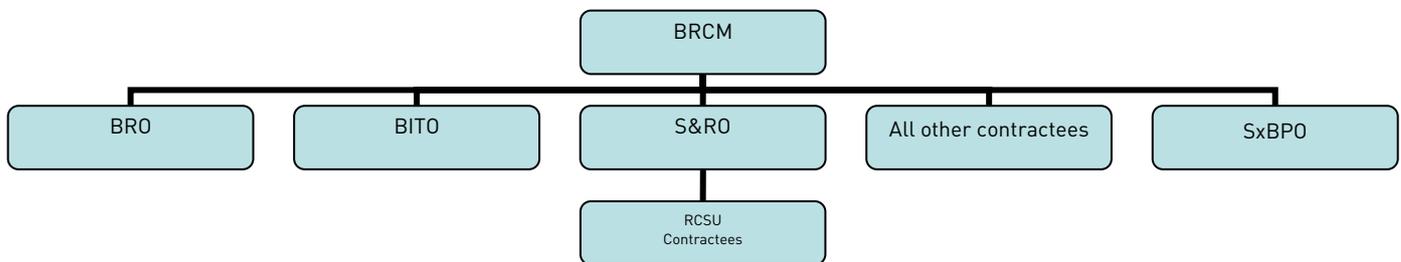
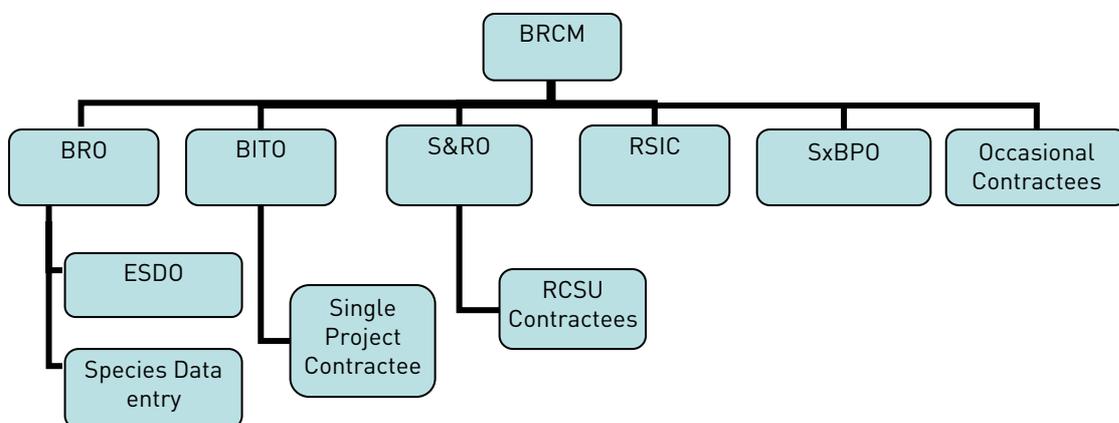


Fig. c: Proposed Staffing Structure



The proposed changes to staffing structure raise the responsibilities of core staff whilst taking some day to day responsibilities from the Record Centre Manager. It puts SxBRC into a more robust position where there is less dependence on a single individual. It also allows SxBRC officers to develop new skills in staff co-ordination and budget management, which will in turn help them to develop their own careers (*). Ideally the short term contracts of ESDO and RSIC could be made into permanent posts.

At present several core SxBRC roles are covered by contractee work. The fundamental importance of the work carried out by some SxBRC contractees needs to be recognised and posts made permanent within the staff structure and pay scale where possible (*). This is to be done on the understanding that making permanent posts increases overheads and reduces financial flexibility and needs to be carefully considered.

The current salaries represent a disincentive to potential applicants for posts at SxBRC. This is demonstrated by the falling numbers of applicants in recent recruitment drives. Relocation on the salaries offered is out of the question. Expectations of the abilities of SxBRC are now very specific and a re-recruitment at current salary levels would be extremely challenging (*). To date SxBRC has been able to recruit highly skilled suitable staff into each post, however the salaries currently offered raise doubts on if this fortunate trend will continue.

Business security

Considering the above issues the fundamental business model proposed for SxBRC is as follows:

1. Services are provided to those organisations who wish to hold Service Level Agreements (or more flexible partnership agreements) with SxBRC; these services should be delivered by permanent staff. SLAs spanning three years should be encouraged where possible.
2. Permanent staff costs and core office costs should be covered by partnership contributions. This can be supplemented by enquiry income in the short term.
3. Commercial users are charged a pay-as-you-use fee; this service is delivered by permanent staff; the income from this source should be divided between core SxBRC costs and SxBRC development.
4. SxBRC support for voluntary recording is an SxBRC core function and as such should be supported by Core SxBRC income.
5. A discretionary free service should be delivered to naturalists, the public, educational users, non-corporate landowners; This service should be delivered by permanent staff; paid for charges to partnership funding and supplemented by the income from commercial users.
6. Projects (not RCSU) are undertaken on a contract basis; these are delivered by contract staff, managed by SxBRC staff. Income generated from this source is considered core income with 10% towards development costs.
7. Income generated by RCSU, after office costs, surveyor costs and R&SO costs are allocated directly to gap filling projects.

This outline business model, though tailored to Sussex, is essentially that pursued currently by the seven Local Records Centres in SW England and can be demonstrated to be viable, manageable and fair to the various user groups (*).

Recommendations

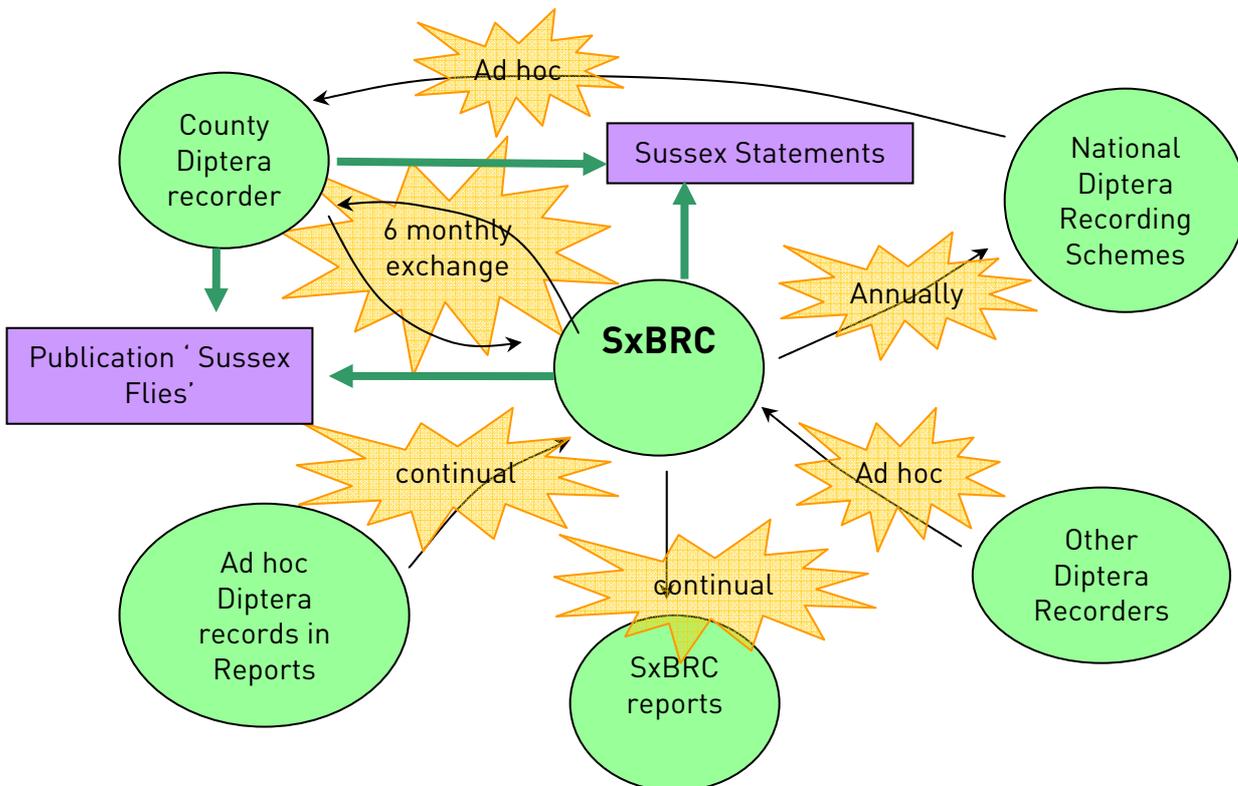
- Core and enhanced functions should be revised annually and ratings made accordingly to monitor SxBRC development.
- Core function ratings should be monitored annually.
- True cost of enquiry service and management fees should be recalculated annually and adjustments made to charges on 1st April each year.
- All financial partners need to be offered the opportunity of an SxBRC visit or presentation every two years to reacquaint staff with the services that are available to them from SxBRC and for SxBRC staff to ascertain the present and future needs of its partners in order to make SxBRC services relevant to them.
- If SxBRC finances are to be sustainable in the future SxBRC partners should recognise the need to maintain income from partners at a level equal to that of expenditure on core functions. This must be achieved by 2007.
- All partners need to be contacted annually to ensure no break in dialogue between SxBRC and these organisations.
- Projects that develop LRC core or enhanced functions should be encouraged. The income derived from the management of such projects should be used directly in LRC enhancement.
- An annual review of the RCSU Terms of Reference by the SxBRC Steering Group.
- As SxBRC develops the Record Centre Manager should promote the staffing structure shown in Fig b wherever possible.
- Permanent posts should be made where appropriate from existing contractee posts.
- All SxBRC projected IT requirements to be clearly outlined for every Steering Group meeting .
- RCSU development plan prepared
- IT Strategy prepared including a consideration of the longer term options of a completely separate SxBRC server. Options and costs must be presented to SxBRC Steering Group.

2.2 Information on the Species, habitats and Wildlife Sites of Sussex – System management

2.2.1 Collating Information

- **Terrestrial Species information from Recording Groups and Individuals:** Collecting species information requires continual liaison with the numerous Sussex Schemes and Societies and individuals involved in biological recording in Sussex. At present data flow between SxBRC and major Sussex data providers is undocumented. Detailed data flow diagrams should be agreed for each taxonomic group so that all involved are clear about responsibilities and time frames (*) e.g. **fig. d** below.

Fig.d. an example data flow diagram for Diptera data in Sussex



Once these relationships and responsibilities have been agreed a data sharing agreement between the relevant parties should be considered (*).

Historical data

Not all data from significant surveys of the last 25 years in Sussex has been computerised. SxBRC often has to give priority to more contemporary survey data. Thus the back catalogue of historical data remains un-used in contemporary decision making (*).

- **Satellite recording sites:** Some areas of Sussex are not only particularly well recorded, but recording effort in these areas is already co-ordinated by another group or individual. Examples include Hastings Borough, Rye Harbour Local Nature Reserve (and environs), Pagham Harbour Local Nature Reserve, the Booth Museum on Natural History (covering Brighton and Hove) and Chichester Harbour. SxBRC has a unique relationship with each 'satellite' recording site, and these relationships need to be clearly defined in terms of data flow and of the responsibilities of each party (*). SxBRC is able to give advice to satellite sites on data exchange, storage and back-up, and may be able to offer support in terms of data entry and collation.
- **Marine and coastal data:** This is a data set easily overlooked by SxBRC which has traditionally had a terrestrial focus. Sussex Marine data are held at the Booth Museum of Natural History in Brighton. Data derived from Sussex *Seasearch*. *Seasearch* is a national project for volunteer sports divers who have an interest in what they're seeing under water, want to learn more and want to help protect the marine environment. The main aim is to map out the various types of sea bed found in the near-shore zone, up to about 5 miles off the coast or 30m depth around the whole of the British Isles. In addition they are recording what lives in each area, establishing the richest sites for marine life, the sites where there are problems and the sites which need protection. The data collected is held by Sussex *Seasearch* on Marine RECORDER at the Booth Museum.

A recent meeting between SxBRC, the Booth Museum and Sussex *Seasearch* resulted in the creation of a Memorandum of Understanding regarding Marine and Coastal data in/off Sussex. The key points to emerge from this were:

- Booth Museum to maintain Marine RECORDER and enter all *Seasearch* data.
 - SxBRC to hold no marine data other than cetacean records
 - SxBRC to hold all coastal data for Sussex (down to low tide mark).
- **Survey information:** Small scale and large scale surveys are taking place across Sussex each year. The Sussex Environmental Survey Directory (ESD) holds metadata on over 2000 of them. In order to ensure that SxBRC is up to date on survey information there are several important steps:
 - **Large scale surveys.** Surveys of this nature are generally carried out in the knowledge of either SWT, EN, EA, a County Council, SWT or SDCB. Through working with members of the SxBRC steering group the appropriate relationships and confidence should be in place to ensure that SxBRC is a chosen depository (either temporary or permanent) for this work.
 - **Smaller scale surveys.** Relationships must be in place with all partners to ensure that SxBRC is either a temporary or permanent depository for small scale surveys that they themselves may have commissioned or hold. Annual collation by the ESD officer of the survey work held at each partner office is recommended (*). Small scale surveys are also carried out by local ecologists. Liaison with key individuals will hopefully ensure that where possible (copyright and ownership need to be carefully considered) copies of small surveys are passed onto SxBRC(*).
- **Habitat information:** Habitat data held by SxBRC is well documented in the lifescapes project '*Joint Data Management for the Proposed South Downs National Park*' and the report entitled '*Priority Habitat data*

sets held by Local Record Centres in South East England which is available from the South East England Local Record Centre Forum Website www.selrcforum.org.uk. Both these reports demonstrate that there are significant gaps in the habitat data held by SxBRC. These gaps are being highlighted by the S&RO and efforts are being made to use SxBRC data and RCSU resources to start to fill these gaps. The Sussex Biodiversity Partnership, who aim to know and understand the extents and trends of all Sussex Habitat Action Plan habitats, are strongly meshed in with the core objectives of SxBRC and thus go a long way towards re-enforcing and re-affirming each others work. The newly recruited SxBPO is developing the Sussex Biodiversity Partnership's *Monitoring Strategy* alongside RCSU and BRCM, and the newly strengthened links between the partnerships are well demonstrated (*).

- **Designation information:** Annual liaison with the relevant data holders (EN, County Councils etc.) should ensure that SxBRC holds the most up to date information available on designated and County Wildlife sites(*).
- **Non-biological information:** As SxBRC takes further steps forward in it's use of GIS, the analysis available and the tools required to achieve yet higher levels of interpretation and presentation need more background information than previously required at SxBRC. For example geological, hydrological and topographical data are now an invaluable support in gap filling analysis. These data generally are provided by partners of SxBRC at their discretion, by keeping them up to date with SxBRC outputs they can then anticipate SxBRC's future needs(*).
- **Contextual information:** Putting the data holdings of SxBRC into a national perspective is relatively straightforward as the information required tends to exist within published paper or virtual literature. However putting the data into a Sussex perspective is a more specific responsibility of SxBRC and is an important aspect of the SxBRC enquiry response service. This information can be gleaned from analysis of the data, literature and liaison with local recorders. For some species groups it is difficult to ascertain information as so little is known about the species concerned, but for others, e.g. vascular plants or dragonflies the knowledge exists to advise SxBRC in its '*Sussex Contextual information*' (*). Similar information is also required for the context of Sussex habitat extents in relation to the county, region and country. This information is generally accessible through the work of the Sussex Biodiversity Partnership(*).

2.2.2 Managing data

Each type of SxBRC data is managed and stored in a different system. The following are the principle systems:

System	Use
Environmental Survey Directory	Access based database for all survey and site information. Versions of this are available in Access 97 and Access 2000.
ArcView 9 (GIS)	Arcview is currently in use for OS, aerial, landscape, site, habitat, designation and species data. Arc-view data and projects are held on the SWT Server SxBRC directory in the ArcView layer library(*).
Recorder 2002/6	For holding all species observations (*).
Enquiries database	Access database for information on all enquiries carried out by SxBRC.
R Plus	A tailor-made add-on to the Recorder software that holds SxBRC species contextual information and reports on RSI, PSR and BAPSI.
SWT Server SxBRC directory	All documents are held here in rationalised filing system. Many are available on-line through SxBRC website.

Off site data	Data that are entered by partners and associates of SxBRC should also be considered in a loose manner as an 'SxBRC dataset' because ensuring that these data are managed and maintained appropriately helps work towards SxBRC aims (this includes survey data held at County Councils and statutory agencies)(*).
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With so many systems in which data are held the role of BITO is extremely important. The complexities of the system have overtaken the level of technical expertise that is reasonably required in other SxBRC staff and volunteers. From this list of data storage systems a number of recommendations are made. Innovative new systems of data management will always be considered.

Supplying data

The quality of SxBRC's professional enquiry service is examined regularly to ensure that efficiency, accuracy and detail are all set at an appropriate level. Contribution to the development of the enquiry response service comes through liaison with all core staff and discussion with the Steering Group (*).

Supplying data in response to standard enquiries (60% of enquiries) A standard site enquiry (i.e. covering no more than 10 square kilometers) takes, on average, one hour and includes the following information:

- A rare species report for the site taken from the Sussex Rare Species Inventory, a facility which is updated weekly by SxBRC.
- A protected species report for the site taken from the Sussex Protected Species Register (PSR). This register covers species in Schedules 5 and 8 of the 1981 Wildlife and Countryside Act (Updated by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000). Data on birds and badgers are not currently included. PSR is updated weekly by SxBRC.
- A Sussex Environmental Survey Directory (ESD) Search for the area. This facility is also updated weekly by SxBRC. Sites that are significant for breeding birds are included in this report courtesy of the Sussex Ornithological Society who can be contacted for further details if required.
- A printed map showing the boundaries of sites and habitats relevant to the enquiry area.
- Citation sheets for relevant national and local wildlife sites.
- Summary sheets for habitats flagged up in a map showing the relevance of the habitat both nationally and within a Sussex context.
- Explanation sheets on rarity, protection, National site designations, County Wildlife Site systems and grid references.

The detail of the contents of SxBRC standard enquiries need to be regularly assessed for relevance(*).

Supplying data for bespoke enquiries. (40% of enquiries) A bespoke enquiry is one that is more specific than a standard enquiry. It may involve one-off maps of species or habitat distributions, or may include detailed analysis of cross referenced data sets. Non-biological data contribute a great deal to these enquiries. Bespoke enquiries currently represent 40% of SxBRC enquiries.

Supplying data to Partners. Since the development of various internet transfer techniques, the re-instatement of data entry and RSI and PSR updates, and the closer integration of SxBRC software, GIS outputs to partners were re-instated in October 2004. In the first instance, monthly updates are anticipated, but weekly updates will eventually be accessible as an result of increased automation and integration of SxBRC core technologies. This is a service that is unanimously agreed to be invaluable by SxBRC partners (*).

Recommendations

- BRCM, BITO, BRO and RSIC to design a data strategy each year, outlining which groups will be contacted and when.
- A general Data Exchange Agreement should be compiled by BRCM and BRO.
- Data flow for data on each taxon should be clearly understood by all parties involved. These should be confirmed with data sharing agreements.
- Allocate one volunteer day a week to enter data from significant older surveys so that this data is prioritised in a ring fenced manner.
- All satellite/SxBRC data flows must be clearly defined and data exchange agreements put in place.
- Annual collation by the ESDO of the survey work held at each partner office
- Ensure SxBRC representation on Sussex Biodiversity Partnership Steering Group and Sussex Biodiversity Partnership representation on CBR.
- BRO to contact all organisations responsible for site designations annually to ensure that SxBRC is up to date with boundaries and descriptions.
- BITO undertake an annual review and update of the GIS data catalogue.
- BITO to engage with national debate regarding the RECORDER software to ensure smooth transition of SxBRC data to RECORDER 6 (or its successors).
- Sussex Statements to be completed for all RSI, PSR and BAPSI species (these should be clearly dated).
- SxBPO to complete Sussex Statements for all Priority Habitats in Sussex.
- SxBRC to liaise with major Sussex data custodians to ensure that data holdings to which SxBRC refer are accessible and up to date.
- Ensure that Enquiry output is reassessed regularly.
- Ensure regular E-link updates for partners.
- Ensure Annual reassessment of data provision to partners.
- BITO to devise strategy for bringing website into a more central role for appropriate service delivery.

2.3 To meet and promote the priority needs of data users

SxBRC works with numerous sectors, each having different biodiversity information needs. In order to establish the scope of their data needs a brief summary of each is given prior to tangible recommendations for improved SxBRC services being made.

2.3.1 The Sussex Biodiversity Action Plan

The overall aim of the Sussex Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) is to conserve and enhance the biological diversity of Sussex and contribute to the conservation and enhancement of both national and international biodiversity.

The existence of detailed and accurate information on the species and habitats of Sussex is a fundamental prerequisite for the setting of biodiversity targets and the monitoring of progress towards them. Below are some of the roles that SxBRC can play in the Sussex BAP process.

- Promote targeted species recording by volunteer naturalists.
- Support the data needs of land-management advisory activity.
- Collate existing SAP species records.
- Continually update newly acquired SAP species and HAP habitat data.
- Integrate habitat, species and management data.
- Act as an agent of delivery for selected, special biodiversity monitoring projects.
- Promote Sussex BAP habitat information in regional fora.
- Connect innovative new species/habitat recording projects to the relevant HAP group.
- RCSU to design and co-ordinate HAP data or indicator or SAP species monitoring projects.

The Sussex Biodiversity Partnership (SxBP) and SxBRC have similar partnership structures, and the cross-over between the two organisations increases as plans are now written, and actions and reporting are the current emphasis.

SWT currently chairs the SxBP and until April 2005 employed a part-time Biodiversity Officer whose role was:

- To maintain the systems for supporting the administration of the Sussex Biodiversity Partnership.
- To co-ordinate, monitor and report on the delivery of Biodiversity action.
- To promote the delivery of plan targets.

However due to past inadequacies of data and the evolution of the Sussex HAP process SxBRC's role within the SxBP has been restricted, despite hosting the Sussex Hedgerow Inventory Project and having small scale involvement on most of the HAP working Groups.

SxBRC recently took the opportunity to compliment the post by funding a two day a week SxBRC role running alongside the three day a week SxBPO role. The new full time post was finally launched in June 2005, and just in its first few months has accelerated the synergy between the two projects considerably. An SxBP Officer who has full access to the SxBRC data resource is in a better position to put in place a realistic monitoring strategy for Sussex HAPs that builds on the extensive work already in place in Sussex.

The opportunities this joint officer provides also enhances the SxBRC role in aiming to fill the gaps exposed in Sussex data in the report '*Priority Habitat data sets held by Local Record Centres in South East England*'¹⁰.

¹⁰ *Priority Habitat data sets held by Local Record Centres in South East England*. Dr Jacqui Middleton. Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre. 2004.

This newly vitalised relationship between SXBP and SxBRC must be closely monitored so that the role and responsibilities of each organisation remain clear. There is an acknowledged 'grey area' between the two projects where partnership responsibilities merge. Close liaison between the two groups is crucial (*).

2.3.2 Local/Planning Authorities

In their work County and District Planners must have regard to an array of legislation and government guidance. Nature conservation can be a significant material consideration in determining any planning application.

Counties	West Sussex	East Sussex	
Districts	Chichester Horsham Arun Adur Mid Sussex	Wealden Rother Lewes	
Boroughs	Crawley Worthing	Hastings	
Unitary Cities		Eastbourne	Brighton & Hove
Pan Sussex	South Downs National Park Authority (2007) (*)		

The Sussex Planning Authorities vary in many ways including organisation, departmental division of responsibility, environmental commitment, history of engagement with the SxBRC, use of external consultants and level of environment staff. Some have biodiversity considerations built into all relevant areas of service delivery, others have barely begun to engage in the process and may be failing to meet their statutory environmental responsibilities.

Considering the vast array of environmental legislation that must be considered, the benefits of easy access to high quality biodiversity data are many. In the planning process access to relevant data at an early stage can frequently avoid unnecessary problems and conflicts and can even save planning authorities the expense and trouble of a public inquiry.

It is important therefore for the Record Centre to keep up to date with planning legislation. This would support Local Authorities in staying abreast of the complex range of policies. Appropriate links and pages could be added to the SxBRC website to fulfil this purpose (*).

Additionally, engaging all tiers of local planners in discussions on why and how nature should be included in the planning process (the agenda of SWT and other organisations) would be of benefit to many local authorities and would be a valued promotion of the resources available at SxBRC (*).

2.3.3 Statutory Agencies

Both **English Nature**¹¹ and the **Environment Agency** have an established need for high quality biological information, and for better access to the information which they themselves currently collect and collate. In order for both these organisations to fully exercise their statutory regulatory functions (e.g. advisory work, preparation of strategic and land management plans, the setting and monitoring of Biodiversity Action Plan targets) biodiversity information is required. Both bodies commission surveys and studies, the results of which need to be transferred to a central system.

¹¹ Soon to become, with other agencies 'Natural England'

SxBRC needs to have a close relationship with both these organisations in order to ensure that the service that it is providing, and any developments which it makes are in line with the needs of these key partners. Both organisations have close involvement with the National Biodiversity Network and recognise the use of local resources in providing wildlife information to their staff. Contributions by EN and EA to SxBRC's steering committee are fundamental in achieving a successful working relationship between these agencies and SxBRC (*).

Defra has been unable to fund individual LRCs, however emerging discussions suggest a closer working relationship with LRCs on a regional level for the future (*). SxBRC engages with English Nature locally to promote the funding needs of LRCs to those making decisions regarding the future structure of Natural England.

2.3.4 Conservation Organisations

The service supplied to SWT has already been discussed in detail in section 1.5. However the needs of Conservation bodies are varied. SxBRC could extend the scope of its services to work more closely with RSPB and the National Trust in the future, as both operate locally and regionally (*).

2.3.5 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty Offices

South Downs: Sussex Downs Conservation Board (SDCB) has been an SxBRC partner for many years. Recently SDCB has been restructured as the South Downs Joint Committee (SDJC) and it will possibly become (2007) a National Park Authority. It is this future Authority for which SxBRC should be seeking to provide biodiversity information and SxBRC should ensure that it is included in any relevant biodiversity related discussion.

High Weald: The High Weald AONB unit is nominally a partner of the Record Centre, but this relationship has not been fully explored. A good working relationship is already in place with their Woodland Officer.

Ashdown Forest: Little liaison takes place between SxBRC and the Ashdown Forest Conservators. This is a relationship that could certainly be explored further.

Chichester Harbour: SxBRC is already involved in some technical support and data sharing with Chichester Harbour Conservancy and it is hoped that this relationship will continue to develop.

2.3.6 Agricultural representatives

SxBRC has been involved in Agri-environment applications since 2000 through supporting the Sussex Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG) with biodiversity information for Countryside Stewardship Applications. With the recent development of Higher Level agricultural stewardship the role of SxBRC data is of increasing relevance and the recent Memorandum of Understanding with FWAG, with regard to Farm Environment Plans (FEPs) needs to be revisited regularly to check for its continued relevance to the evolving FEP process (*).

Each Natural Area has a targeting statement and there is scope for SxBRC to work closely with FWAG and Sussex Landscape officers to help target delivery of the system (*).

2.3.7 Environmental Consultancies

Continual development of SxBRC enquiry response service should see the development of the provision of service to this sector. However feedback is not forthcoming from commercial enquiries and a feedback sheet may go some way in investigating the appropriateness of the SxBRC report to their needs (*).

2.3.8 Utilities

Demand from this sector is related to the increased requirement for assessment of the impact upon wildlife of proposed development work, coupled to the very high pressure for development of housing and infrastructure in Sussex. SxBRC currently provides data for several Utilities in Sussex but has a formal partnership agreement with only one. Potential partnership with other utilities should be explored (*).

2.3.9 Public Needs

The development of Community Strategies will take on an increasingly important role within Local Authorities over the next few years. The environmental information available from Record Centres is likely to be valuable in both empowering local communities to become involved in decision making and to local authorities in informing and monitoring the success of strategies. Liaison with conservation community workers will ensure that the SxBRC enquiry service is publicised and used appropriately.

2.3.10 Future National Park Authority

Sussex Downs Conservation Board has been an SxBRC partner for many years and it is hoped that the South Downs Joint Committee and in turn the South Downs National Park Authority will follow this lead. The National Park Authority will have major responsibilities towards biodiversity. Close working between SxBRC and the Hampshire Biological Information Centre is important (*).

Recommendations

- SxBP and SxBRC should be represented on each others steering groups.
- BRCM should maintain a funding stream to allow the continuation of the SxBRC/SxBP partnership.
- EN and EA to maintain place on SxBRC Steering Committee
- BRCM to fully investigate service provision for each of the Statutory Agencies.
- Enquiry feedback sheet should be developed in order to gauge the appropriateness of the SxBRC enquiry response service to commercial enquiries.
- Investigate the relevance of SxBRC to Utilities in Sussex.
- Revisit potential partnership arrangements with all Sussex Local Authorities every two years.
- Investigate the concept of indicator species on behalf of all SxBRC partners working with Local Development Frameworks.
- SxBRC to engage planners through discussions/presentations on current legislation through working closely with SWT and Association of Local Government Ecologists (ALGE).
- SxBRC to promote its role for biodiversity information provision for the proposed South Downs National Park.

2.4 Linking at a regional and national level

2.4.1 The Regional Picture

Sussex was one of the LRCs responsible for the development of *the South East Local Record Centre Forum* (SELRCF), which has been meeting regularly since 2000. Seven LRCs are represented and these range from under resourced, understaffed LRCs to those with many staff and excellent facilities.

Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre
 Thames Valley Environmental Record Centre
 Surrey Biological Record Centre
 Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Environmental Record Centre
 Hampshire Biological Information Centre
 Kent and Medway Biological Record Centre
 Green Space Initiative for Greater London

At its inception, the forum immediately became a useful round-table for the sharing ideas and best practice. The introduction of RECORDER 2000 and its subsequent upgrades made the forum indispensable for sharing the technical solutions found for mutual problems. Strong liaison between the South East LRCs gives data users which operate on a regional level a greater incentive to fund Local Record Centres regionally (the funds being then split appropriately amongst the LRCs) (*).

2.4.2 South East England Biodiversity Forum

Though originally established as an opportunity to share best practice with neighbouring LRCs, SELRCF has now taken a bigger role in issues of biodiversity on a regional scale. It now holds a place on the South East England Biodiversity Forum (SEEBF), where it takes an active responsibility in the development of useful biodiversity information for decision makers on a regional level. Already SEEBF has found funding for SxBRC to prepare the document 'Priority Habitats in South East England currently held by LRCs'. The presentation of this report to the SEEBF Executive in Spring 2005 resulted in committed support to the existing tier of LRC in the region with regard to the eventual provision of regional data and commitment to the investigation of the use of the Integrated Habitat System (IHS) for existing habitat data sets in the region (*).

SxBRC is currently the SELRC representative of the SEEBF data and reporting group and SEEBF Executive group. BRCM's role on this group has seen the production of a tender for a project investigating the use of the integrated Habitat System (IHS) in South East England.

2.4.3 The National Picture

Across the UK several of the key agencies in biodiversity conservation have sought to bring together national and local data custodians into a National Biodiversity Network (NBN). Consequently a new legal entity, the NBN Trust, was established.

The objective of the NBN is to improve the accessibility of relevant wildlife information to everyone that wants or needs to use it. An important part of the NBN strategy has been the development of the Local Records Centre (LRC) Network across the whole of the UK.

With the NBNs development in mind it is crucial that SxBRC stays informed about debates taking place at a national level. Insight and contribution to the debate on the role or functions of an LRC are of advantage to Sussex on several levels:

1. Involvement at a national level ensures that Sussex stays abreast of new policies and developments relating to LRCs and biological recording. This ensures that local partners are fully informed on, and can contribute to, national debates or even funding opportunities which will eventually have influence at a Sussex level.
2. Contribution to a national debate from a functioning LRC helps ensure that developing outputs and opinions of the NBN Trust stay realistic with respect to the real potentials and constraints of LRCs.

2.4.4 Contributing to a National debate

SxBRC is one of at least 70 LRCs in the UK, and is well established in its local relationships and outputs. Within the South East England Local Record Centre community Sussex is regularly consulted and has supported the development of several of its neighbouring Centres, particularly Kent, Surrey and London.

Involvement with the National Federation for Biological Recording (NFBR) keeps SxBRC informed of developing issues in UK Biological Recording. Involvement in the Local Record Centre sub-group of NFBR is also seen as an important contribution which Sussex can make to the national development of a Biodiversity Information Network. This sub group will be launching the new Association of Local Record Centres in July 2006. If successful, this will be of considerable benefit to all member LRCs including Sussex.

2.4.5 Sharing Best Practice

From time to time SxBRC has been asked to contribute to national and international events where it reported on local solutions to common problems. Most recently this has been on the subject of IT which has seen, and continues to see, a period of great upheaval and rapid transition, but subjects such as relationships with local recorders and liaison with National Schemes and Societies have also been aired. The benefits of promoting the potential of LRCs nationally catalyse useful discussion and contacts. The benefits of helping other LRCs in the UK are two fold:

- Reciprocal support when needed
- A stronger UK network for SxBRC to exist within

2.4.6 SxBRC commitment to the NBN

SxBRCs relationship with the NBN has been through occasional contribution to NBN organised meetings and sub-groups. It has been, until recently, considered by the SxBRC staff and steering group that the NBN Gateway was not yet sufficiently developed to provide an appropriate resource to SxBRC. However, developments of the NBN Gateway in the past few months are in line with the current data delivery needs of SxBRC and a trial in the coming year is suggested after the completion of NBN work with the Green Space Initiative for Greater London and the Leicestershire Environmental Record Centre (*).

It is important that SxBRC continues to feed its experiences with the Gateway and other NBN Trust functions and services back to the NBN as LRC involvement is crucial to the successful development of the network.

Recommendations

- SxBRC should maintain a role on relevant national biodiversity fora to bring national issues to the attention of its Steering Group.
- SxBRC should maintain its proactive role in SELRCF.
- SxBRC to encourage the SELRCF to explore regional funding opportunities.
- SxBRC to participate fully in the development of a regional dataset for South East England.
- Engage with the NBN Gateway to investigate data sharing facilities.
- SxBRC to continue to engage with the NBN where appropriate.

2.5 To support the Sussex biological recording community.

SxBRC relies on the **data, expertise and support** of the Sussex recording community. This community is for the most part comprised of volunteers, many of whom are considered national experts in their field. SxBRC is recipient of a manifold of services from this sector and relationships with these data providers is at the heart of the developing services that SxBRC provides to data users.

It is important that SxBRC offers what support it can to the recording community, thus promoting their work and helping to alleviate technical concerns or data back log issues.

2.5.1 Breakdown of needs

Recording schemes and Societies and individuals are extremely diverse. They range from independent hobbyists to efficient, effective county branches of national recording bodies. The following is the summary of the needs that these groups/individuals may have.

- Computing expertise for record collation
- Time or aspiration for data entry backlogs
- Advice on recording software
- Professional mapping for publications
- Publishing experience
- A permanent postal address for the Society
- Publicity for websites
- Funds to carry out recording projects
- Liaison with other recording groups about mutual concerns
- Contact with the conservation community regarding current issues requiring their input
- Publicity to attract new members
- Publicity to start groups
- Publicity for new publications or recent achievements
- Recruitment of new members
- Administration for new publications

2.5.2 Existing support tools

Committee for Biological Recording. This committee is a committee of SWT and is currently chaired by a SWT trustee. The group is comprised of a selection of members of the Sussex recording community. This committee advises SxBRC on any matter relating to recording and acts as a feed back system to this community for issues raised in meetings.

Enquiry response facility By providing data to SxBRC, recording schemes and societies can spend less time responding to enquiries as this service will be carried out by SxBRC as part of its standard enquiry response. SxBRC receives over 500 enquiries per year, which would be a challenging task for a voluntary recorder working from home.

Sussex Biological Recorders' Seminar. 2006 will see the 17th Biological Recorders Seminar. A much anticipated annual event providing a forum for biological recording in Sussex. The event consolidates the relationship of many recorders with SxBRC, keeps recorders abreast of a selection of current conservation and recording projects in Sussex and as the event is on a donation only basis is considered an event that SxBRC can provide to Recorders in respect of all the data and expertise that they provide for SxBRC.

Adastra Recording Days. In 2005 SxBRC started to organise recording days for under recorded sites in Sussex.

These have proved popular with 10-20 attendees at each event. SxBRC will continue to organise these events as time permits.

Adastra 2005 saw the production of the 4th Issue of *Adastra, the annual Biological Recording Report for Sussex*. This document is extremely well received and is a useful tool for publicising the work of Sussex Recording Schemes and Societies and individuals, who often have little or no contact with each others' work. The annually updated list of County Recorders is an extremely popular and useful facility. The report is indexed each year, so readers can quickly cross reference areas of interest.

Sussex Biodiversity Recording Award For four years SxBRC has provided an award for biological recording in Sussex. £1000 is made available and applications for awards of up to £200 are invited. This award will remain available as long as SxBRC has sufficient funds.

Sussex Wild Flower Fund Some of the proceeds of Sussex Wild Flowers have been put towards a 'slush' fund for Sussex publications relating to Biodiversity Recording. £2,000 has been made available by the Sussex Botanical Recording Society (to be administered by SxBRC) to act as seed funding where necessary to get publications off the ground.

Data entry facilities SxBRC offers data entry facilities to recording schemes and societies. This work may be undertaken by SxBRC when there is an assurance that it will not detract from SxBRC other core work too significantly.

Data entry resources The development of the software 'Species Recorder' facilitates data entry projects, both in house and by the recorders themselves. This software can be tailored on request to suit a particular society or use with a particular taxa.

Recording software advice and support The complex relationship between varieties of recording software is well documented and has caused a great deal of confusion within the recording community. BITO is able to supply support through the LRC technical forum. It is important for individual recorders to feel that they can approach SxBRC with any problems in this area, as the complexity of software can be extremely daunting. SxBRC should support any application that conforms to NBN standards, help recorders with training, including reporting on their own data and facilitating data exchange. Advice needs to be given to individual recorders on their legal responsibilities, particularly regarding the Data Protection Act.

Data mapping and analysis facilities SxBRC can produce detailed maps and some analysis of records if required by a particular recorder/scheme. These maps can be used for presentations, reports or books (e.g. *The Dragonflies of Sussex*¹²).

Website facilities SxBRC website can offer space to recording groups wishing to publicise their group, events or records. BITO can also advise recorders on website creation if required.

Publication distribution and publicity Successful publications with the Sussex Botanical Recording Society [*Sussex Rare Plant Register*¹³, *Sussex Botany*^{14 15} and *Sussex Wild Flowers 2004*¹⁶] have demonstrated that a collaborative approach to publication can be very successful. Such projects can be extremely time consuming

¹² *The Dragonflies of Sussex*, Essedon Press 2004

¹³ *Sussex Rare Plant Register*, Mary Briggs et al. Sussex Wildlife Trust 2001

¹⁴ *Sussex Botany 1*, Sturt and Harmes. 2004

¹⁵ *Sussex Botany Issue 2*, Sturt and Harmes. 2005

¹⁶ *Sussex Wild Flowers*. Mary Briggs. Sussex Wildlife Trust 2004

for SxBRC staff and as such their suitability for involvement should be assessed on an individual basis. All of the above resources must continue to be available to recording schemes and societies (with caveats where necessary), but the understanding is that by working with a scheme's data SxBRC may use this data in its enquiry response service. Traditionally there have been no formal data sharing agreements with Sussex data providers. In the future these agreements should be considered, much like information request forms are currently required (*).

The Mary Briggs Fund Following the successful publication of Sussex Wild Flowers the proceeds have been allocated to two important projects. The majority of the funds have gone towards the publication of the

Recommendations

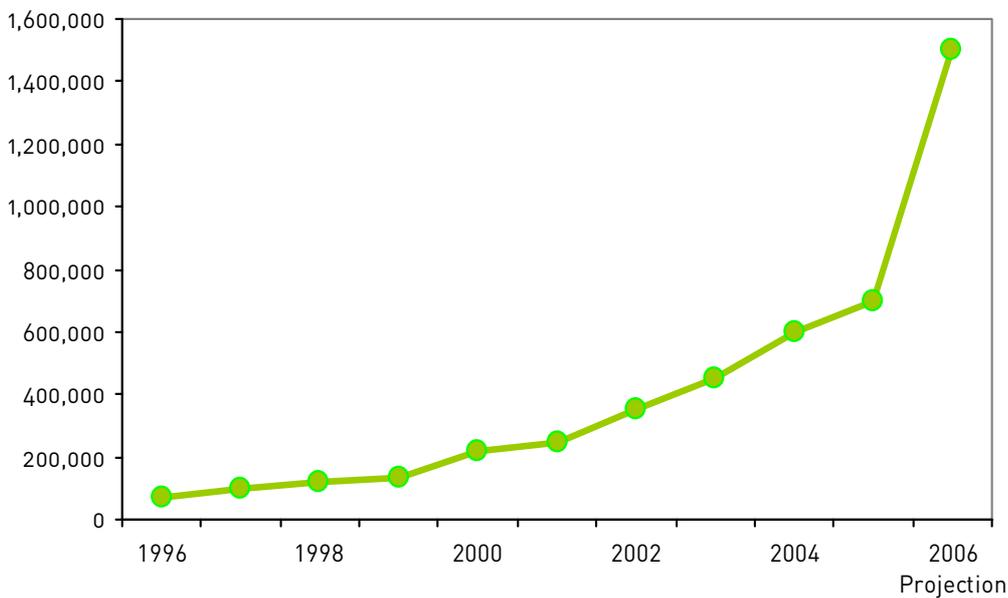
- All the facilities listed above should be maintained while funding allows.
- New initiatives with recording groups/individuals should be encouraged with ideas discussed with the Committee for Biological Recording.
- SxBRC recognises the high requirement for data validation and verification. SxBRC should consider policy implications of professional fees for verification.
- Data flow explanations and data sharing agreements must be created for all major taxon groups.

3. Business Plan for SxBRC 05/06 to 08/09

This section looks why SxBRC needs to grow and at the income and expenditure of SxBRC. The current situation (05/06) is discussed and a 08/09 situation proposed. Each required increases in expenditure is discussed as is the development of each funding source.

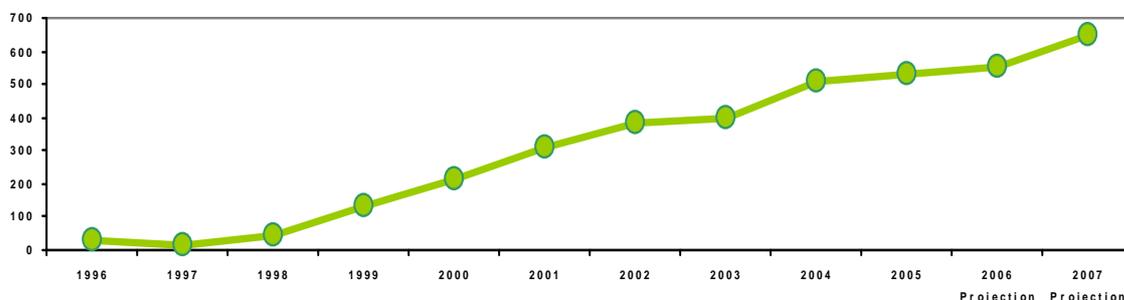
3.1 Need for Growth

The need for growth within SxBRC is demonstrated specifically by the increase in the number of species records held. It is anticipated that 2005/2006 will show an unprecedented increase in the number of records held from 740,000 to 1,500,000. This is based on some data imports which have not yet taken place but are anticipated for the near future.



The dramatic increase in species data is expected to cause an increase in the number of enquiries coming into SxBRC in 2007. This is due to the nature of the datasets involved which mark a turning point for SxBRC in terms of some of the most significant gaps in the SxBRC data that will now be filled.

Number of SxBRC in-house enquiries per year - 1996 to 2007



The last two years have demonstrated that the number of enquiries is no longer a practical measurement for the work that takes place within SxBRC as the complexity of enquiries is increasing and this complexity is continually offset by the development of new systems to facilitate enquiry responses to the ever more complex questions asked. The number of enquiries does not reflect the increased complexity of workload.

Both the above graphs demonstrate that there is a need to develop the Record Centre and ensure that it is capable of staying abreast of demand for data whilst providing the highest quality outputs as efficiently, professionally and effectively as possible.

3.2 Assets and Liabilities 05/06

In order to project growth at SxBRC the current Assets and liabilities must be considered. These are given below. With these in mind we can see how each category of asset must develop over the next three years.

Assets	Liabilities (costs)
<p>Material Assets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 desktop computers 2 lap top computers 1 laser jet printer 1 inkjet printer 1 Binding Machine Stationery Supplies 6 desks 6 chairs 	<p>Material liabilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Computer equipment Work Station facilities
<p>Digital assets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Licences for Arc 9 and Arcview 3.2 Licences for R2K2 and Recorder 6 760,000 species Records 5.6 Gigabits of habitat information Digital reporting infrastructure 6 windows 2003 licenses 	<p>Digital liabilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data management Licence up keep Internet Service Provider Communications
<p>Spatial assets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Woods Mill office space and facilities 	<p>Spatial liabilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Office and communication
<p>Personnel assets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff Sussex Recording Community network Funding partner relationships 	<p>Personnel liabilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff

3.3 Assets and liabilities over the period of this development plan 06/07 – 09/10

Material Assets

Investment in material assets will need to take place. This investment is no more than replacement computers on an ad hoc basis until the move into new office space 2007/2008. This will require the potential development of a new SxBRC server and network (or the continued development of the existing SWT server). As the data holdings of SxBRC increase so does its processing capacity, with computers that were once 'top of the range' unable to withstand the technical demands put on them. This is a priority area of investment due to the

considerable impact that a poor computer system would have on SxBRC. The proposed SxBRC IT strategy will investigate the available options and cost them accordingly. Likewise increased staffing numbers will follow the move to larger office space thus incurring increased work station costs.

Digital Assets

Storage and access to the SxBRC digital assets is discussed above however the software needs of SxBRC continue to increase e.g. licences to GIS software need to be maintained annually. New computers therefore represent further hidden costs in software requirements.

SxBRC also maintains several bespoke digital systems. These need continual development often involving outside expertise.

Spatial Assets

Due to the support of SWT in providing office space for SxBRC, there are few costs incurred to the SxBRC budget relating to its spatial assets. The Record Centre Survey Unit pays a recharge to SWT (calculated as a proportion of the SxBRC in kind contribution to SxBRC) and this will remain in place but no costs are incurred at present to the SxBRC core budget.

The move to larger office space may incur some costs and the responsibilities for finding the funds required fall to the BRCM and the SWT Marketing Manager who plan to work together to raise the funds required from sources known to SWT, but never previously accessed by SxBRC.

Personnel Assets

Any increase in staff numbers of over the next two years will need to be for out posted contractees as the office facilities of SxBRC are currently stretched. The salaries of existing staff are set to rise following a recent pay review, and then annually in line with inflation. Arrival in the new office space will see the arrival of a new team member to support the technical and administrative needs of the Centre.

3.3 Funding streams over the period of this development plan 05/06 – 08/09

The funding situation of SxBRC is detailed in section 2.1.2. This is summarised below

- **Enquiry income** in 2004/2005 this income stream came to approximately £10,000. This amount is set to increase as the enquiry rate increased from an hourly rate of £60 + VAT to £100 + VAT on 1st April 2005. Allowing for the slight increase in the number of enquiries in 2005/2006 the anticipated income from enquiries is £17,000. IN light of the new data sets arriving at SxBRC in the near future it is anticipated that income from enquiries will gently increase year on year.
- **Income from Partners** Income from the funding partners of SxBRC stood at £53,000 in 2004/2005 and is set to increase to circa £60,000 in 2005/2006. It is hoped that following the recommendations in this report this will continue gently increasing.
- **Projects** Project income is sporadic and unpredictable. Last year it came to £19,000. This funding is mostly spent on outside contractors with only a management fee coming into SxBRC. This source of income is not to be relied upon.
- **Surveys** The income from Surveys coming into the Record Centre Survey unit is unpredictable but is in the range of £35,000 to £55,000 per year. The income derived from the Survey unit is fed back into its core costs, the benefits to the Record Centre, though not financial, are through the increased service

provision it adds to the SxBRC suite of outputs as well as the data that is collated as a result of projects.

- **Other** Grant giving bodies have not been approached by SxBRC and it is anticipated that this will be done with the SWT Marketing Manager to provide for the spatial assets of SxBRC. However this is a funding stream that remains un-investigated, but as time permits should be explored.

3.4 Growth in Real Terms

The most significant point of growth in the period of this plan will be in 2007/2008 when SxBRC moves to larger office space. In this new venue new staff can be housed. In the interim period SxBRC will have to increase its resources slightly to accommodate the increasing workload and need for improved IT facilities.

Projected income and expenditure for the duration of this development plan is shown overleaf (start of 09/10 sees end of plan 05/06 included for reference).

Projected income and expenditure for the duration of this development plan demonstrating *enhanced* output**Income (in thousands)**

	05-06	06-07	07-08	08-09
Enquiries	17	20	22	24
Local Authorities	30	35	35	37
Statutory Agencies	18	20	22	25
NGO and other SLAs	7	8.5	10	15
Other income	8.5	9	10	15
Office move costs	-	-	?	-
Total	80.5	89.5	98	114

Expenditure (in thousands)

	05-06	06-07	07-08	08-09
Salaries	64.5	70	74	92
Contract costs	7	8	8	5
Computer support costs	2	2.5	3	5
Office costs, travel, training, volunteer support etc.	5	6	6.5	7
IT, including depreciation/ replacement	2	3	6.5	5
Office space preparation	In-kind	In-kind	?	In-kind
TOTAL COSTS	80.5	89.5¹⁷	98¹⁸ (+?)	114

¹⁸ Assumption - Extra funds are spent on increased core staffing in the 0708 year of growth and costs have been included for technical updates for potential office transfer.

Appendix 1 – Actions and Targets April 06 – April 09

For SxBRC to grow sustainably the recommendations in this report need to be implemented. With this in mind this appendix puts all the recommendations into a time frame based around the SxBRC Steering Group meetings. Specific targets have been added so that SxBRCs delivery of these recommendations can be measured.

For purposes of preparation for the delivery of this plan the Jan 06 Steering Group meeting has been included.

Jan 06 Steering Group meeting Agenda Items	Jan 06 Targets
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss RCSU development plan. • Report on progress on conference for planners. • IT Strategy discussed. • Assess data import backlog and its management. • True cost of enquiry service and management fees should be recalculated and adjustments made to charges by 1st April. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full agreement by partners of plan prior to April 2006 • Recorder 6 to have been fully installed on SWT/SxBRC server. • New SxBRC Website Launched • BRO to design Enquiry Feedback Sheet to gauge the appropriateness of the SxBRC enquiry response service to commercial enquiries.
May 06 Steering Group meeting Agenda Items	May 06 Targets
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BRCM to have liaised with SWT Trustees re SxBRC status within SWT. • SLAs with Statutory Agencies discussed. • SLAs with utilities discussed. • Assessment of enquiry output quality by group. • Re-assess data import backlog and its management. • New funding streams discussed. • Working with the new National Park Authority to be discussed • BITO undertake the annual maintenance of GIS data and present options for adding metadata to GIS catalogue. • Role of SxBRC in the use of indicator species by Las and others to be discussed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data sharing agreements signed with 2 major recording groups. • EN & ESCC data holdings (ESD) cross referenced. • SxBRC IT Strategy Launched. • Data exchange agreements put in place with at least two data Satellite sites. • BRO to ensure that all local and national site designations are up to date. • SLAs with two partners brought up to date • SxBRC position within SWT is formalised by SWT Trustees in a Memorandum of Understanding. • Partners to all be up to date with data updates.
Sept 06 Steering Group meeting Agenda Items	Sept 06 Targets
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Data strategy designed by BRCM, BRO and BITO discussed • Potential projects that could enhance core functions to be discussed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RCSU Development Plan Launched • Conference for Planners working with SWT • Sussex Statements to be completed for all terrestrial Priority Habitats working with

- Discuss regional funding opportunities.
- Development Plan updates discussed.
- SLAs with LAs discussed.
- Core and enhanced functions should be revisited and ratings made accordingly to monitor SxBRC development.
- Future use of NBN Gateway by SxBRC discussed and demonstrated.
- Discussion with SWT Business Manger re. office move costs.
- Response to enquiry Feedback sheets discussed.

Sussex Biodiversity Partnership.

- Association of LRC Launched.
- SxBRC Terms of Reference agreed by SWT Trustees.
- All partners receiving regular data updates.

Jan 07 Steering Group meeting Agenda Items

- True cost of enquiry service and management fees should be recalculated and adjustments made to charges by 1st April.
- IT and website strategy discussed.
- Action to responses from Enquiry Feedback Sheet to be discussed.
- Review progress of work with SxBPO.
- Update on Office move timetable.

Jan 07 Targets

- Data flows must be clearly defined and data exchange agreements put in place with at least two more data Satellite sites.
- Promote SxBRC services to future National Park Authority.
- SLAs with two more partners brought up to date.
- All SxBRC habitat data integrated into BARS.
- Indicator Species services launched.
- ESDO to contact all partners re data retrieval for ESD

May 07 Steering Group meeting Agenda Items

- SLAs with Statutory Agencies discussed.
- NBN Gateway use by SxBRC discussed.

May 07 Targets

- Data sharing agreements with two more data providers to be signed.
- BRO to ensure that all local and national site designations are up to date.
- Phase II of OIT strategy launched.
- On-Line service provision enhanced

Sept 07 Steering Group meeting Agenda Items

- Development Plan updates discussed.
- SLAs with LAs discussed.
- Relocation to new office within Woods Mill imminent. Timetable discussed.
- Core and enhanced functions should be revisited and

Sept 07 Targets

- EA & WSCC data holdings (ESD) cross referenced.
- Data flows must be clearly defined and data exchange agreements put in place with at least two data more Satellite sites.
- All Sussex Species Statements completed.

ratings made accordingly to monitor SxBRC development.

- Annual Data strategy designed by BRCM, BRO and BITO discussed.

- SLAs with 2 more partners brought up to date.
- Sussex data integrated into Regional IHS system.

Jan 08 Steering Group meeting Agenda Items

- True cost of enquiry service and management fees should be recalculated and adjustments made to charges by 1st April.
- Relocation to new office within Woods Mill imminent. Timetable discussed

Jan 08 Targets

- All data sharing agreements revisited and assessed
- All data imports to be up to date

May 08 Steering Group meeting Agenda Items

- SLAs with Statutory Agencies discussed

May 08 Targets

- Data sharing agreements with two more data providers to be signed
- Data flows must be clearly defined and data exchange agreements put in place with at least two more data Satellite sites
- BRO to ensure that all local and national site designations are up to date.
- SLAs with two more partners brought up to date

Sept 08 Steering Group meeting Agenda Items

- Development plan updates discussed
- SLAs with LAs discussed
- Core and enhanced functions should be revisited and ratings made accordingly to monitor SxBRC development.
- Annual Data strategy designed by BRCM, BRO and BITO discussed

Sept 08 Targets

- ESDO to have collated meta-data from all partner offices

Jan 09 Steering Group meeting Agenda Items

- True cost of enquiry service and management fees should be recalculated and adjustments made to charges by 1st April.

Jan 09 Targets

- Data sharing agreements with two more data providers to be signed
- Data flows must be clearly defined and data exchange agreements put in place with one more data Satellite sites
- Final draft of new development plan ready for circulation to SWT Council plus SxBRC Partners
- SLAs with two more partners brought up to date

Appendix 2 – SxBRC Staff and Volunteers

Staff

Biodiversity Record Centre Manager – Henri Brocklebank

Biodiversity Records Officer – Penny Green

Biodiversity Information Technology Officer – Charles Roper

Survey and Research Officer (4/5) – Theresa Greenaway

Biodiversity Partnership/Data Officer (2/5) – Cath Laing

Current Contractees

Environmental Survey Directory Officer (2/5) – Andrew Lawson

Rare Species Inventory Co-ordinator (1.5/5) – Dr Patrick Roper

Volunteers

Alan Gillham – works on Protected Species Register, SWT reserve data and mammal records

Peter Challis – Sussex Hedgerow Inventory Project

Helena Carter – Sussex Hedgerow Inventory Project

Judy Woodman – Data entry

Dr Peter Anderton – BAP Species Inventory and habitat digitising

Jacky Cooper – Species Recorder developer

Jane Watkins – Data entry

Carole Mortimer – Data entry

Appendix 3 - Record Centre Survey Unit Projects 2004 to present

SURVEY	COMPLETED	CLIENT
Lower Ouse Baseline Phase 2	Jan 2004	EN
Wooded Heaths in the High Weald	May 2004	High Weald AONB Unit (ESCC)
NVC Reserves	Dec 2004	SWT
Conservation Assessment Wilmington Green & Monken Pyn	Mar 2003	Wealden District Council
Training Day WHU	May 2004	High Weald AONB Unit (ESCC)
NVC Reserves	Dec 2004	SWT
Flooded Forest Concept Study	Jan 2005	Sussex Floodplain Forest Group
Précis of Wooded Heath Report	Jun 2004	High Weald AONB Unit (ESCC)
Cut-grass <i>Leersia oryzoides</i>	Oct 2004	EA
Motney Hill Monitoring	Oct 2004	Southern Water
Eastbourne Park Scoping Report	May 2005	Eastbourne BC/ESCC
Bryophytes of Marline Nature Reserve	Apr 2005	SWT
Knepp Castle Baseline Survey and Scoping Report	Apr 2005	EN / SWT
NVC Reserves	Dec 2005	SWT
Small Reserves Surveys	Dec 2005	SWT
Bat Survey of Mill Building	July 2005	SWT
Knepp Castle Report Phase 2	Dec 2005	EN / SWT
WSCC Habitat Change	Aug 2006	WSCC
Notable Road Verge Surveys	Oct 2005	WSCC
St Leonard's Forest Habitat Visioning	Feb 2006	High Weald AONB Unit (ESCC)
Francis Rose Notebooks Project	ASAP	SxBRC
West Dean Woods Lichen Survey	t.b.c.	SWT
Eastbourne Habitat Analysis	t.b.c.	ESCC
Chalk Springs & Rivers	t.b.c.	EA

Appendix 4a - Sustained and Diminished output options

For SxBRC to maintain its existing core functions the following scenario is envisaged:

Sustained output	
Drivers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An increase in funding in line with sustained growth of the SxBRC. This sustained growth is outlined in this report and represents the minimum input required to continue to develop SxBRC in line with local biodiversity information needs. Wind-fall development funds from an external source
Delivery of Core functions	All
Delivery of enhanced functions	All – even potential development of further functions. IT advances will provide natural enhancement to the service.
Funding considerations	Partners must be regularly reminded of the service available to them and the core responsibilities of SxBRC fully understood. Value added to service through incremental IT improvements and streamlined delivery.
Funding – Real terms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Core income must increase at a minimum of the rate of inflation each year and no major reduction in in-kind income is possible to sustain growth of SxBRC. RCSU would need to continue to cover its own costs.
Spatial considerations	A new office base will need to be considered in due course as the current limitation to 6 personnel (including volunteers) and little or no space for support technology (a dedicated SxBRC server, for example) will not sustain SxBRC in the longer term. Options at Woods Mill for 2007 are likely to fulfil the requirements for sustained growth (with a bit of a squeeze in the interim!)
Management concerns	The achieving of targets from this development plan will ensure an IT system and a management structure that has the flexibility for the sustained output of SxBRC

However certain drivers will lead to a diminished output for SxBRC, the detail of which is outlined below:

Diminished output	
Drivers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No increase in funding from principle partners or other sources Withdrawal of significant data sets and or licences Significant reduction in data use Sudden reduction in SxBRC resources and facilities
Delivery of Core functions	Core functions would be reduced in a specified order depending on the extent of the problem. See Appendix 3.
Delivery of enhanced functions	None
Funding considerations	BRCM time should be focussed on funding opportunities, both from partners and also from alternative sources.
Funding – Real terms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Real core costs stood at £80,500 for the 04/05 financial year. An additional in-kind contribution of £105,000 was also provided. The loss of any major in-kind contribution would be extremely detrimental to the delivery of SxBRC core functions and the procedure in Appendix 3 would need to be considered until alternative funding sources were found. The income of £20,000 for extra projects (not including RCSU projects

	<p>allowed for some SxBRC development, but also contributed considerably towards the core costs of the Centre. This funding stream is unreliable and CANNOT be relied upon.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If core income (+ project income) does not cover core costs diminished outputs from SxBRC is anticipated. • RCSU income and expenditure is in part linked to SxBRC core functions as the gap filling aspect of SxBRC's work is funded through this source. A reduction in income from this source will see a diminished SxBRC output.
Spatial considerations	No extra space would be required
Management concerns	Exit strategy must be prepared with prioritisation of core functions. Investigation of funding sources becomes a priority

Considering the sustained output option income and expenditure will resemble the projections below:

Income (in thousands)

	05-06	06-07	07-08	08-09
Enquiries	17	18	19	20
Local Authorities	30	31	32	33
Statutory Agencies	18	19	20	21
NGO and other SLAs	7	8	9	10
Other income	8.5	8.5	8.5	8.5
Total	80.5	84.5	88.5	92.5

Expenditure (in thousands)

	05-06	06-07	07-08	08-09
Salaries	64.5	67	69.5	72
Contract costs	7	7.5	8	8
Computer support costs	2	2.5	3	3
Office costs, travel, training, volunteer support etc.	5	5	5	5
IT, including depreciation/ replacement	2	2.5	3	4.5
Total	80.5	84.5	88.5	92.5

In the case of the loss of a major contributing partner or any of the other drivers for diminished output then the following financial scenario gives an impression of how income and expenditure would be influenced.

So as to not draw speculation on which financial partner would fail to support SxBRC funding has been reduced from all sectors.

Income (in thousands)

	05-06	06-07	07-08	08-09
Enquiries	18	16	13	5
Local Authorities	30	25	20	10
Statutory Agencies	18	18	15	12
NGO and other SLAs	7	5	4	3
Other income	8.5	6	6	0
Total	81.5	70	58	29

Expenditure (in thousands)

	05-06	06-07	07-08	08-09
Salaries	64.5	59.5	50	24
Contract costs	8	4	3	2
Computer support costs	2	1	1	1
Office costs, travel, training, volunteer support etc.	5	3	2	2
IT, including depreciation/ replacement	2	1.5	2	1
Total	81.5	70	58	29

Appendix 4b - Core Function Exit Strategy

In the unfortunate instance where the diminished output is the scenario followed there will come a time when the core functions of the record centre will no longer be achievable. The order in which core functions are prioritised in this exit strategy is designed to maximise efficiency in a scenario of reduced staffing and resources.

C : Continue Service for as long as resources permit

C- : Service diminished through lack of resources but can be picked up again when/if funding allows

C-- : Service severely diminished

X : Service stopped completely until funds allow.

Core Function	Service	Notes
Hold current local and national wildlife site data.	C-	This resource would still be available, but updates will be less frequent
Hold detailed and current species data.	C-	This resource would still be available, but updates less frequent. Backlogs of data to import will inevitably build up
Hold detailed biological survey information.	X	This resource would still be available but will no longer be updated. It could be commenced as a project when/if funds become available
Document habitat extent and monitor habitat change.	C--	Little update will be made to this dataset. It could be picked up again when/if funds allow.
Hold wider environmental information.	C--	No extra data will be collated
Maintain a high quality reporting service	C	There would be inevitable reduction in quality but this resource is a fundamental service.
Maintain up to date, efficient IT Systems	C	Emphasis will need to be put onto ease of extraction
Gap Analysis	X	A product of a sustainable Record Centre
Data capture service	X	This resource will reduce considerably and eventually stop
Off site reporting services	C	This resource will not be updated as regularly because there will be little fresh data to update partners with, but data will be made available upon request by partners.
Data provision for BAP Outcome Reporting	C--	Little update will be made to this dataset. It could be picked up again when/if funds allow.
Liaison with Recording Community	C	It is important that if SxBRC is struggling in terms of data, resources or finances that the recording community be kept informed.
Regional/National contribution	C	Rather than contributing to the development of National or regional networks SxBRC would need to rely on other LRCs to do the work.
Archive	C	As long as SxBRC has access to archive space it has a responsibility to ensure the security of important Sussex datasets and surveys.
Compliance with all relevant legislation	C	Not negotiable.

The eventual worse case scenario is the Record Centre existing as a static database. Access to the data should

be on a pay as you use basis with reporting carried out on a part time basis by a member of staff who is paid for by the income from the pay as you use service.

If there are no contributing partners and SWT is still housing the project the responsibility of the data should remain with the following steering group, members of which have had a long term commitment to the Record Centre project in Sussex.

Sussex Wildlife Trust (Chair)
English Nature
Environment Agency
West Sussex County Council
East Sussex County Council
Brighton and Hove City Council

Responsibility for the annual biological recorders seminar should fall to SWT.

Appendix 5 - SxBRC partners 2005/2006

Sussex Wildlife Trust

English Nature

Environment Agency

East Sussex County Council

West Sussex County Council

Wealden District Council

High Weald AONB Unit

Horsham District Council

Mid Sussex District Council

Chichester District Council

Rother District Council

Arun District Council

Sussex Downs Conservation Board/South Downs Joint Committee

Southern Water

Brighton and Hove City Council

West Weald Woods Landscape Partnership

Appendix 6 - Risk Analysis.

Below is the risk analysis of SxBRC (Score 1-Low to 6-high)

Category of Risk	Prob.	Impact	Action	New impact	Existing Activity or Working Group
Score	1 - 6	1 - 6		1-6	
Management of Assets					
Material Assets	1	3	Appropriate insurance. Office security system.	2	SWT Policy and procedure
Digital Assets	1	6	Server backup and virus scans.	2	SWT Policy and procedure
Spatial Assets	1	4	Relationship with SxBRC cemented. Office security system.	1	SWT Policy and procedure
Personnel Assets	2	4	Good terms and conditions.	4	SWT Policy and procedure
Damage to Output					
Loss of records	2	4	Reliable back-up system	3	Committee for Biological Recording
Corruption of records	2	4	Reliable back-up system	4	
Loss of funding	2	4	Liaison with partners	3	Steering Group
Loss of OS licenses	2	5	Relationship County Councils cemented	5	Steering Group
Loss of expertise	2	4	All staff share skills and responsibilities	3	SxBRC team meetings and documentation
Damage to reputation					
With Recording Community	2	5	Continual liaison with recorders	3	Committee for Biological Recording
With funding partners	2	5	Continual liaison with partners	3	Steering Group
Compliance Risks					
Fire regulations	1	5	Comply with regulations	3	SWT Policy and procedure
Health & Safety at Work	1	4	Comply with regulations	3	SWT Policy and procedure
Office premises legislation	1	5	Comply with regulations	3	SWT Policy and procedure
Funders' conditions	1	6	Comply with regulations	3	SWT Policy and procedure
Data Protection Act	2	4	Comply with regulations	3	SWT Policy and procedure
Freedom of information act	1	5	Comply with regulations	3	SWT Policy and procedure
Data provision conditions	1	4	Comply with regulations	3	SWT Policy and procedure
Software use conditions	1	4	Comply with regulations	3	SWT Policy and procedure
Employment legislation	1	4	Comply with regulations	3	SWT Policy and procedure
Personnel Risks					
Loss of key personnel	2	5	Good terms and conditions	4	SWT Policy and procedure
Poor H&S management	1	3	H&S policy, training	3	SWT Policy and procedure
Poorly recruitment	1	3	Training	3	SWT Policy and procedure
Staff misdemeanours	1	3	Disciplinary procedures	2	SWT Policy and procedure
Volunteers					
Inappropriate activities	2	4	Volunteer support	3	SWT Policy and procedure
Injury whilst working for Trust	1	4	Risk Assessment, H&S procedures, insurance	3	SWT Policy and procedure
Information Technology					
Data loss	2	6	Back up systems	3	SWT Policy and procedure
Poor data protection	2	4	Data protection strategy. Compliance with Data Protection Act.	4	SWT Policy and procedure
IT systems failure	2	5	Back up systems. Maintenance and hardware replacement program	3	SWT Policy and procedure
Loss of IT support	2	5	Volunteer support	3	SWT Policy and procedure
Poor system inter-compatibility	3	4	Liasion between BITO and SWT IT staff	3	SxBRC IT strategy and SWT Policy and procedure
Natural Disasters					

Fire	1	5	Identify & manage risks; comply with regulations; insurance	1	SWT Policy and procedure
Flood	1	5	Identify & manage risks; insurance	1	SWT Policy and procedure
Landslip	1	4	Identify & manage risks; insurance	1	SWT Policy and procedure
Storm	1	4	Identify & manage risks; insurance	1	SWT Policy and procedure
Loss of power	2	3	Identify & manage risks; insurance	2	SWT Policy and procedure
Loss of water supply	2	2	Identify & manage risks	2	SWT Policy and procedure
Climate change	1	4	Identify & manage risks	1	SWT Policy and procedure

Appendix 7 - Detail of SxBRC Budget Structure.

CORE INCOME

	Carry forward from previous year
120522	Enquiries
120322	SxBRC Specified Project Income
160214	SxBRC Seminar
120122	Contract Funding

CORE EXPENDITURE

200022	Salaries - BRC (HB PG CR + AL)
211622	Recording Grant
230522	Computer Support
210022	Travel
211322	Stationary and Books
210622	Volunteer Expenses
200122	Data Input contracts
240022	Marketing & Publicity
210222	Recruitment
220022	Staff Training
210422	SxBRC Specified Project Costs
270814	Seminar Costs

RCSU INCOME

	Relevant Carry Forward
121122	Survey Income

RCSU EXPENDITURE

	Re charge to SWT
240222	Salary
210332	Travel
240122	Sundries
220122	Training
200322	Payment for Surveys

Misc. income and expenditure

121322	Sales of Sussex Botany
230622	Expenditure on Sussex Botany
121422	Income from SxBRC Run courses
220222	Expenditure from SxBRC Run courses
120814	Hedgerow Inventory Income
271314	Hedgerow Inventory Expenditure
121522	Income from Dragonflies of Sussex
121022	Membership fees of Sussex Lichen Group
120222	Income for Francis Rose data project
200222	Expenditure for Francis Rose data project

Appendix 8 - In-Kind contributions

ESCC – OS Licenses, data and staff time
WSCC - OS Licenses, data and staff time
BHCC - OS Licenses, data and staff time
EN – Data and staff time
EA – Data and staff time
Horsham DC – Staff time
Wealden DC – Staff time
Sussex Wildlife Trust (See below)
South Downs Joint Committee – Data and staff time

SWT In-Kind Breakdown

Director's time @ 7 days a year
Operation Manager's time @ 10 days a year
Finance Manager's time @ 6 days a year
Finance Assistant's time @ 4/34's of time
Personnel Officer's time @ 4/34's of time
IT Officer's time @ 4/34's of time
Receptionist's time @ 4/34's of time
Cleaner @ 4/34's of time
Electricity & Gas @ 4/34 WM bill
Phone @ ¾ WM bill
Photocopier 4/34 Woods Mill bill + hire
Water @ 4/34 Woods Mill bill
Insurance @ 4/34 WM bill
Other WM Costs (other repairs/maint.) @ 4/34 WM bill
Stationery Costs -Paper and envelopes
Postage Costs - Enquiries plus letters
Software licenses @ 4/34 WM bill
Server @ 4/34 WM bill
Technical Support (RF) 2 days a month
Floor space (office plus meeting room/kitchen/toilets)