



Thames Valley
Environmental
Records Centre

Thames Valley Environmental
Records Centre

Annual Report

2024 - 2025



Enabling data-driven decisions to better enhance and protect our natural environment

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Chair's Foreword



Over the past year I have had the privilege of working with a wide range of partners in helping to develop the Oxfordshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy. TVERC staff have been instrumental in this work across both Berkshire and Oxfordshire, and I have been impressed by the level of professionalism and the expert guidance that they have contributed to the process. With both LNRS's being published in the coming year, I am hopeful that TVERC will go on to play a vital role in helping to deliver the new strategies and will be able to record the resulting increases in both habitats and species!

Volunteers are at the heart of what TVERC does, from the tens of thousands of hours that our recording community contributes, to the invaluable help that TVERC gets from its 'office' volunteers who have been instrumental in helping TVERC to build its database of records to over 5 million in the last year.

Local Government Reorganisation is likely to have implications for TVERC as well as its Local Authority partners over the coming years. Any major changes bring a degree of uncertainty, and the role of the Steering Group over this period will be to help guide TVERC through the changes, and ensure that TVERC emerges in a strong position to serve the new strategic authority and new unitary authorities that emerge from the process.

Dominic Lamb

*Climate and Biodiversity Team Leader
South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils*

Executive Summary



TVERC has had a full and rewarding year in 2024–25. It's been encouraging to see a growing number of people and organisations making use of the wildlife data we curate. Throughout the year, our data searches, licences, exchanges, and research have been regularly used to support better-informed decisions for nature across Oxfordshire and Berkshire

I am pleased to see that wildlife recording continues to thrive across both counties. This year, we have received more than 700 datasets of wildlife records. A particularly exciting milestone was reached in March, when our database surpassed 5 million species records. The majority of these records come from contributions by voluntary recorders. We found in our recent study of Wildlife Recording in the Mend the Gap area that most respondents to our survey record for personal interest, with around a third also participating in local or national monitoring schemes. This highlights how much we rely on the goodwill of individuals to make and share records of the nature in our counties.

To support the growing volume of data, we've expanded our team. We welcomed a Data Officer and Data Assistant to strengthen our Data Team. Additionally, Laura Doughty joined us as Ecology Manager, focusing on securing and delivering new projects..

We've continued our work on the Local Nature Recovery Strategies for both counties, contributing to opportunity mapping and prioritisation. These strategies are progressing well and are expected to be published later this year. We look forward to supporting the delivery phase as they move forward..

Our involvement in Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) has also grown. We've supported a range of landowners in evaluating their potential to generate biodiversity gain through both desk-based assessments and field surveys. Notably, we conducted a retrospective study for Oxfordshire County Council, exploring how mineral sites might contribute to BNG in the future.

A huge thank you to everyone at TVERC; our incredible staff, dedicated volunteers, and all the amazing individuals, groups, and organisations across Oxfordshire and Berkshire. Your continued support and collaboration have made these achievements possible. We're excited to keep building on this momentum together and look forward to making an even greater impact in the year ahead.

Steve Wilkes
TVERC Director

Who we are

05



TVERC are the only organisation in Berkshire and Oxfordshire providing a comprehensive ecological information hub through which critical knowledge can be shared to support scientific research and responsible decision-making.

We are at the center of a network of recorders and data-users in Berkshire and Oxfordshire and are the regional delivery node of the National Biodiversity Network.

We are a not-for-profit organisation run by a partnership. All those contributing to TVERC help manage our environmental resources sustainably for current and future use.



Data

We collect wildlife information from a wide variety of sources in a coordinated way; enabling information-sharing between recorders and decision-makers.



Information

We are a specialist team with the skills, knowledge and dedication to make complex data understandable and available to all who need it.



Knowledge

This constantly improving, high quality resource is accessible by everyone, so they have the knowledge they need to carry out scientific research and make responsible decisions.



VISION

We live in a better environment because decisions are made using our data and insight.



MISSION

We are impartial environmental data scientists who collect, manage, analyse and share data in Oxfordshire and Berkshire so people can make sound decisions that protect and enhance our environment.

Milestone achieved


5 million species records!


In a remarkable achievement, we now hold over **5 million species records** in our comprehensive ecological information hub for Berkshire and Oxfordshire. As we celebrate this milestone, we also look forward to continuing our work and expanding our database. The information collected is crucial for guiding conservation management, influencing planning decisions, assessing environmental conditions, and tracking changes over time.

This year, we added valuable data sets for less well-recorded invertebrate taxa, such as spiders, craneflies, and beetles. We received and entered records from 1980s and 1990s surveys on important wildlife sites in Oxfordshire. These historical records are crucial for comparing with modern surveys to observe changes in biodiversity.

We invite everyone to contribute to this growing repository of biological records. Whether you observe a rare butterfly, hear a melodious bird song, or encounter a rabbit, your observations are invaluable!





 **256,188**
records imported
5,009,194 total species
records in the TVERC
database

 **718**
Datasets logged
567 datasets
imported in 2024/25
financial year

 **105,929**
Protected &
Notable Species
added to our database

 **55,970**
largest dataset
imported
from Berkshire Bird Club

 **5,525**
species covered
included in records
entered into our
database

 **48**
taxon groups
contributed to the
species records




Our success wouldn't have been possible without the remarkable contributions from the recording community, local groups, partners and our dedicated volunteers who share their observations and expertise. All wildlife records are crucial—they deepen our understanding of Berkshire and Oxfordshire's environment. Thank you!



Ellen Lee, TVERC Biodiversity Data Manager

Local Wildlife Sites

Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) are sites recognised for having high wildlife value containing rare or threatened habitats and species and are considered to be of county importance. While they do not have statutory designation, they serve as crucial links with legally protected sites, forming essential networks of habitats.


We play a key role in the survey, selection and maintenance of information on LWS. Our methods for identifying, mapping, and designating these sites align with the practices used in other counties across England and adhere to DEFRA's guidance on local sites.

Discover more about last year's survey highlights in [Berkshire](#) and [Oxfordshire](#).



Recording Community

Supporting the recording community is an essential part of the work TVERC carries out to help them further their aims and to ensure the region has people committed to monitoring and recording the environment and its wildlife. Most of our species records come from local naturalists or wildlife groups. These dedicated individuals voluntarily observe local wildlife and share their sightings. These observations can be part of organised surveys or incidental records from their gardens or walk. This valuable information helps us understand and protect our environment.

 **80%**
**from Biological
Recorders**
The majority of our species records come from volunteers

1612
No of Recorders
Data imported from
1612 recorders




Data agreements

We have data exchange agreements in place with over 54 local groups who regularly send us their data. In many cases we also send them our data in return to support their local conservation work. Each group is welcome to decide its own terms for sharing data with us, for instance if they want to restrict the location information that TVERC provides to ecological consultants working on behalf of developers.

Renewed and new data agreements

- The Letcombes Conservation Group (covers the parishes of both Letcombe Regis and Letcombe Bassett).
- National Agromyzidae Recording Scheme



Recorders' Conference

Our Recorders' Conferences took place in October 2024 and March 2025, providing an opportunity to learn about the incredible wildlife recording and conservation work in Berkshire and Oxfordshire.

The Autumn Conference featured talks from TVERC Micro-Intern Student Harveet Purewal on the effects of climate change on the distribution of Brown Hairstreak using TVERC data. Catriona Bass from Long Mead Foundation shared insights on meadow restoration, and Dr. Julian Parfitt presented findings on ancient trees, bats, birds, and fungi. Updates on the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) were provided by Rosie Street and Chloe Edwards.

At the Spring Conference we had an inspiring talk from Entomologist Ivan Wright about the bees at Shotover, and the history of wildlife recording there. Neil Clennell, CEO of Wychwood Forest Trust, shared the experiences so far from the Nature Recovery at Gibbets Close Hill and how it is being monitored, and future plans. TVERC Micro Interns Ruby Leys and Jessie D'Urso presented their bat-related projects. The numerous speed updates highlighted the diverse activities of the recording community.

Thank you to all who attended our conferences, and special thanks to our speakers, workshop hosts, and those who had displays.

Autumn Recorders' Conference



Oracle, Thames Valley Park, Reading



49 attendees



14 speakers

2 workshops



Spring Recorders' Conference



Exeter Hall, Kidlington



69 attendees



19 speakers

4 workshops



Students

Since last year's annual report we have once again hosted 3 groups of interns for week-long projects of varying topics.

In September 2024, our micro-interns explored bat data and with one student focusing on the breadth of species richness and the other focusing on a specific species, finding very interesting and well-researched results. We were fortunate enough to have these interns present their findings at our Spring Recorders' Conference in Kidlington this past March.

At the start of the year, new interns researched deadwood invertebrate distribution across Oxfordshire and Berkshire. Our latest project analysing 64,000 mammal records, will occur in June. We hope to have these 2 cohorts join us for our Autumn Recorders' Conference in Pangbourne this September.

66

Alongside developing my GIS skills, working with TVERC has given me an appreciation for the importance of publicly collected data in protecting vulnerable species and has emphasised the critical role of citizen science and data analysis in conservation.

99

Holly Simpkins, TVERC Micro intern student

Recorders' Grant

We have supported many great projects with our Recorders' Grant scheme, which is administered by [Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment \(TOE\)](#).

It is open to local wildlife organisations in Oxfordshire and Berkshire and can provide funding for equipment, books, training and more.



25

grants awarded

Since our Recorders' Grant started in July 2016



£2,500

2 grants awarded

in 2024/25 financial year

Funding awarded to:



**Wild
Cookham**

for Cookham Ponds &
Waterways surveys



**Long Mead
Foundation**

for Floodplain meadow
invertebrate surveys

Engaging Community

TVERC is dedicated to enhancing environmental conservation in Berkshire and Oxfordshire by collaborating with local science and environmental organizations. By maintaining strong relationships with local recorders and recording groups, we aspire to remain the central hub for biological recording in the region.

2024 was the second year that TVERC organised the City Nature Challenge (CNC) for Berkshire and Oxfordshire. This year we created separate iNaturalist projects for the two counties, to give them their own identity. Last year they were registered together. The CNC weekend ran from 26th to 29th April 2024. We had a total of 3,790 observations across Oxfordshire and Berkshire, surpassing the total number of observations and species for 2023.

Our former micro-intern student, Joss Carr, also ranked in the UK's top 2 observers, with an impressive 1882 observations of 363 species in Oxfordshire.



Berkshire

Oxfordshire

495

Observations

3,303

Observations

267

Species

646

Species

116

Identifiers

327

Identifiers

38

Observers

121

Observers

On November 2024, TVERC attended the NBN Conference with this years' theme "Making data work for nature". We also participated in events like the Garden Moth Scheme Conference, Biodiversity Net Gain Virtual Symposium and the Local Biodiversity Data Virtual Symposium just to name a few.

At the beginning of 2025, we enjoyed a fantastic day at the Wild Tilehurst Nature Fair alongside other incredible local groups such as the Berkshire Ornithological Club, Berkshire & S. Bucks Bats, Reading & District Natural History Society, Wild About Reading, Reading Beekeepers, and Econet, among others. The event attracted over 170 visitors, offering a wonderful opportunity to discuss TVERC's work and learn about various ongoing projects.





We live in a better
environment in
Berkshire and
Oxfordshire
**because decisions
are made using our
data, information
and services**



Data Searches



984

Data search requests

Our data search service can be accessed by anyone.

This means that the records that local wildlife recorders submit – whether sent directly to us, submitted to iRecord or sent via national recording schemes – are being used for a wide range of purposes, including development planning, research, neighbourhood planning, student projects and lots more.

To request access to TVERC data, please submit a request via our [website](#)

Data Provision to Partners

Through our service level agreements, we provide:

- Local Wildlife Sites
- Protected & Notable species
- Priority habitat
- Invasive non-native species

TVERC continues to provide updated datasets and services to our partners, ensuring compliance with planning policy and wildlife legislation. Our funding partners include all Local Authorities in Berkshire and Oxfordshire and the Environment Agency.

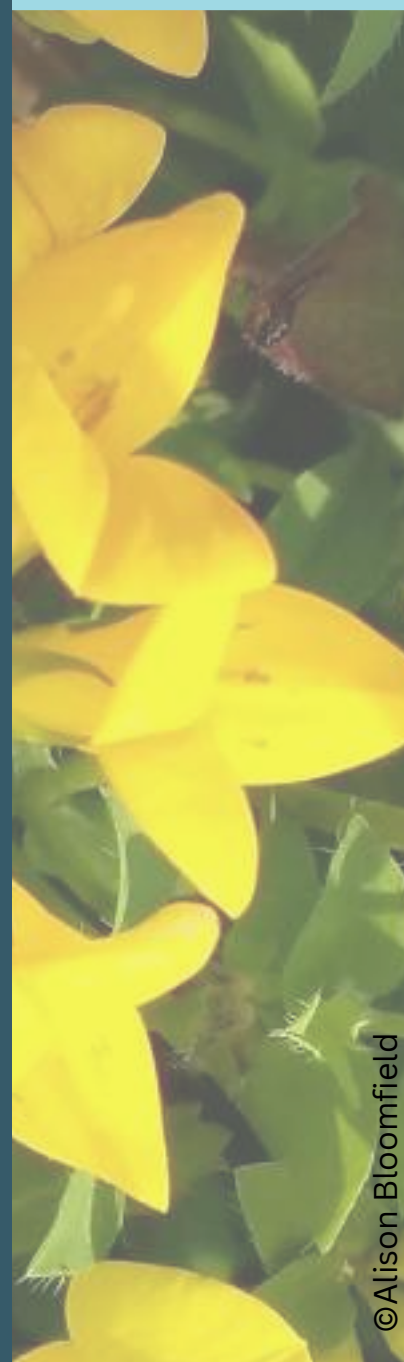
These data inform decisions on conservation efforts, land management, and minimising environmental impacts

We publish the environmental data we collate and analyse in an [annual biodiversity monitoring report](#). The report is available to Local Authorities.



Projects

We are creative and innovative, using these to drive our development, enhance our systems and processes, and offer solutions to interpret natural environment data



©Alison Bloomfield



Local Nature Recovery Strategy

Beginning the groundwork in 2023, TVERC has been collaborating with Oxfordshire County Council and the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead on the Oxfordshire and Berkshire Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS), respectively. These county-wide documents aim to identify the best places for interventions to reverse the decline in our nature by 2030. Projects this large and with nation-wide implications need all the time and resources we can offer. We've been working tirelessly on bringing together professional knowledge and feedback from public consultations in a mappable format for publication.

This past year saw the development, approval, and publication of both counties' draft strategies online inviting public comments & feedback. In recent months TVERC has been working with both counties' teams to refine the LNRS maps based on this feedback from individuals, local groups, and larger organisations. As was the case last year, the LNRS projects are ongoing, but we look forward to sharing them with you and seeing the positive impact some prioritised actions for nature can have on Oxfordshire and Berkshire's environment and biodiversity.



Find out more about:

[Oxfordshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy](#)

[Berkshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy](#)

Mend the Gap

We received funding from Mend the Gap (MTG) to uncover key species of plants and animals recorded in the region over the past 30 years, and learn more about those observing wildlife in the area. MTG is a joint programme of the Chilterns National Landscape, North Wessex Downs National Landscape, and the Railway Action Group, aiming to enhance and enrich the landscape for wildlife, residents, and visitors.

The project analysed and mapped existing records for 35 key indicator and iconic species across nine taxon groups including records spanning a 30-year period for trees, wildflowers, mammals, birds, and insects. The analysis identified hotspots and cold spots in species distribution. Notably, the Loddon Lilly was one of the species showing a decline in observations in the area.

Our survey into Wildlife Sightings also provided invaluable insights into our recording community's motivations, challenges, and opportunities. We look forward to continuing our collaboration and engaging new audiences in wildlife monitoring.



To download the project report, please visit the **[Mend the Gap website](#)**.

WISH

We're excited to be part of the [Waste Innovation Station Headquarters \(WISH\) Partnership](#) helping connect our community to nature and each other and upskilling the community to enable better stewardship of the planet!

Our ongoing and planned activities are designed to strengthen the community's connection to nature. These initiatives include organising events like Noticing Nature and supporting citizen science projects such as the City Nature Challenge. Through these efforts, we aim to foster community-led sustainable change and holistic well-being in the area.

Biodiversity Net Gain **BNG**

TVERC continued to work in partnership with local councils in Oxfordshire and Berkshire to deliver BNG projects during 2024. There are potential opportunities for habitat creation and restoration works at certain council-owned sites, funded by developers, where development proposals cannot deliver biodiversity net gain on site. Off-site habitat creation or restoration projects create additional biodiversity value to offset the losses on development sites.

Oxford City Council commissioned TVERC to carry out ecological work to inform a project assessing the feasibility of using Council-owned land for BNG offsetting. The project required habitat surveys, enhancement modelling and reporting work to be undertaken for eight 'demonstration sites', which will feed into the overall project to assess the feasibility of using Council-owned land for BNG offsetting.

Oxfordshire County Council Minerals and Waste Team contracted TVERC to analyse nine mineral sites across Oxfordshire to evidence that biodiversity delivered and determine the scale of potential BNG delivery at similar sites in the future, informing future planning policy.

Wokingham Borough Council engaged TVERC for baseline BNG surveys on five woodland parcels. West Berkshire Council identified two parcels of land for potential use as future receptor sites for BNG initiatives, including tree planting, and contracted TVERC for baseline surveys before planting commenced.



Communications

53,044



TVERC website
page views



1350

-5%

X followers



777

10%

Instagram
followers



669

5%

Facebook
followers



592

16%

LinkedIn followers



511

BlueSky followers



763

TVERC mailing list
subscribers

We are committed to enhancing our communication efforts. Our mission is to solidify TVERC's position as the central node for biological recording in Berkshire and Oxfordshire. We're focused on showcasing the vital role our recorders play, not only to our partners but also to the wider circle of data users. In our journey to secure a thriving future for biological recording, we're actively engaging our community through various communication outlets.

Just before last summer, we've launched a newly improved website with enhanced functionality, improved navigation, and a fresh look. Our rebranding efforts reflect our commitment to providing you with even better access to environmental data, resources, and services.

Our bi-monthly news bulletin serve as spotlights for our active participation in diverse projects, as well as a source for conservation news and happenings throughout Berkshire and Oxfordshire and we continue to regularly post on the main social platforms. In November, we've also joined BlueSky where we are connecting with a growing community of environmental and wildlife recording groups and organisations.



If you don't already subscribe to our mailing list, we'd love you to do so! [Sign up now](#)

Staff Volunteers



We employ a well-staffed, effective, and motivated workforce with value and respected staff and volunteers, who retain and develop their skills, expertise, and knowledge

As a not-for-profit organisation, surplus income is reinvested in services except for Reserve funds. TVERC, an internal unit of OxonCC, operates with a balanced budget annually and maintains a separate Reserve account.



We are funded from a variety of sources, contributing to the annual cost of collating and managing the TVERC database, allowing for cost-effective services.



A significant part of our income is allocated to staff and volunteer-related expenses. Staff and volunteers contribute valuable time to projects, data searches, and licenses, which are crucial for TVERC's services and data products, adding value for funders.



We are lucky to have a fantastic team of volunteers helping with data processing, species recording, and site surveys. Their assistance is vital for managing and entering data into our database, which is where they primarily focus their efforts.

 **8**
Volunteers

 **83**
Volunteer days

£13,639
Equivalent cost

Financial Summary

	24/25	23/24	22/23
Income			
Local authorities SLA	154,061	146,452	128,715
Environment Agency SLA	16,525	15,859	15,104
Commercial data searches	199,287	204,695	170,848
Commercial data licences	17,644	49,838	44,193
Projects	166,304	126,750	85,426
Donations	942	877	659
Reserve fundng	20,000	69,209	78,157
Total	574,763	613,681	523,101
Expenditure			
Salaries, expenses, training	486,629	465,183	421,466
Project expenses	1,223	2,026	4,566
Overheads	6,790	4,192	5,091
Premises (paid 'in kind' by OCC)	18,274	17,404	16,575
Recorders Fund and Conference	4,873	3,887	3,766
Investment in service	17,663	16,017	10,578
Total	535,452	508,709	462,042

Stay in touch

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Records Centre (TVERC)

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