

**Bristol
Regional
Environmental
Records
Centre**



Annual Report 2005/06

BRERC receives funding and support from Bristol City Council, Bath & North-East Somerset Council, North Somerset Council, South Gloucestershire Council, English Nature, Environment Agency and the Avon Wildlife Trust.

BRERC staff:

Manager - Tim Corner
Assistant Manager – Daniel Marshall
Biodiversity Records Officer – Helen Davies

Call-out staff employed during 2005/06:

Helen Davies	Jenny Dowell
Martin Evans	Roger Edmondson
Caroline Harrison	Libby Houston
Emma Koblizek	Jon Mortin
Nick Hudson	Jo Illsley
Lindsay Moore	Bee Peters

Volunteers during 2005/06:

Daisy Bickley	Rob Davison
Emma Koblizek	Mary Hill
Caroline Hope	Margaret Howarth
Jon Mortin	Nick Hudson
Duncan Parker	Hazel Robins
Andrew Round	Susan Sayers
Ralph Stabb	Nikki Terrett
Jenny Webb	Margaret Whellams

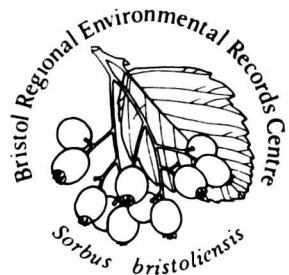
Report compiled by Jo Illsley and Daniel Marshall

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Bristol Regional Environmental Records Centre (BRERC)

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Bristol Regional Environmental Records Centre (BRERC) is a not-for-profit partnership organisation that collects, manages and distributes data on behalf of four unitary authorities; Bristol, Bath & North East Somerset, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire.

Data is collected from a wide variety of sources – members of the public, consultants, national agencies etc. This data is, where possible, digitised onto computers: either onto BRERC's main database or using mapping software. All data is validated and verified before being digitised, and all digitising is double-checked.

A wide range of people and organisations request data from us for a variety of reasons - simple species distributions for research, enquiring about protected species on a site with regard to a planning application, or sophisticated analysis towards a regional understanding of biodiversity in relation to development control.

BRERC is also part of a national network of local record centres (LRCs), within the National Biodiversity Network (NBN) and as such we have responsibilities to the UK-wide partnerships of conservation organisations. We also provide advice on standards and methods to the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC), NBN and other national organisations.

At the end of the financial year 2003/4 a new five-year joint agreement for BRERC has been agreed between Bath & North East Somerset Council, Bristol City Council, North Somerset Council, South Gloucestershire Council, Avon Wildlife Trust, English Nature and the Environment Agency. This new agreement provides essential long-term stability for staff, partners and the centre, enabling effective and efficient resource management to meet the needs of users particularly at a time when there is more demand for our services.

For our partners we provide the following services:

1. Support to biodiversity action plan (BAP) process and other partnership projects.
2. Data collection
 - support to recorders and recording groups, providing forms, publishing data
 - programmes and events to promote wildlife recording
 - support for community and youth groups interested in wildlife and wildlife recording
 - pro-active surveys
 - training in biodiversity, geology and related technology.
3. Data management
 - a repository for environmental information gained during environmental impact assessments (EIAs), or any other survey, or any *ad hoc* records submitted by groups, members of the public, consultants etc
 - management of all data and, where possible, digitisation to national standards.
4. Data dissemination
 - an enquiry service about wildlife related issues for partners, consultants, members of the public, students etc
 - data to screen planning applications against; notable species and designated sites and habitats are provided on CD for use on the ecologists' desktop
 - regular updates of data, plus additional digitised material.

In addition to our core work; as charged work, we provide survey teams to survey sites and gather species records; and contract staff to carry out desk-top analysis of data and aerial photographs, digitising of habitats etc. To our partners we provide this work at-cost (i.e. not including overheads). We now enter field data generated through our surveys directly onto the main database as part of the report writing procedure. This means that survey data is available for almost instant use, rather than the data being entered from the paper report at a later date.

We also charge for the time spent in providing data to consultants, and others who are using data for commercial purposes. We do not charge for our time in providing data to members of the public, community groups, other conservation groups etc. As a not-for-profit organisation any surplus income is used to support the core work programme.

2.0 ADMINISTRATION

BRERC are administered by a Joint Advisory Committee consisting of members of the four funding councils and representatives from other partnership organisations.

A Steering Group meets quarterly, consisting of officers of the four unitary authorities, and representatives from the English Nature, Avon Wildlife Trust and the Environment Agency. Bristol City Council host BRERC and provide line management, personnel and payroll services.

IT

More staff and volunteers with skilled needs have put more pressure than ever before on BRERC's IT systems, and our systems have had to grow and adapt to cope with this.

The major achievement over the last year has been setting up a MapInfo maintenance agreement with MapInfo Corporation, which means that for an annual sum our GIS systems are always up to date. As well as having 7 full licenses, we have negotiated 'charity' rates and are therefore able to purchase new licenses at half the usual price.

Alongside this, we have a new network attached storage system for BRERC data that cost only a quarter of the old system yet holds 50 times more data, in a safe, secure fashion. BRERC was beginning to run out of networked computer storage space, so the new system was much needed.

BRERC purchased several computers in a short period of time four years ago, and these machines are now beginning to show their age. As part of a programme of ongoing replacement and to ensure staff have adequate equipment to process some of the huge datasets we have been dealing with recently (eg: RSS work, Field Boundaries Project parish mapping), four new powerful computers with 3 year warranties have been purchased in the last year to replace the older machines. The new computers are cosmetically refurbished machines and have been purchased at an extremely low price point.



The old computers have been retained in anticipation of having more available space and volunteers in the future, either through our move to new offices or through deployment as satellite data entry systems.

Flat screen TFT monitors have also been purchased for a variety of reasons, including health and safety (reduced eyestrain, easier adjustment), visible screen size (larger and higher resolution than old CRT monitors), functionality (ability to swivel through 90 degrees to create and print portrait maps) and environment (Use over 70% less space and energy than conventional monitors).

The purchase of a networked colour laser printer means high quality mapped output can be produced from any computer on the BRERC network. In survey season, for example, this has made multiple staff producing different reports at the same time a possibility, whereas in the past staff would have had to wait for a printer to be available, and then swap computers to access the one colour printer – which led to many delays and inefficiencies.

The BRERC website continues to be an extremely important tool for communicating with all our users and saves us many hours in explaining various procedures, for example, submitting a data enquiry. At the time of writing the website is undergoing a major overhaul in order to make all the pages more accessible to all our users.

We are also pleased to report that there have been no virus or security problems due to our automated firewalls and anti-virus systems.

Staff

This year has seen a number of developments in staffing organisation. In May 2005 interviews were carried out to complete the requisite number of available staff on our Call-Out Register. The standard of application was very high and more than ten new members of staff joined the register. Abigail Pedlow, the Assistant Manager left on maternity leave in March and the post of Assistant Manger was advertised to cover this period. Daniel Marshall, the Biodiversity Records Officer has taken the position on a fixed term contract that left his old position vacant. This post is being covered by Helen Davies from the 1st July 2006.



Staff development

In addition to the in-house training (see 4.3.4) two staff attended a course on Amphibian Surveying and Monitoring. All volunteers and staff are given the opportunity to attend in-house training.

Accommodation

BRERC is expecting to have to move out of its current offices based at Ashton Court by the 31st August 2006.

The search for new accommodation looks to have finally come to an end with the identification of the top floor of the Central Library in Bristol as a suitable new location for BRERC to be housed. The formal paperwork is still being completed at the time of writing, but informally the decision to move to the library has been approved by those involved in the process.

Although car parking is an issue, and some volunteers may be discouraged by the central location, the new offices potential benefits far outweigh any disadvantages. The space available far exceeds that of BRERC's current offices, and will allow us to expand into the future. As we have been stating for many years that space is an issue, it is particularly pleasing that we have been able to secure the library offices, where we can obtain new filing cabinets and desks without worrying if they will fit.



The connections in terms of IT are also perfect for our needs. There are BT phone lines, allowing us to continue our present services with regards to telephone and broadband internet. We will have to lay a computer network to continue our present operations.

Currently, all the costs of relocation are being borne by BRERC. These include removal costs, laying of a computer network, phone redirection/administration charges, additional filing cabinets and publicising our new location. Also not to be forgotten is the staff time and effort used in the move, and the potential downtime for BRERC as an organisation.

As the formal paperwork is not quite finalised, BRERC staff are at the earliest stages of preparing for the move. The aim is to move sometime towards the middle or end of August, and in the lead up to this time, BRERC will inevitably suffer increasing disruption as systems have to be cleaned up, shut down, moved to the new premises and reinstated. We would ask for all our users, the Steering Group and the JAC to be especially supportive and understanding during this process.

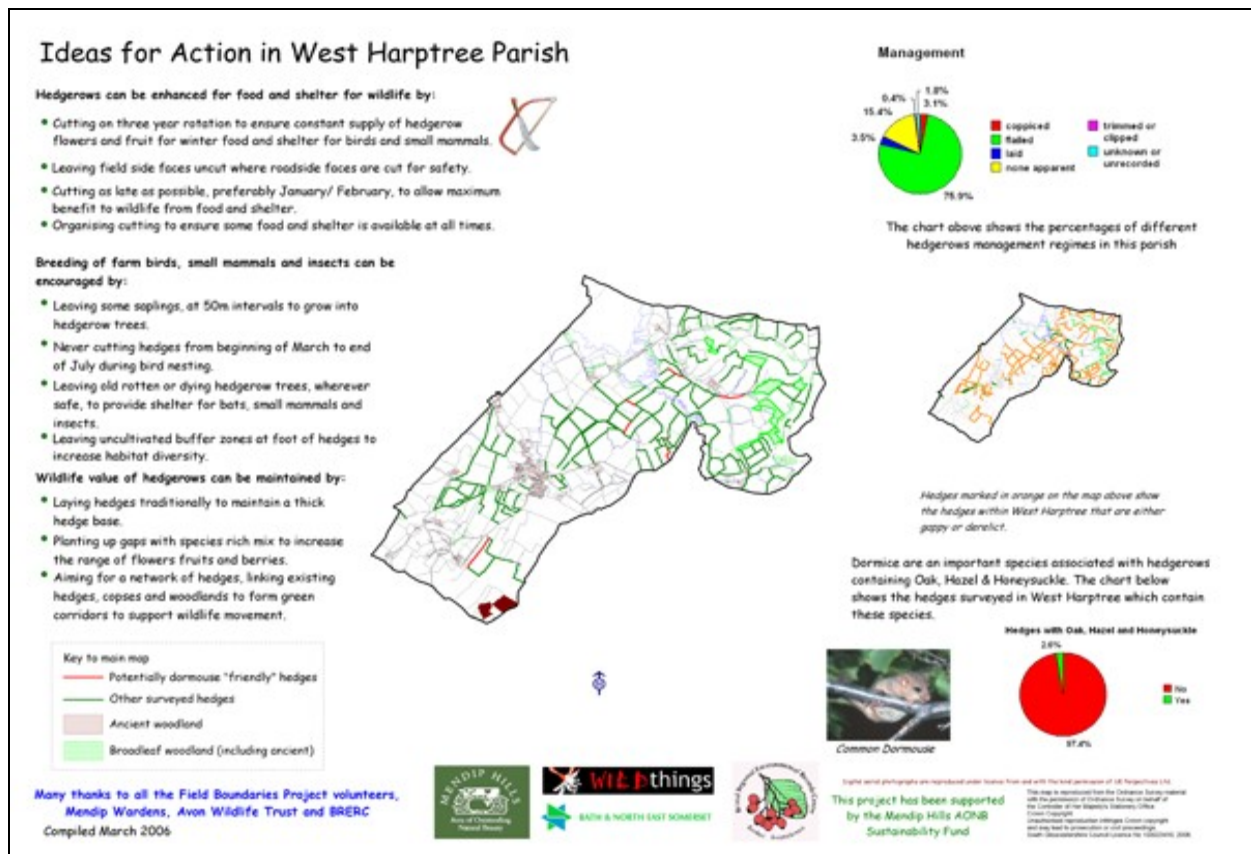
3.0 OVERVIEW OF 2005/6

Project Work

BRERC has been a key partner in a number of externally funded projects this year. The **Field Boundaries Project** has involved extensive surveying by volunteers of hedgerows in South Gloucestershire, B&NES and North Somerset, whilst another HLF funded project, **Dormice on your Doorstep** has required BRERC to identify and digitally map hedgerows in B&NES containing plant species which support Dormice. Funding from the **Mendip Hills AONB** has also been directed towards this work. The resulting data is being collated and managed by BRERC. Approximately 30,000 records have been generated by these projects so far and it has significantly enhanced the value of information that we are able to provide on the hedgerows in our area (**See Figure 1**). As part of this work BRERC has created a series of Parish Maps illustrating the wildlife value and species diversity of hedgerows in 8 parishes to date.

We have also been working with the Forest of Avon and our partners, Avon Wildlife Trust to map the **Green Infrastructure** of Avon. BRERC's involvement has been essentially in a GIS capacity by collating all the data we hold on public access and privately owned green space in the region, creating a programming tool to navigate the data and producing maps to illustrate the findings of the report.

Figure 1 – Example of Parish Map



LRC News

BRERC presented at the second LRC conference in September and is represented on the steering group of the newly formed national association of LRCs. An independent management consultant, Charles Copp of Environmental Information Management was recently commissioned to carry out an audit for accreditation to the Local Records Centre Accreditation Scheme. The audit report is in the process of being written and will be available shortly.

Enquiries

This year enquiry income has remained fairly stable compared to last year. This is partly a result of a consistently applied charging policy but also reflects the sustained demand from enquirers working in the development sector. BRERC continues to supply an accurate, comprehensive and professional service to this sector.

Local Sites

BRERC has provided updates of site and species electronic data to the four local authorities, Environment Agency and English Nature. Work is continuing with the local authority ecologists to establish a process of local site designation and an electronic SNCI Register.

Publications

This year also saw progress on the future publication of '*Moths of the Bristol Region*', the third in the Wildlife of the Bristol Region series, following on from the publication of the Butterfly and Flora books in recent years

Satellite Sites

We are continuing to work with Avon Wildlife Trust to have 2 satellite copies of our database which holds data for their sites and allows them to input additional data at their offices which is then integrated into our main database.

One Day One Record

There was a good response to our 'One Day One Record' event held in the summer. It attracted good publicity and increased our records for Himalayan Balsam by 27%.

Regional Work

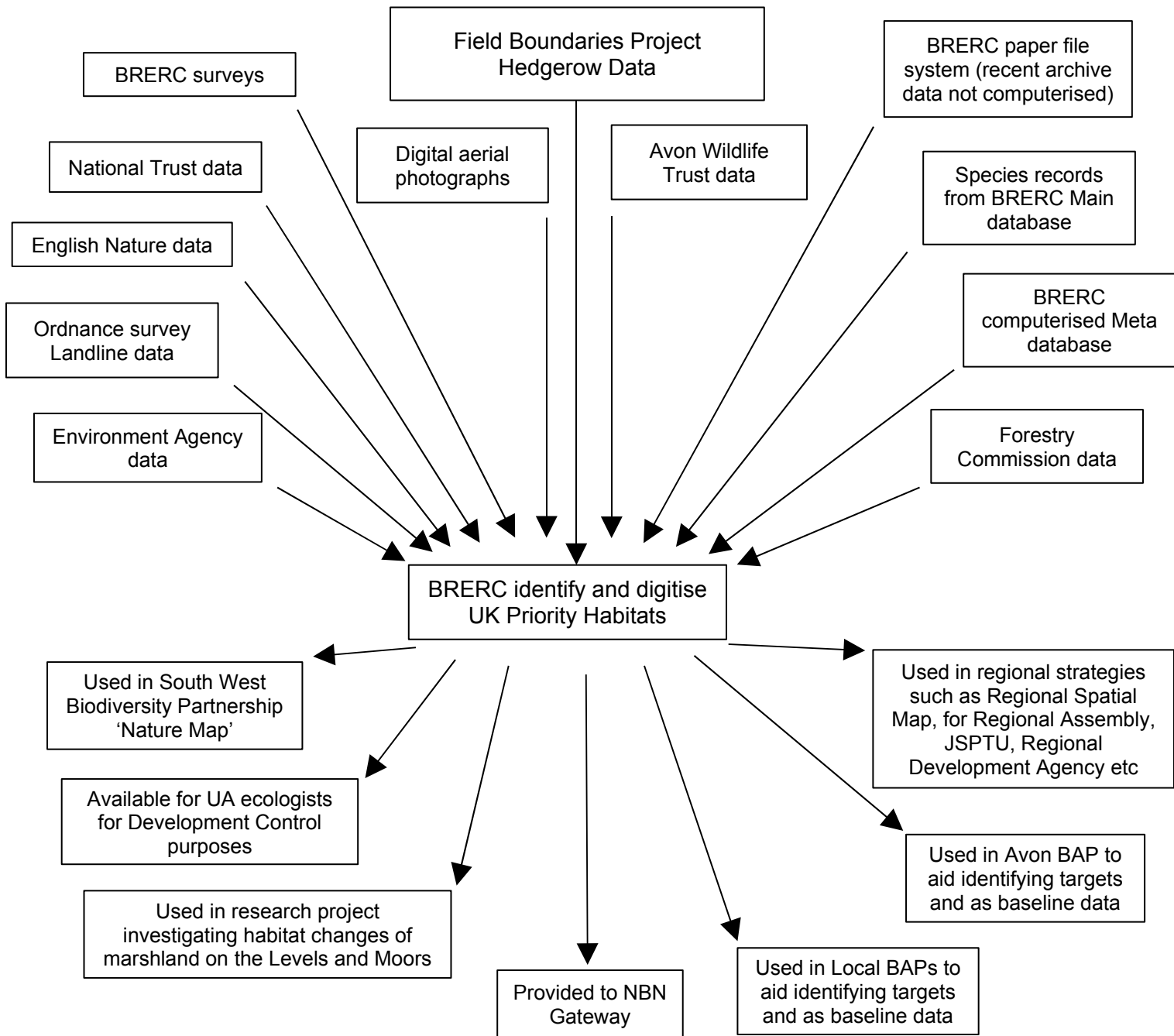
At the request of the South West Biodiversity Partnership, BRERC coordinated the review of the target figures for BAP Priority Habitats across the South West. This involved liaising with agencies and organisations throughout the region to agree and implement a methodology to produce biodiversity targets. The data analysis was carried out by BRERC and the resulting targets have now been incorporated into the Regional Spatial Strategy. BRERC's report has been submitted as the South West's response to the UK BAP review.



The successful application of this work led on to us being asked by the Southwest Biodiversity Partnership and the Rural Development Service to carry out analysis of data to assess what area of BAP Priority Habitat falls within Agri-Environment Schemes and Sites of Special Scientific Interest. This has been carried out and the information is being used in planning how the South West biodiversity targets are to be delivered.

This work has also means BRERC is well placed to put together a funding bid for a five year project to survey, digitally map and update the Priority Habitat sites in Avon. The methodology used in the regional analysis provides a structure in which to approach this project and the framework to deliver the results effectively.

Figure 1. Example of how externally funded work benefits others



4.0 AREAS OF WORK

4.1 Local Plans

BRERC provide data that is used to produce all local plans and is provided to planners and ecologists within each local authority. Ecologists are regularly provided with notable species information and habitat data as GIS layers.

Surveys of Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI) were carried out for Bristol City Council to assess sites with regard to favourable condition status. GIS information was updated and data was entered onto the main database during the report writing stage, making it available to all enquirers.

Surveying of selected SNCI's for B&NES council to inform their local plan was carried out early in 2005.

A SNCI/WS database is in production. This will hold details of all locally designated sites, and will be provided to all ecologists to enable them to clearly see the information held for each site and the date of the last survey, allowing them to prioritise future survey work.

4.2 Partnerships

BRERC advise and support the following partnership projects including:

- *Avon Biodiversity Partnership*
Member of the partnership, provide baseline data, input to biodiversity action plans and mapping of target areas
- *South West Biodiversity Partnership*
Tim Corner represents all seven South West LRCs on this partnership. BRERC has been instrumental in the review and setting of South West biodiversity targets.
- *South Gloucestershire Biodiversity Action Plan*
- *Bristol LA21 Biodiversity topic group*
- *B&NES Wildthings*
Core, Species & Habitats and Monitoring & Tracking groups
- *Wildspaces – South Glos and B&NES*
- *North Somerset Biodiversity Action Plan*

Member of steering group.

- *B&NES Batscapes*
Member of partnership, provide data, provide IT support and database advice. Provide volunteer time for data entry.
- *B&NES and South Gloucestershire Field Boundaries Project*
Member of partnership, enter data and digitise hedgerows, produce parish maps indicating good quality hedgerows, management advice and notable species information.
- *B&NES Dormouse on your Doorstep project*
Member of partnership, provide data, provide IT support and database advice. Provide volunteer time for data entry, support training event, provide support for survey packs
- *Green Infrastructure*

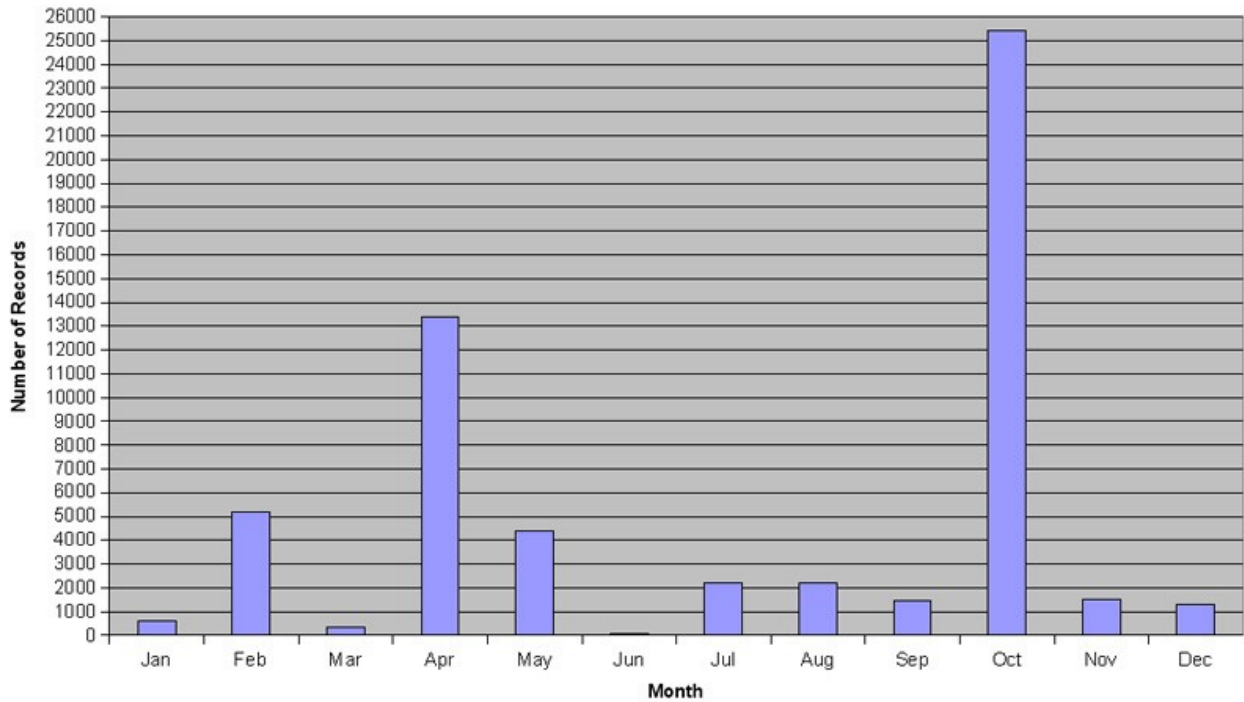
BRERC are also Trustees of the Bristol Naturalists' Society.

4.3 Data collection

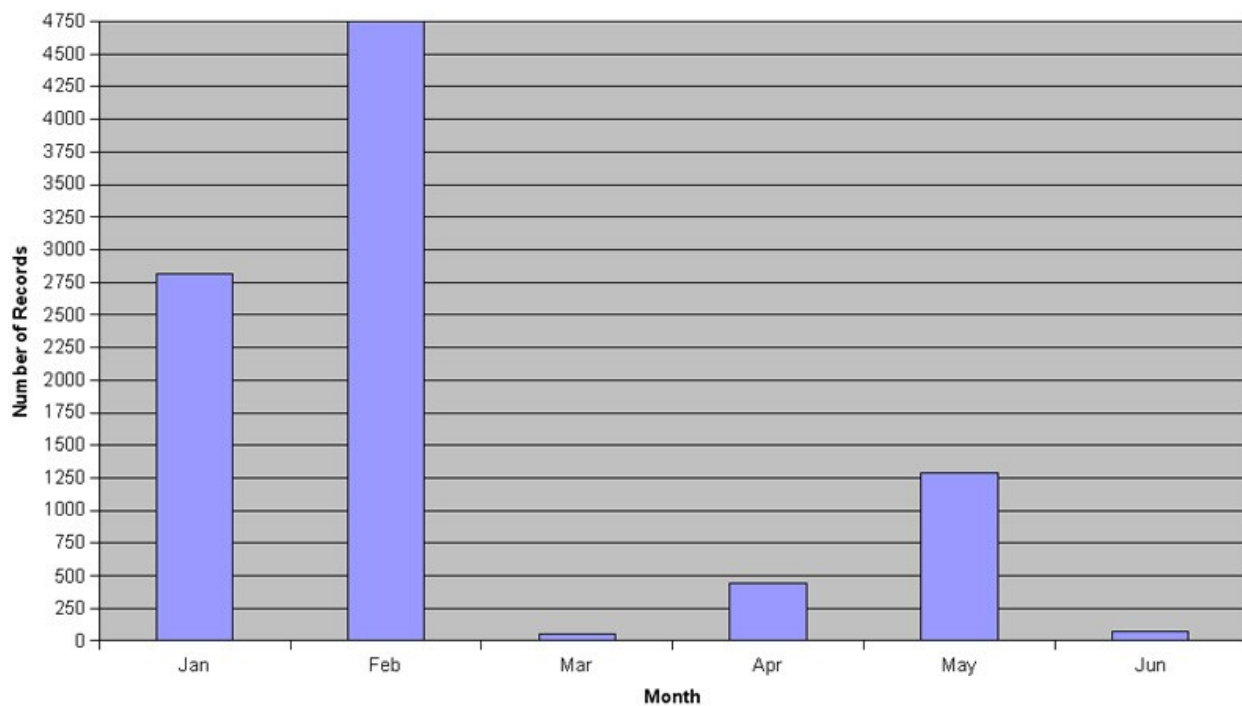
We aim to encourage wildlife recording in the area, to ensure that decision-makers have access to complete, up-to-date information where possible.

The number of records received by BRERC in 2005 and 2006 is shown on the following graphs.

Number of Records received per month (2005)



Number of Records Received per Month (2006)



4.3.1 Surveys

In addition to the surveys commissioned by the Local Authorities, BRERC has carried out several pro-active surveys. A school pond in North Somerset was surveyed for Great Crested Newts and Knowle Wood in North Somerset was surveyed as a training exercise for BRERC staff and volunteers. BRERC staff also attended a Dormouse training day where the identification and recording of Dormice was discussed and demonstrated.

4.3.2 Community & Youth Groups

BRERC support and advise the following community and youth groups including:

- *Parish Wildlife Wardens (N Somerset)*
Steering Group member, provide advice, maps and training.
- *Southville Centre (Bristol)*
Provided specially designed maps and forms to encourage wildlife recording.
- *Manor Road Community Woodland (B&NES)*
Provided training on mollusc surveys, specially designed maps and forms, survey report on the woodland.

4.3.3 Promoting Wildlife Recording

One Day One Record

BRERC held a 'One Day One Record' event. This initiative is designed to raise awareness of wildlife recording, particularly of species groups that are under-represented on the main database, and to encourage people to send in just one record on one day, because even that small effort adds to the knowledge of where species live.

Overall, the event was extremely successful, as a result of the publicity generated; half the records were from people who hadn't submitted records before. Long-term analysis is needed to show if any of these people turn in to regular wildlife recorders.

Bristol Festival of Nature

In October BRERC had a stand at the festival and over two days we met many people and made a lot of useful contacts. Many leaflets about BRERC were given away to members of the public, and we sold a fair number of BRERC publications.

Newsletter

The BRERC newsletter was produced twice during the year, and sent out to nearly 900 addresses. Our mailing database continues to grow and we ensure that all active recorders are added to the mailing list.

BRERC newsletters back to 2002 are available to download from the BRERC website.



4.3.4 Lifelong learning

BRERC have continued to offer internal training to staff, and the opportunity to attend has also been extended to members of the steering group, the wider partnership, and for some events, to the wider recording community. Avon Wildlife Trust staff and the unitary authority ecologists in particular have attended these.

Courses carried out during 2005/06 included:

- Latin for Surveyors
- Preparing for Field Survey
- Introduction to Mosses
- Field Surveying Techniques
- Report Writing

The Manager and Assistant Manager gave talks to local groups to promote the work of the record centre and encourage recording of wildlife.

4.3.5 Recorder support

BRERC provide a secretariat for, and help administer, the following recording groups:

- Avon Butterfly Group
- Bristol and District Moth Group
- Avon Flora Group
- Avon Regionally Important Geological & Geomorphological Sites group
- Avon Reptile and Amphibian Group
- Bristol Region Dragonfly Recording Scheme
- Bristol & District Hoverfly Group

A new Lower Plants group is also planned.

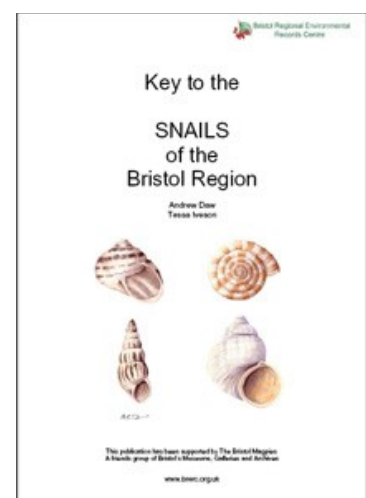
As well as managing records sent in by recorders to us, we send out recording forms with our newsletter twice a year.

We have produced a new recording card for plants, with updated scientific names and indication of notable species and invasive species. We plan to roll out a complete suite of re-designed forms over the next year or so. Clear forms are important in helping our recorders send us clear records, and help speed up data entry. As new forms are produced they are being made available on the BRERC website in .pdf format – enabling recorders to download and print forms at their own convenience.

A Key to the Snails of the Bristol Region has been produced and is available directly from BRERC for a small cost or for free to download from the BRERC website.

We also help and support the following groups by providing data management services, and/or performing data searches for them, and/or providing them with existing data:

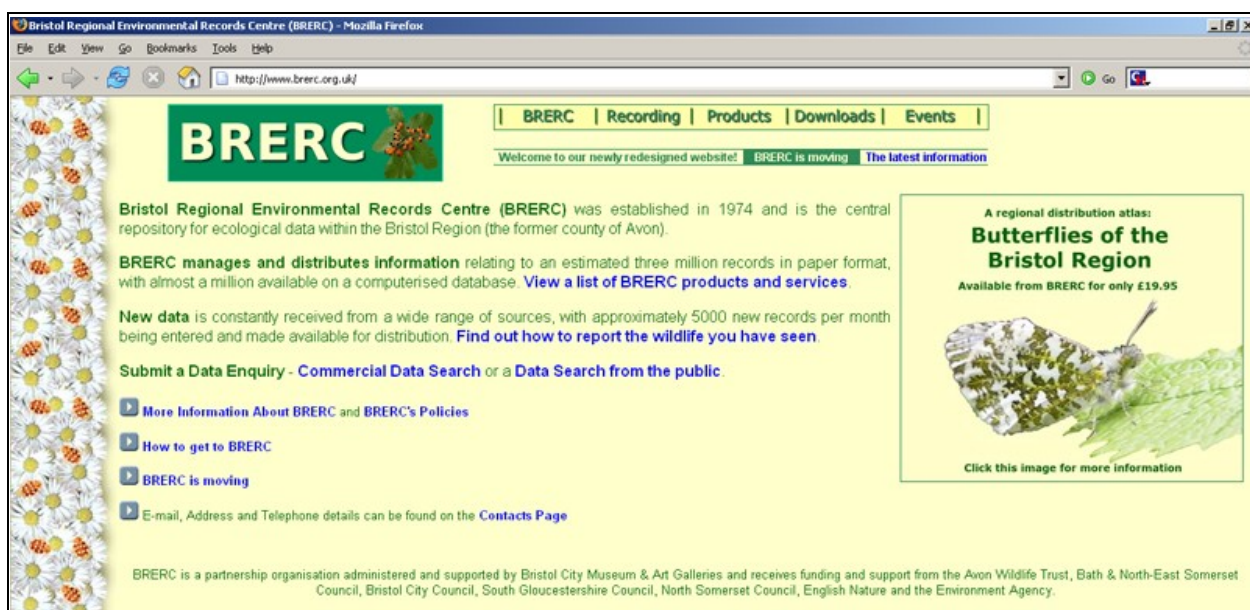
- Avon Bat Group
- Somerset Rare Plants Group
- Bristol Avon Otter Survey
- Bristol Naturalists' Society
- North Somerset Otter Group
- Bristol Ornithological Group
- Bath Natural History Society
- Somerset Butterfly Group
- YACWAG
- West Country Branch Butterfly Conservation



4.3.6 Website

The BRERC website is a wonderful working tool for staff at BRERC. We save vast amounts of time through being able to direct enquirers and recorders to the website and all the information it contains, hence reducing the time taken explaining this ourselves.

The website has been maintained and improved, including the pages belonging to the recording groups. New material is regularly added including newsletters in Adobe Acrobat pdf format. Recorders are increasingly using the website to submit data. The website has receives an average of about 60 visits per day.



We have also recently improved the records submission form on the website, so that it now generates a custom 'Thank You' page, confirming the information that you have just sent, and inviting you to return to the BRERC home page or submit another record.

4.4 Data management

4.4.1 Main database

Currently the main database holds almost a million records. Our data management techniques ensure that data flow is sustained, with time lag between data being entered onto data entry databases and transfer to main database much reduced. Our data entry procedure is now fully documented and a copy of the full procedure is given to all data entry volunteers for reference. We have also colour coded our filing for data entry so that more recent data can be prioritised for entry. Data from BRERC surveys is entered at the report-writing stage, speeding up the accessibility of BRERC data compared to data from other organisations and agencies.

4.4.2 MapInfo GIS Layers

MapInfo is the GIS mapping software that we use at BRERC. In addition to notable species and site information, we now have GIS layers for Phase 1, Priority Habitats, Badger setts, ponds and hedgerows. These layers are continually updated with new records which allow us to respond to enquiries by running queries on our data and presenting up to date wildlife information in adaptable and innovative ways.



RIGS

Where new RIGS sites have been identified through projects and reviews; the digitised boundaries have included qualitative information in the browser tables about the site and why it has been selected as a RIGS site. We have gone back through the previously existing RIGS and added this information to browser tables. Again, this improves the value of data that is supplied to data enquirers and to our partners.



4.4.3 Geological paper files

Over time some anomalies have built up between geological site records held at BRERC and at the museum (the original location of all records). Nick Hudson, a BRERC volunteer, has worked on aligning the museum's records to those of BRERCs and providing recommendations on improvements to 'joined up' data management of RIGS and non-RIGS geological sites. Another volunteer has gone through the geology files and scanned in photographs which will now be available to the local authority ecologists and members of the RIGS group.

4.4.4 Backlog

Currently, in the paper filing system, there is a backlog of data to digitise. This comprises data collected before routine computerisation was possible, and also very large datasets that would be extremely time-consuming to digitise. Digitising this data would increase the efficiency of the record centre, enabling more accurate analysis of trends over time to be derived from our data sources, and make them accessible for all. We are always working to try and make inroads into this backlog, and due to our various systems and procedures, plus the dedication and hard work of our volunteers, we are able to make a positive impact with relatively few resources.

4.5. Enquiry service

Number of enquiries

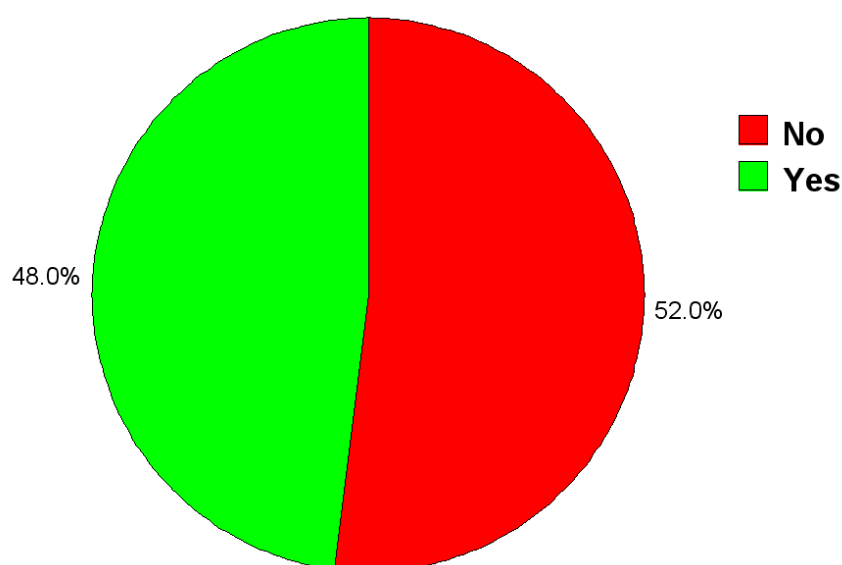
The new systems for recording enquiries now enable us to be more accurate in our reporting of the number and type of enquiries. Two hundred and seventy-seven enquiries were logged in the year. These range from five-minute enquiries answering simple questions, to enquiries that take several days to perform.

Income from enquiries – this year and over time

All data searches from our partners, members of the public and conservation organisations are not charged. Only organisations using the data for commercial purposes are charged for the time spent in carrying out the data search. The number of charged enquiries has risen in the past couple of years.

Charged of Non charged enquiries

Enquiries - Charged vs Not Charged 2005/06



The income from charged data enquiries went up significantly this year. **Table 1** shows the increase; both year-on-year, and since 2000-01.

Table 1. Income from enquiries

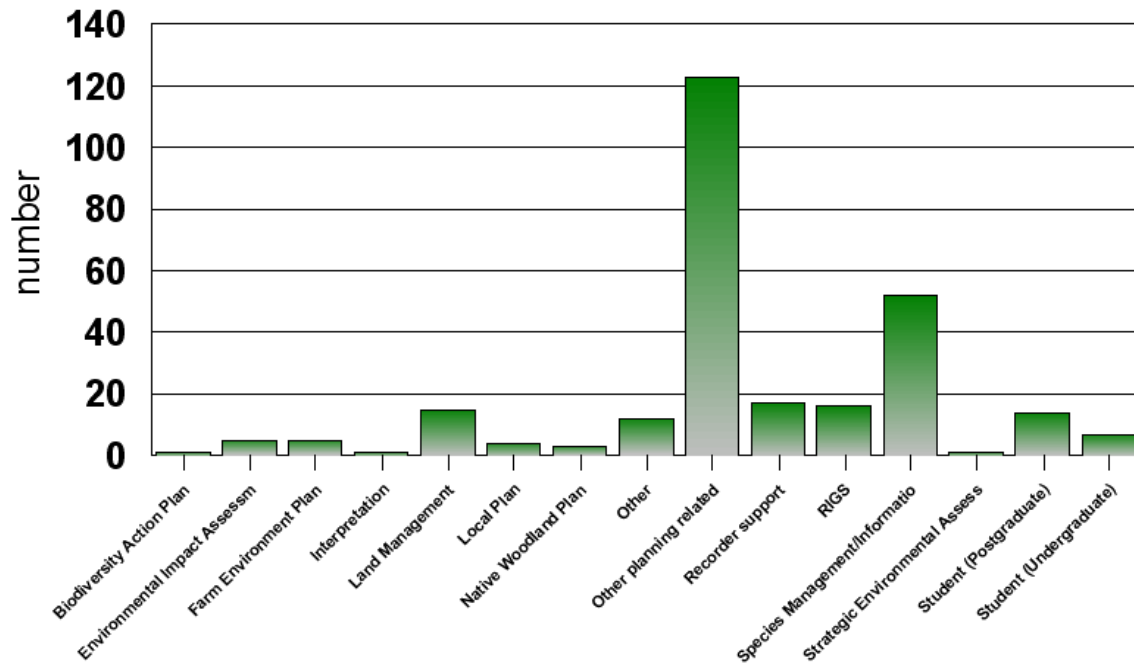
year	enquiry income	% increase/decrease year-on-year	% increase from 00-01
2000-2001	£6,348.14		
2001-2002	£7,780.00	22.56	22.56
2002-2003	£9,850.00	26.61	55.16
2003-2004	£16,094.00	63.39	153.52
2004-2005	£9,630.00	-40.17	51.70
2005-2006	£17,753.74	184.36	179.67

The minimum charge for an enquiry rose to £85 (from £75) in mid-2004. There are currently no plans to increase this further. The full enquiry charging policy is available on the BRERC website. The enquiries and associated administration amount to approximately a full-time job at BRERC, with additional support from the finance teams at the Museum, and Bristol City Council.

Reasons for Enquiries

Planning and development account for over a third of enquiries, then species management and information – this category covers most of the phone enquiries from members of the public.

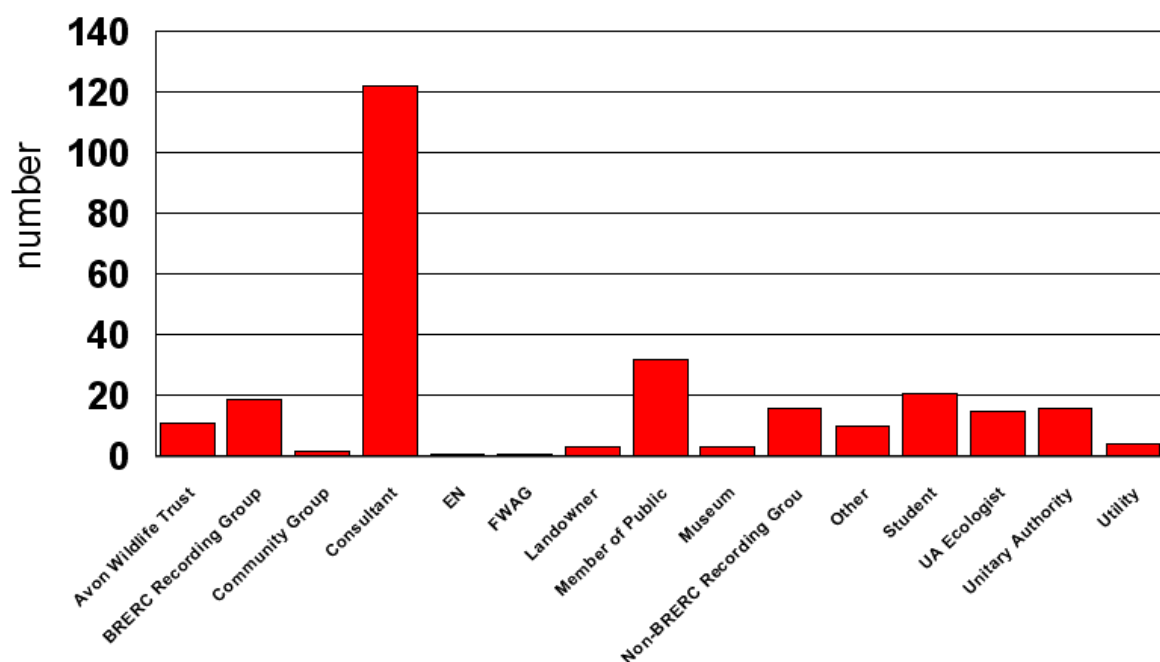
Enquiries - Reason for Enquiries 2005/06



Types of Enquirers

Consultants are the largest group of enquirers, followed by members of the public and the ecologists/nature conservation officers of the unitary authorities.

Enquiries - Type of Enquirer 2005/06



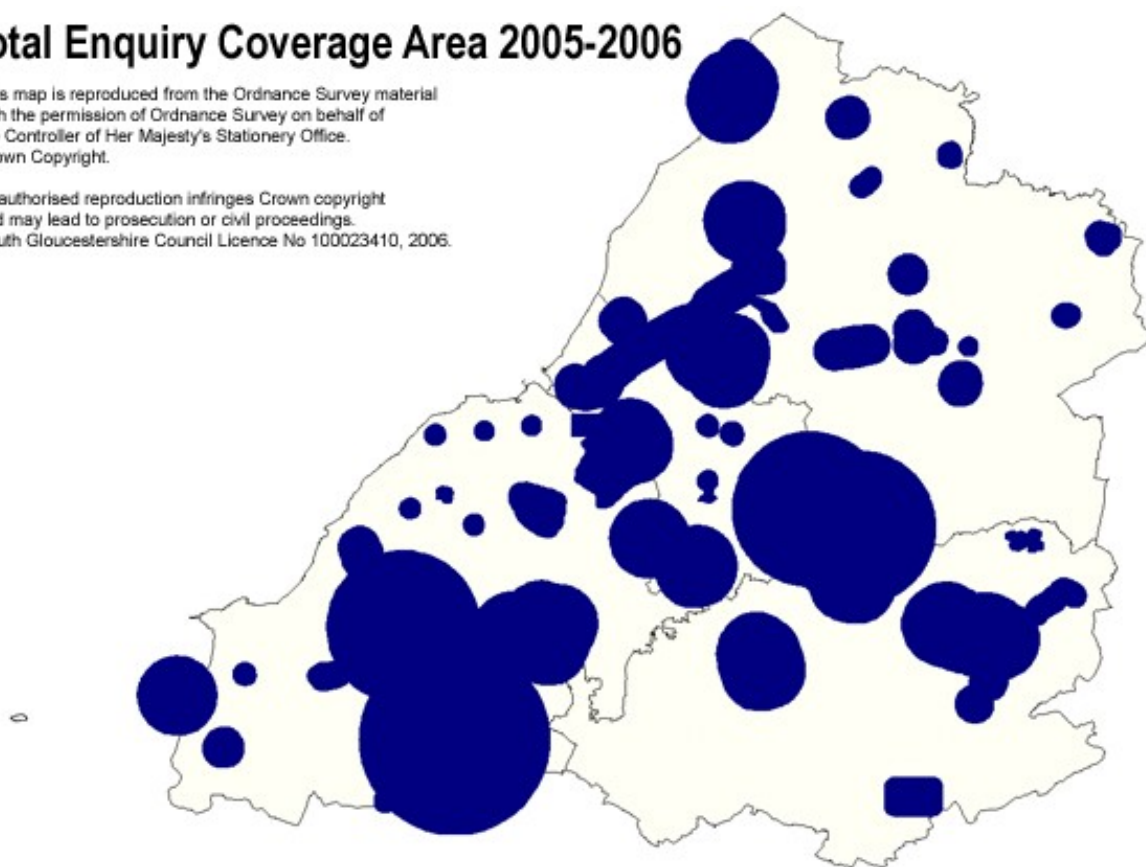
Distribution of enquiries

Enquiries were fairly evenly distributed over the four unitary authority areas, with North Somerset again generating most enquiries.

Total Enquiry Coverage Area 2005-2006

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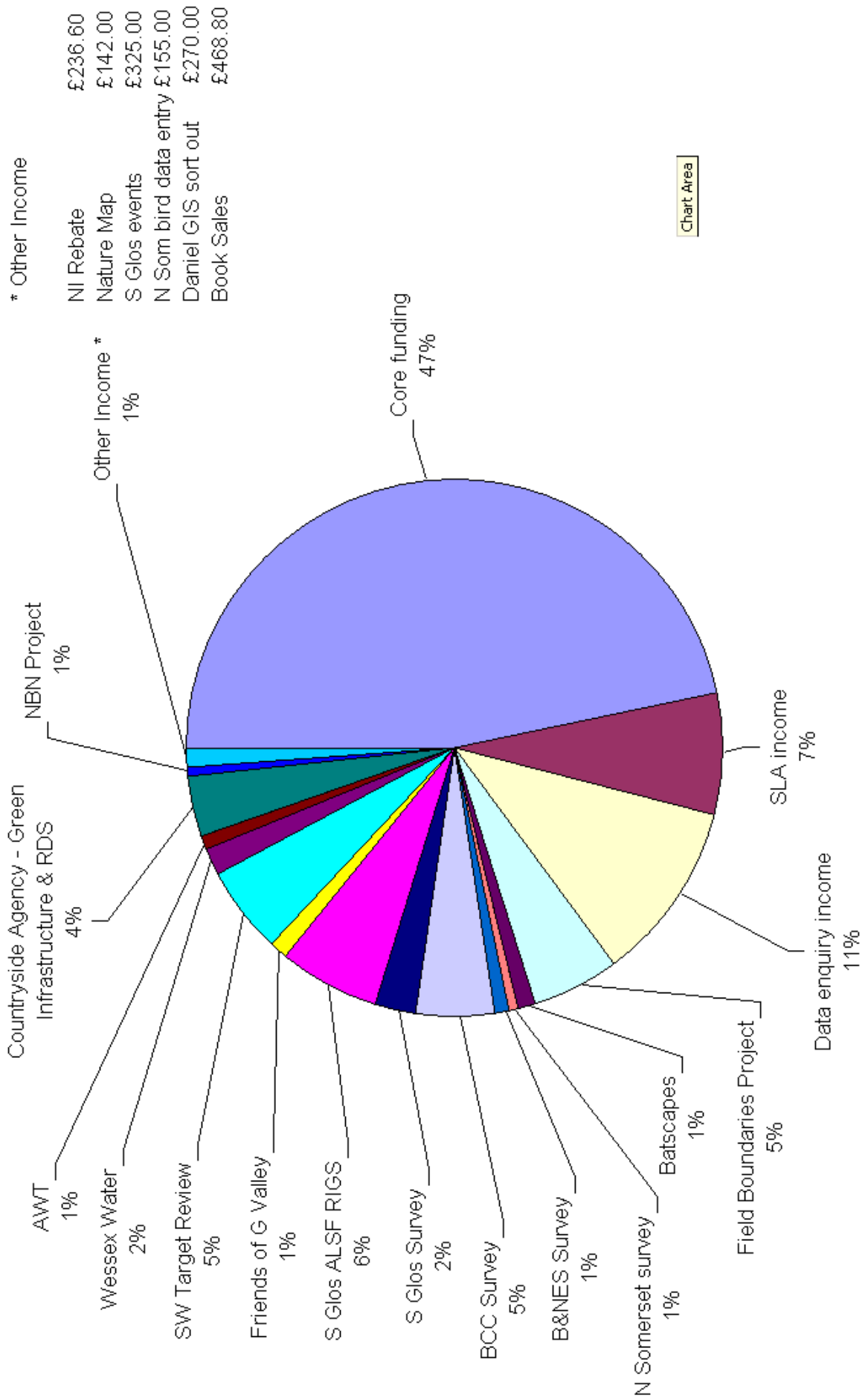
5.0 INCOME & EXPENDITURE 2005/06

Contract income in this period was high, and combined with a strong year for charged data enquiries, BRERC finances have been fairly easy to manage. It is expected that BRERC will carry forward a substantial surplus, which will go towards covering expenses incurred by moving and covering maternity leave.

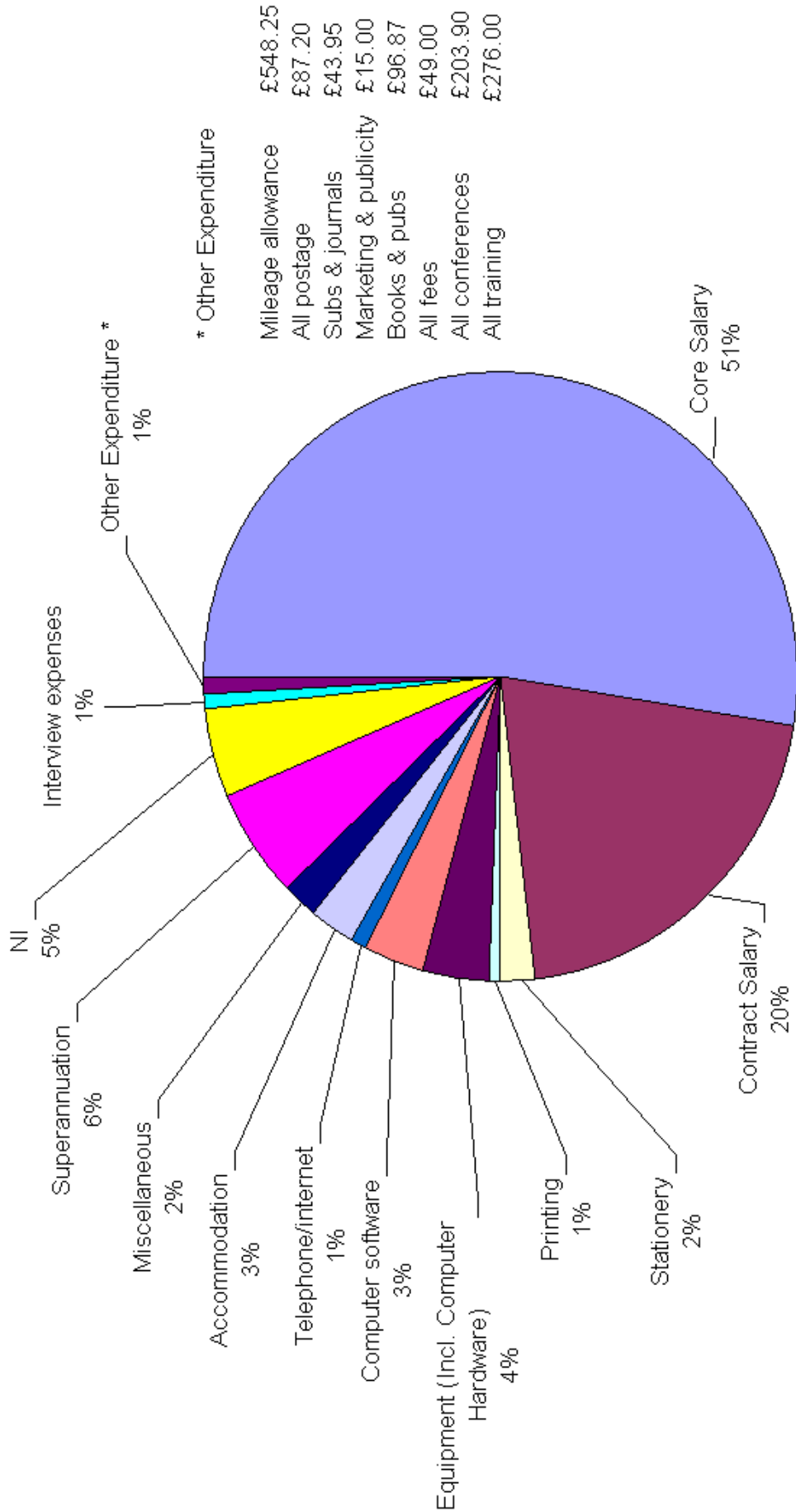
Because income was relatively strong, BRERC have been able to invest towards building a solid IT infrastructure. Our purchases are directly geared towards ensuring that staff have access to the equipment they need to do their jobs as efficiently as possible, and we always search out the best value for money. Examples of purchases over the past year include a network colour laser printer and three new powerful computers. The former allows all members of staff access to colour printing (vital in survey report production) whilst without the latter we would have struggled to perform our analysis for the South West Biodiversity Partnership, which required a lot of computer processing power to handle the huge South West datasets.

BRERC plans to publish the third book in the 'Wildlife of the Bristol Region' series later in 2006. Work on 'Moths of the Bristol Region' is well underway, and £2000 has been awarded to BRERC through grants to help with publication costs. However, the final cost is expected to be nearer £9000, and it has been suggested that we create a suspense account to hold the deficit, until the income through sales of the book offset the initial costs.

BRERC Income 05/06



BRERC Expenditure 05/06



6.0 The Year Ahead

6.1 Forward Plan

Continued work on a generic, core workplan for BRERC, as specified by our partners, is underway and will hopefully become a standard proforma that BRERC can use to plan the workplan at the beginning of each financial year.

6.2 National Association of Local Record Centres

BRERC intends to co-host (on behalf of the South West LRC's) a meeting of LRCs from all over the UK in order to discuss the continued process of developing the national association. The proposal is to host the meeting at a venue in Bristol.

6.3 Development of 'Core' Services

Normally our development work is restricted to contract and project work. However, this year we would like to pay more attention to developing our core services, in order to continue to provide an efficient and improving service. Examples of the work we aim to undertake includes:

- *Database and GIS development work through computer programming.* This will improve the methodology and ease of use with which we input and use data at BRERC.
- Continuing to develop the B&NES SNCI Register to make it a useful and accurate tool for checking the status of SNCI's in B&NES. BRERC then aims to roll this out to the other Local Authorities too.
- *Supplying BRERC digital species data to the National Biodiversity Network (NBN) website.* We will still have control over this data in that we can choose who sees the data and at what resolution, but making it available via a web-based mapping system gives us the potential to deliver information and services in new and exciting ways. We will be working with the NBN to enable enhanced facilities and access tools. An example of this is explained in **6.5** below.
- *Working with Local Authorities to make biodiversity information readily available.* Local Authorities are required to move towards making their data available via web-based systems. Currently we supply all the Authorities with GIS information, but for a variety of reasons this data is not accessed or interrogated as much as it might be. Along with the NBN work, we are hoping to develop and trial new systems that make it easy for those in local authorities who need this data to be able to access it with a minimum of training.

6.4 BRERC Satellites

BRERC's move to new premises is an exciting opportunity, but for some of our current volunteers (and potential volunteers) the Central Library is an inconvenient location.

BRERC would like to secure space in other buildings and offices in the Bristol region to house 'satellite' copies of our data entry databases (or indeed any other tasks), so that volunteers could continue to make a valuable contribution to BRERC without having to travel too far to do so.

Appropriate access and space for a desk and computer is all that is required, and BRERC hope to set up satellites at several places, including the City Museum and Art Gallery, over the next year.

6.5 BRERC Recording Groups

Due to time constraints, these have been neglected by BRERC over the past year, but we have plenty of ideas for breathing life back into them, increasing membership and stimulating interest. Our ideas are as follows:

- A weekend meeting where all the groups committee members would get together and discuss the way forward.
- Setting up individual field days for each of the groups to encourage both current and potential members.
- Making NBN Gateway mapping, using live data, available on the group pages of the BRERC website (see **6.3**).
- Targeting certain species for recording by the groups, and providing feedback on the results.

We are also seeking funding for a volunteer co-ordinator to manage these activities and maximise the benefit of voluntary work at BRERC.