

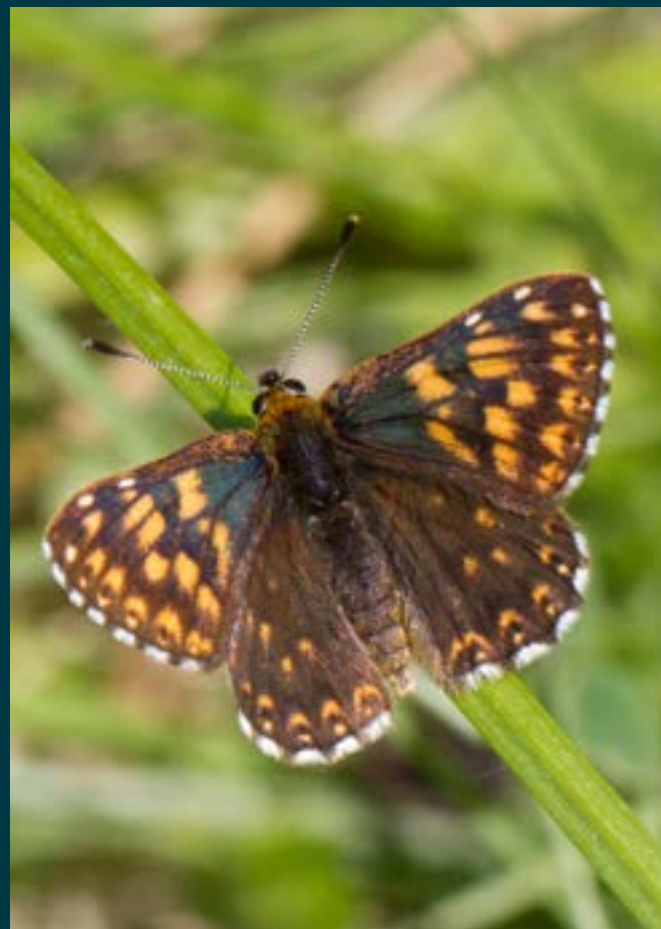


Thames Valley
Environmental
Records Centre

Thames Valley Environmental
Records Centre

Annual Report

2025 - 2026



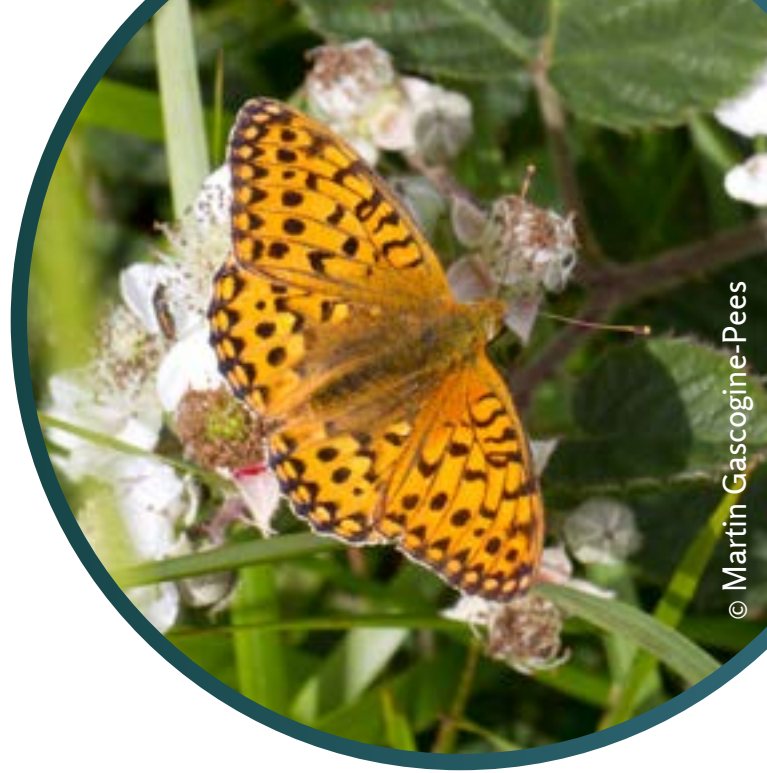
Enabling data-driven decisions to better enhance and protect our natural environment

Content

Chair's Foreword
Executive Summary
Who We Are
Looking Back at Our Year
Species Data
Local Wildlife Sites
Recording Community
 Data Agreements
 Recorders' Conference
 Students
 Recorders' Grant
 Engaging Community
Data Searches
Projects
Local Nature Recovery Strategies
Mend the Gap
Brown Hairstreak Surveys
WISH
Biodiversity Net Gain
Communications
Staff & Volunteers
Financial Summary
Stay in touch



Chair's Foreword



During the last year the Local Nature Recovery Strategies for Berkshire and Oxfordshire were published, TVERC played a major role in delivering the LNRS across the two counties. As we transition from the development phase to into delivery of the LNRS, TVERC will continue to play a pivotal role in ensuring that delivery is underpinned by the best available data. TVERC is already developing new products and services that it can offer to its commercial customers and to delivery partners to help them deliver more for nature.

The publication of the LNRS has also begun to generate a lot of new interest, energy and enthusiasm from local communities throughout the two counties, a challenge for TVERC will be to capitalise on this renewed interest in nature to help nurture a new generation of recorders.

There has been a mixed reception for many reforms that are being ushered in by the current government, many of which are aimed at accelerating development and economic growth but at what cost for the natural environment? What is certain is that these decisions need to be underpinned by good data, particularly with the introduction of Spatial Development Strategies and Environmental Delivery Plans. These changes provide both opportunities and challenges, ensuring good biological data remains at the heart of decision making at a local level and will be a critical test for this new era, and TVERC is well placed to service this need.

Dominic Lamb

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

Executive Summary



During 2025/26, Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC) continued to provide reliable high-quality biodiversity data, expertise and engagement across Oxfordshire and Berkshire, supporting nature recovery, sustainable development and informed decision-making during a period of significant policy change.

Community engagement remained central to TVERC's work. Through programmes such as WISH, we delivered "Noticing Nature" events alongside internships, volunteer roles and initiatives including City Nature Challenge, enabling people to engage with wildlife recording at different stages of experience. In turn, these activities built skills and confidence, supported emerging ecologists and volunteers, and strengthened participation in biological recording.

TVERC expanded its support for Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), translating national policy into practical delivery. Working with councils, we undertook baseline habitat surveys, enhancement modelling and long-term management planning to explore off-site BNG and habitat banks on public land, helping ensure biodiversity gains are evidence-led, measurable and secured for the long term.

TVERC also strengthened its role as an accessible evidence base. Our new LNRS Data Search Report, published alongside the Biodiversity Report, brings together species, habitats, sites and nature recovery opportunity data to help landowners and land managers understand the nature value of their land and identify practical opportunities for restoration, enhancement and nature-positive management.

The year marked the start of Local Government Reorganisation across Oxfordshire. Throughout this transition, TVERC focuses on continuity and partnership working, ensuring authoritative biodiversity evidence continues to support planning, policy development and nature recovery across evolving authority structures.

Together, these activities underline TVERC's continuing value as the trusted hub for biological recording in the Thames Valley.

Steve Wilkes
TVERC Director

Who we are



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.

Looking back at our year

over 3,000 people engaged



at 30+ events including our Recorder's Conferences

11 micro internship students



12 volunteers



5,361,579 species records

353,317 species records imported from 2250 recorders



1,259,403 Protected &

70,112 Protected & Notable species added to our database

Notable species



1,322 Wildlife Sites

Total number of Local Wildlife Sites, District Wildlife Sites and City Wildlife Sites



10,230 ha Mapped Habitat

TVERC has improved the detail in habitat data through ongoing reviews

24 projects delivered

Including published LNRS supported by TVERC data



967

Data searches completed



£3,000

Awarded in Recording Grants



781 TVERC mailing list subscribers



3,031


social media followers

Species Data


Building on last year’s milestone of surpassing 5 million records, we have continued to strengthen and grow our database. This expanding evidence base remains essential for guiding conservation management, informing planning decisions, nature recovery and tracking changes in biodiversity over time.

This year, we added some new and valuable datasets to our database, including Butterfly Conservation records from 2022–2023. A noteworthy highlight was the recording of the flame-shouldered blister beetle (*Sitaris muralis*), a species rare in Oxfordshire with only two previous records in our database. Sharing this sparked further interest and led to the submission of additional records.

Thank you to our recording community, local groups, partners and our dedicated volunteers who share their observations and expertise. We invite everyone to contribute to this growing repository of biological records. Every observation matters, whether it’s a rare beetle, a singing bird, or a rabbit, and we encourage everyone to contribute to this growing record of our wildlife.




353,317
records imported
5,361,579 total species records in the TVERC database



790
Datasets logged
584 datasets imported in 2025/26 financial year




70,112
Protected & Notable Species added to our database



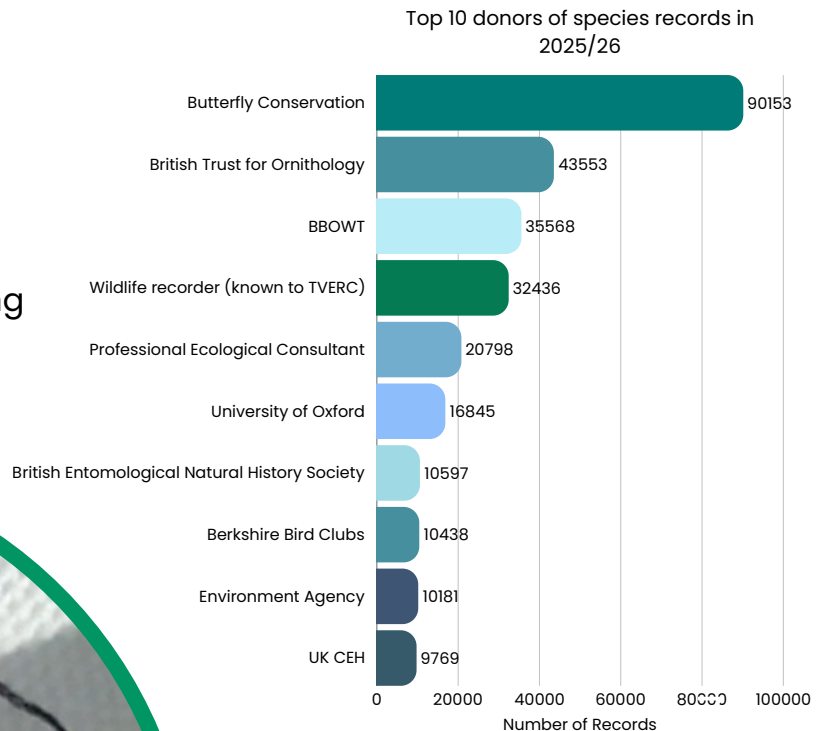
89,338
largest dataset imported from Butterfly Conservation



7,630
species included included in records entered into our database



55
taxon groups contributed to the species records



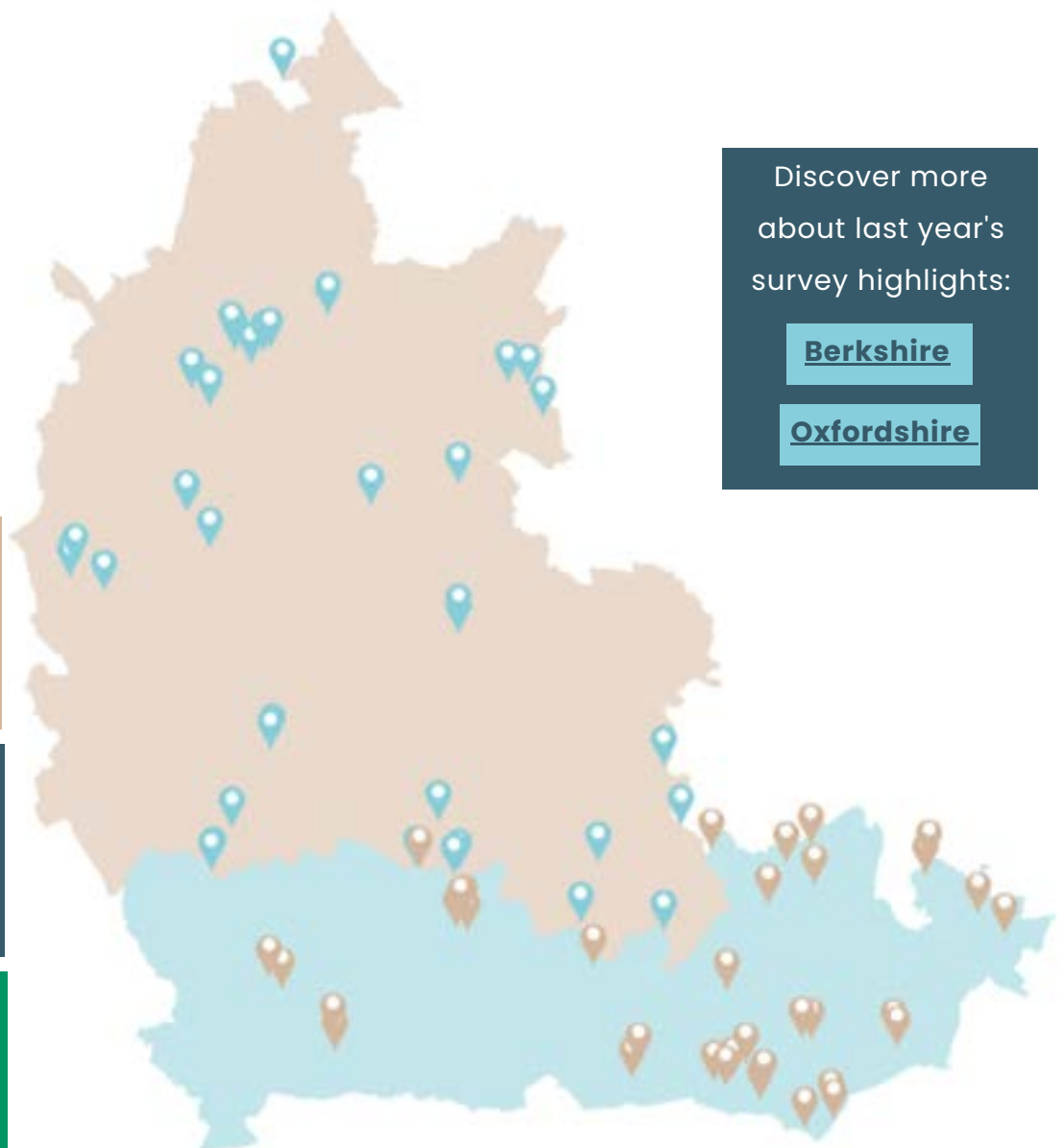
© Peter White

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.

For the first time in many years, the past year also saw surveys carried out on Local Wildlife Sites in Slough, marking an important expansion of this work.



Discover more about last year's survey highlights:

[Berkshire](#)

[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



2,250

Recorders

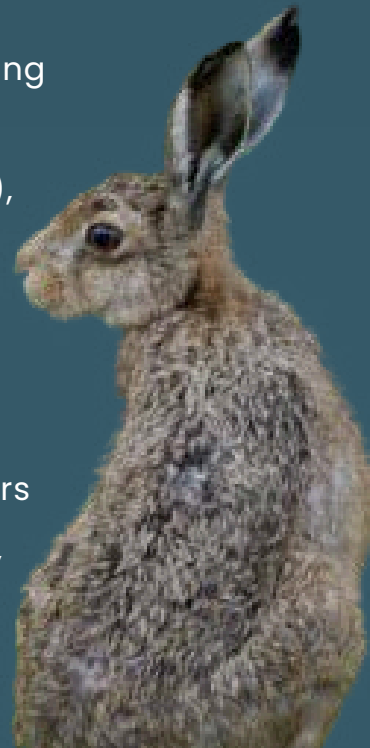
Data imported from 2,250 recorders



Data agreements

We currently hold 39 data exchange agreements with local recording groups alongside many other groups who share data with TVERC through national recording platforms (such as iRecord or the NBN), open-source data flows, and data licences.

Over the past year, we have been working with partners to refresh our agreements and introduce a new standard template. We continue to build strong relationships with existing and new partners to ensure biological records can be shared effectively, sustainably, and in step with evolving recording practices.



Recorders' Conference

Our Recorders' Conferences in September 2025 and March 2026 brought together the recording community to share knowledge and celebrate wildlife recording and conservation across Berkshire and Oxfordshire.

The Autumn Conference included talks from Catriona Bass on Long Mead Wildlife Site, Stuart Croft (Blackwater Valley Countryside Partnership) on boosting barn owls in Wokingham Borough, and Robin Scagell from the UK Glow Worm Survey, alongside speed updates highlighting the diversity of local recording activity.

The Spring Conference featured John Lindley (South Stoke Wildlife & Conservation Group), Ruth Staples-Rolfe introducing Mend the Gap, and TVERC Micro Intern Sophie Williams presenting a deadwood invertebrate analysis. A series of practical workshops covered mammal tracks, pollinators, and habitat creation.

Thank you to all who attended our conferences, and special thanks to our speakers, workshop hosts, and those who had displays for making both conferences such a success.

Autumn Recorders' Conference

 Pangbourne Village Hall

 46 attendees



12 speakers
2 workshops



Spring Recorders' Conference

 Cholsey Great Hall

 69 attendees



16 speakers
3 workshops

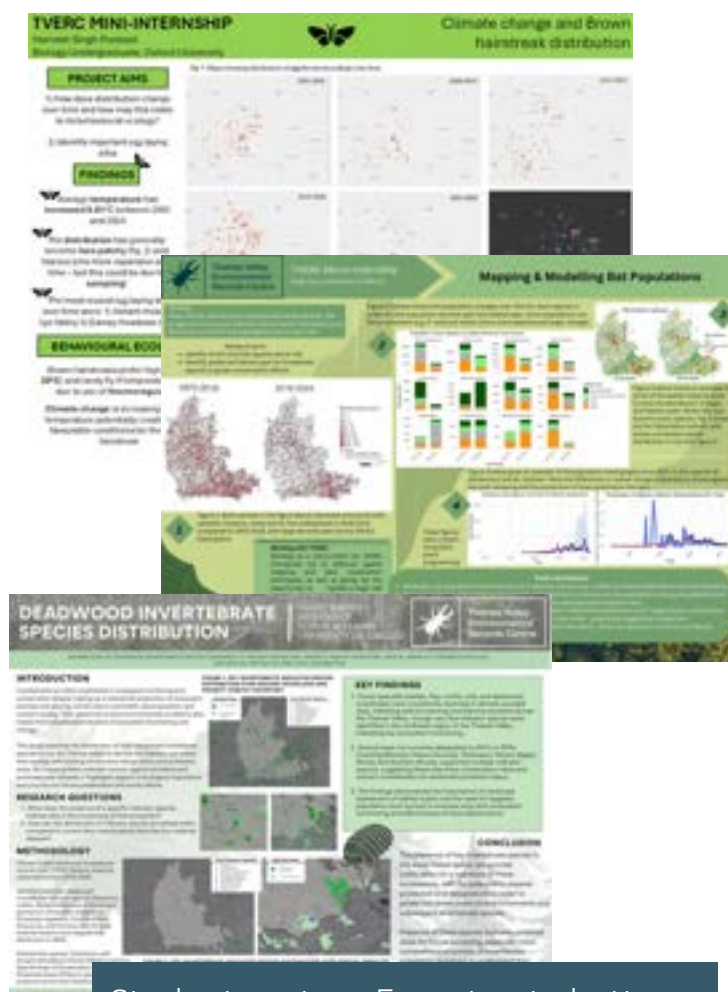


Students

Since last year's annual report we have hosted 2 groups of interns for week-long projects exploring TVERC's species data. These micro-internships are a great opportunity for students to gain some practical work experience as well as hone existing skills and learn new ones during school breaks.

Our first cohort of the year explored TVERC's mammal records in the last couple decades to identify potential survey blindspots, and the second cohort examined our herptile records with some focus on indicator species, especially for wetlands and fens across Oxfordshire and Berkshire.

We've got our official group of interns for the June/July internship, focused on bird records, and we also hope to hear from some of our recent interns at our Autumn Recorder's Conference



Student posters. From top to bottom: Harveet Singh Purewal, Ruby Leys, Sophie Williams

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.

 **27**
grants awarded
Since our Recorders'
Grant started in July 2016

 **£3000**
2 grants awarded
in 2025/26 financial year

Funding awarded to:

Letcombe Brook Project
for Riverfly monitoring
equipment


Keep Nethercote Rural
Mostela boxes

Engaging Community

TVERC is dedicated to enhancing environmental conservation in Berkshire and Oxfordshire by collaborating with local science and environmental organisations. Through these partnerships, we continue to act as a central hub for biological recording in the region.

For the third year running, TVERC coordinated the City Nature Challenge across Berkshire and Oxfordshire. During the four days from 25–28 April 2025, over three million wildlife observations were recorded worldwide, with more than 3,000 observations submitted locally by over 200 participants. A highlight was our event at St Kenelm's Church with Enstone Eco and CAG, where participants explored the historic churchyard using iNaturalist and recorded the nationally declining Meadow Saxifrage, a rare species in Oxfordshire.

Throughout the year, we connected with communities at a wide range of events, including the Newbury Show (alongside our Autumn Conference), Great Big Fest in Henley during Great Big Green Week, Oxford City Farm's Great Big Green Week finale, the Braywick Nature Festival in Maidenhead and Wild Tilehurst Nature Fair. Visitors of all ages engaged with hands-on activities, learned how to record wildlife, and discovered how TVERC's data and services support nature recovery.



Berkshire **Oxfordshire**

1,190
Observations

1,958
Observations

435
Species

601
Species

249
Identifiers

307
Identifiers

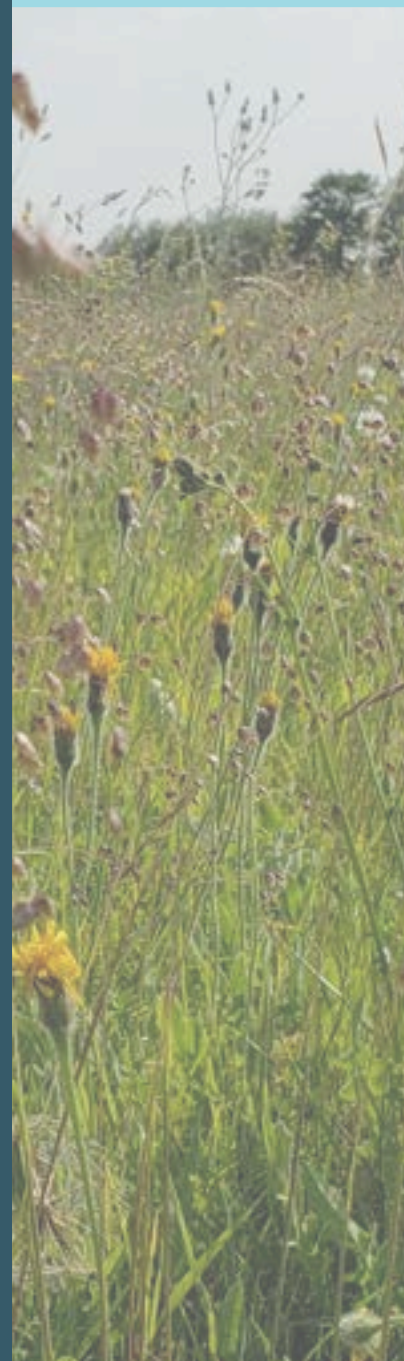
71
Observers

158
Observers





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



Data Searches



967

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, verified records 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

Local Nature Recovery Strategy

We're pleased to announce that the Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS) for Oxfordshire and Berkshire were approved by Defra and published officially this last year. TVERC is proud to have played a pivotal role in bringing these strategies to fruition alongside the leaders and experts on each county's working groups and panels.

Both LNRS reports and maps are now viewable online, and TVERC has also added a new product to our data search service for individuals and organisations interested in a more detailed view of what the LNRS might recommend for their land. This detailed version of the LNRS data also includes management advice and detailed breakdowns of what measures are present in the search area, and is available as an add-on to any data search for a nominal fee. For Oxfordshire residents, Oxfordshire County Council committed funding to provide 10 free LNRS & Biodiversity data searches to local individuals and organisations planning to undertake conservation or restoration work within Oxfordshire. This funding has been renewed for the next financial year as well to increase the accessibility of the LNRS & Biodiversity data service.



Oxfordshire's Local Nature Recovery Strategy launch event



Illustration by Natalie Ganpatsingh.

“ TVERC have been absolutely fundamental to the production of our LNRS and there is no way we could have produced our LNRS maps without their experience and high quality data sets. ”

Chloe Edwards, LNRS Project Manager,
Oxfordshire County Council

Find out more about:

[Berkshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy](#)

[Oxfordshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy](#)

[TVERC LNRS report](#)

Mend the Gap

TVERC is excited to once again be working with Mend the Gap (MtG) to support their nature restoration programmes in Oxfordshire and Berkshire. We are currently working with MtG on their Signature Trees project which has been running for a few years now as they partnered with groups in their project area to plant 4 different species of rare native or native-hybrid tree species, namely Black Poplar, Wild Pear, and 2 types of disease resistant Elms.

We are currently in the early stages of this project while the trees are still quite young, but volunteer recruitment for individuals interested in monitoring the health and surroundings for these trees will soon be underway. We presented an introductory workshop for the project at our recent Spring Recorders' Conference – a huge thank you to all who attended! – and plan to hold a tree ID workshop as part of Withymead Nature Reserve's Citizen Science Sunday event on June 7 from 10am-1pm.



Read more about our work with [Mend the Gap](#).

Brown Hairstreak Surveys

Over the winter, our team carried out Brown Hairstreak Butterfly surveys, focusing on locating eggs laid on blackthorn.

The Brown Hairstreak is the largest of the UK's hairstreaks and is protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981, as well as being listed as a Priority Species within the UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework.

Understanding where Brown Hairstreaks are laying provides invaluable data that helps us manage key habitats for both adults and caterpillars, especially given their reliance on blackthorn.



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!

During the year, we launched a successful programme of Noticing Nature events, encouraging people to slow down, explore local green spaces, and begin recording wildlife. Events took place across Oxfordshire, including Hinksey Heights, North Leigh Common, Heyford Meadow, Spiceball Park, Barton Fields (Radley Gravel Pits), and Boundary Brook. Participants explored a wide range of habitats, from alkaline fen and meadow to woodland and wetland whilst recording plants, invertebrates, reptiles, birds, and mammals. Highlights included sightings of Grass Snake, Slow-worm, Water Scorpion, Drinker moth caterpillar, Red Kites, and a young Fox, alongside many characteristic meadow and fen plant species. Attendees valued learning from local experts and using tools such as hand lenses and iNaturalist, with feedback describing the events as “friendly,” “inspiring,” and “a great way to get started with recording.”

As part of the WISH project, TVERC also attended the Ripples of Change: Sustainable Fashion Show at Blenheim Palace, organised by The Cherwell Collective. We ran a moth trapping session using our battery-operated Skinner trap, engaging attendees in conversations about local wildlife, recording, and the links between nature, sustainability, and everyday choices.



Biodiversity Net Gain **BNG**

During 2025, TVERC continued its collaborative work with local councils across Oxfordshire and Berkshire, focusing on delivering innovative BNG projects. There are ongoing opportunities for habitat creation and restoration at council-owned sites, especially in cases where development proposals cannot achieve biodiversity net gain on-site. In these situations, off-site habitat creation or restoration projects are invaluable, as they contribute additional biodiversity value to offset losses from development activities.

Oxfordshire County Council commissioned TVERC to support a project exploring the feasibility of establishing Habitat Banks using Council-owned land to help provide BNG offsetting. As part of this initiative, TVERC conducted baseline habitat surveys, modelled enhancement options, and developed comprehensive long-term Habitat Management and Monitoring Plans for several sites. These efforts are integral to assessing the overall viability of using Council-owned land for BNG offsetting and will inform future strategies for biodiversity enhancement.

Wokingham Borough Council requested TVERC to conduct baseline BNG surveys of a large area of land identified for enhancement. This land is intended to serve as an extension to the existing Rooks Nest Wood Country Park Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG), which helps relieve pressure on protected heathlands by providing alternative greenspace.



Communications

 **779**

TVERC mailing list
subscribers

 **833** ^{7%}
Instagram 
followers

 **843** ^{4%}
Facebook 
followers

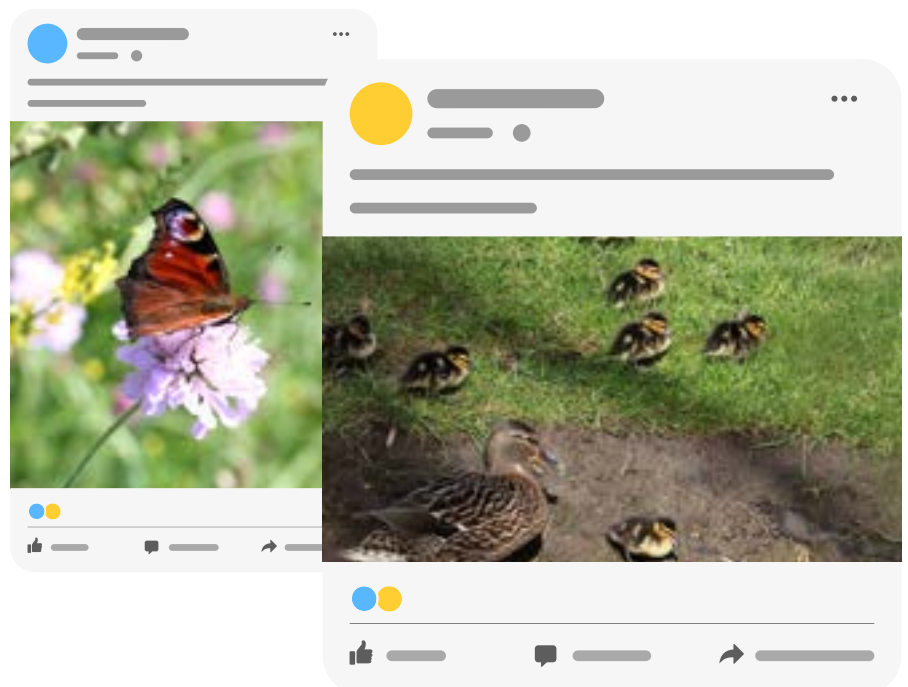
 **664** ^{11%}
LinkedIn 
followers

 **691** ^{28%}
BlueSky 
followers

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

We continue to strengthen our communications to support TVERC's role as the central hub for biological recording in Berkshire and Oxfordshire. We're focused on showcasing our services and 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.

Our bi-monthly news bulletin showcases our involvement in a wide range of projects and shares conservation news and updates from across Berkshire and Oxfordshire. Alongside this, we maintain a regular presence across our core social media platforms. Earlier this year, we closed our X account in line with Oxfordshire County Council's wider decision to withdraw from the platform, as outlined in the Council's press statement. We would like to thank everyone who engaged with us there and continues to support TVERC through our other channels.



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.

“ I have volunteered for TVERC for nearly 5 years now and absolutely love it. I work from home for 1 day a week so have flexibility on days and times worked. ”

Katie Jenks, TVERC Volunteer

 **12**
Volunteers

 **80**
Volunteer days

£13,287
Equivalent cost


Financial Summary


	25/26	24/25	23/24
Income			
Local authorities SLA	167,950	154,061	146,452
Environment Agency SLA	17,021	16,525	15,859
Commercial data searches	248,451	199,287	204,695
Commercial data licences	19,145	17,644	49,838
Projects	157,786	166,304	126,750
Donations	956	942	877
Reserve funding	70,000	20,000	69,209
Total	681,309	574,763	613,681
Expenditure			
Salaries, expenses, training	690,903	486,629	465,183
Project expenses	161	1,223	2,026
Overheads	5,218	6,790	4,192
Premises (paid 'in kind' by OCC)	18,822	18,274	17,404
Recorders Fund and Conference	5,472	4,873	3,887
Investment in service	6,686	17,663	16,017
Total	727,262	535,452	508,709

Stay in touch

Thames Valley Environmental
Records Centre (TVERC)

c/o Oxfordshire County Council

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