



WEST WALES
BIODIVERSITY INFORMATION CENTRE
CANOLFAN WYBODAETH BIOAMRYWIAETH
GORLLEWIN CYMRU

Managers Annual Report

2019-20



Ceredigion



Pembrokeshire

Carmarthenshire



INTRODUCTION

This report covers the period April 2019 to March 2020. West Wales Biodiversity Information Centre (WWBIC) is a not for profit company limited by guarantee, Company No. 5741787. The company was established in 2006 as the fourth Local Record Centre in Wales to cover the West Wales region of Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire, and the aims of the company are to collect, collate, disseminate and manage the biodiversity information of the West Wales region for the public benefit. In response to the convention adopted by other record centres nationally, we are now known as Local Environmental Records Centres (LERCs)

The company operates from its office in Whitland, Carmarthenshire, employs four staff, and is governed by a voluntary board of directors who meet quarterly.

WWBIC Board of Directors at 31/03/2019

Jane Hodges	Chair
Nigel Ajax-Lewis	Company Secretary
Trevor Theobald	
Annie Haycock	
Lizzie Wilberforce	
Bob Haycock	
Huw Jones	
Fiona Lanc	
Chloe Griffiths	
Diana Clark	

In February we began to get an indication that it would be only a matter of time before the UK would be severely affected by the coronavirus pandemic and measures were taken to ensure that staff could work from home. From March 23rd 2020, our Whitland office was effectively closed to staff as the country went into lockdown.

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

WWBIC is supported financially by public sector partners drawn from all the Planning Authorities of the three counties of West Wales and by Welsh Government and WG Sponsored Bodies through our Service Level and Partnership Agreements. WWBIC provides information and services which contribute to these organisations meeting their statutory obligations under the legislation which governs conservation of habitats and species, most significantly, The Environment (Wales) Act 2016. In addition to our public sector support, we have agreements with utility and infrastructure companies, Dŵr Cymru and Network Rail. All our national agreements are negotiated and administered by LERC Wales, (The Consortium of Local Environmental Records Centres Wales).

A significant part of the business is site related data searches for consultant ecologists operating in the commercial sector. In addition to these searches, we occasionally receive requests from conservation organisations, students and academics who require species data for their work and research. Members of the public can access species data by making search requests directly to WWBIC and online through Aderyn, the Biodiversity Information and Reporting Database.

Our relationship with the recording community is very important. In supporting voluntary biological recording, LERCs facilitate the flow of records from the voluntary sector to decision makers. Our annual Recorders Forum brings together biological recorders from all over the West Wales region. In the period covered by this report, we have received records from Vice-county recorders, David Redhead, Robin Taylor, Richard and Kath Pryce, Stephen Evans, Lin Gander, David Bannister, and Sam Bosanquet, as well as many other voluntary recorders. (See Appendix 1) .

We have arranged six recording days, spread throughout the three counties, and four wildlife identification training sessions on; solitary bees and wasps, true bugs, late season flies, and flies and woodlice. In addition to these, we facilitated another three training sessions, one with Pembrokeshire Fungus Recording Network and two with Plantlife.



The Consortium of Local Environmental Records Centres Wales (LERC Wales) whose members are the four LERCs, is responsible for negotiating the national contracts and agreements. The four LERC managers, who represent their individual LERCs on the Board, share the lead negotiating roles with national partners. LERC Wales plays a strategic role through its presence at meetings with other strategic partners tasked with delivering government policy. A significant step forward came this year when an independent investigation for Welsh Government by the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (CEH) found that the inclusion of LERC Wales species data significantly improved the evidence base used in the Welsh Government programme ERAMMP (Environment and Rural Affairs Monitoring and Modelling Programme) and the Well Being and Future Generations Act Indicator 44, the Status of Biological Diversity in Wales.

SERVICES TO OUR PARTNERS

Core Products and Services

Aderyn, the Biodiversity Information Reporting Database. In the WWBIC region, all the planning authorities now have access to Aderyn through their SLAs. National partners, NRW, SWTRA, NMWTRA, DCWW and Network Rail together with regional partners Ceredigion and Carmarthenshire are all using the service regularly. Aderyn usage has increased during the last year and it is the main mechanism for delivering biodiversity data searches, accounting for over half of consultant request results. Aderyn is managed through a Memorandum of Understanding between the four LERCS who all contribute to the employment of a part-time database developer based in SEWBReC and who is responsible for maintenance, troubleshooting and development of new features for the service.

Data as **GIS Alert Layers** of categorised species records are provided to Pembrokeshire and Ceredigion County Councils and the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority (PCNPA). Species data for the entire region is provided to NRW and to the Trunk Roads Agents from the Wales merged database and in this last year to Welsh Government and CEH as mentioned in the previous section. The LERCS have raised the use of LERC data more widely within WG which initiated an internal review which was suspended when the coronavirus pandemic reached the UK.

Site Specific Data Searches are carried out for consultant ecologists, and for local authority departments. In this year we ran 233 searches for consulting ecologists compared to 241 last year. Of other searches, two were for Local Authorities, two for academic research and three for third sector organisations.

Online Recording activity at <https://record.wwbic.org.uk> has increased from last year's total (36,323) and by the end of the year the number of records reached 43,288. The contributors vary from the expert recorder to casual observers and whilst there is a concentration of records input in the usual high recorder effort locations, we are seeing a good selection recorded across the whole of the WWBIC region including many common but under recorded species.

The LERC Wales App which records wildlife from a smartphone has been promoted widely. The App records are stored in the Indicia data warehouse also used by iRecord. The LERC Wales App is based on an iRecord App as is the WWBIC Online Recording site based on iRecord website. The Indicia data warehouse therefore holds records within WWBIC region from all these sources. In early 2020 we began to download the App records for incorporation into the database. The LERC Wales App yielded just under 3000 records whilst other iRecord records amounted to approximately 40,000. Records from these sources require a significant amount of work to check and validate them before being incorporated into our database.

DATA

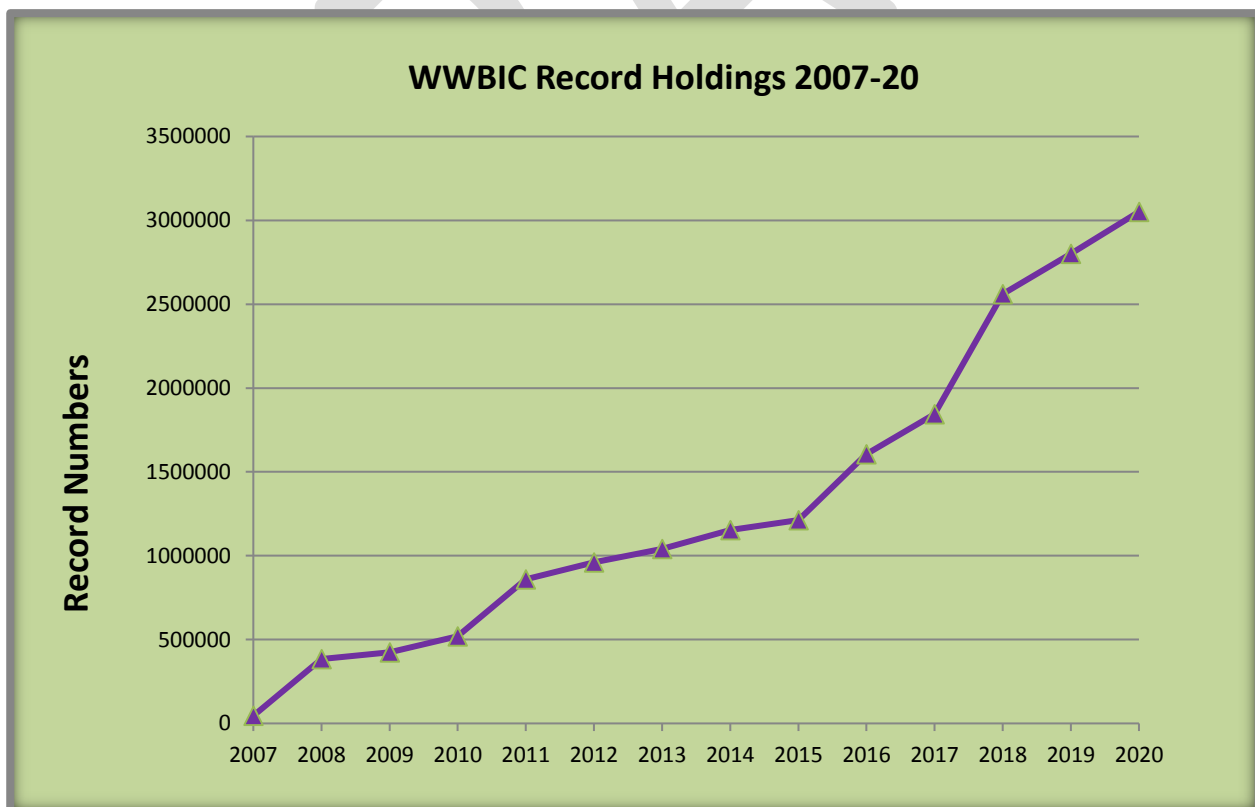
Species records in the reporting database stood at 2,871,044 at the beginning of the period and had increased to 3,050,894 by the end of March 2019. Records continue to reach us through the online recording database at record.wwbic.org.uk and through the LERCWales App as well as the more traditional methods. Active groups such as Penparcau Community Forum tend to use the former whereas John Crum (Pembroke Millponds Action Group) and Denmark Farm regularly send spreadsheets of records into the office. Other groups and projects sending records were Bat Conservation Trust, and Peoples Trust for Endangered Species. Examples of records received for the Vice-counties were;

VC44 Carmarthenshire – County moth dataset from Sam Bosanquet, Butterflies from David Bannister, Vascular plants update from Richard Pryce

VC45 Pembrokeshire –Moths from Robin Taylor, miscellaneous recording day records from Stephen Evans, David Redhead, Annie and Bob Haycock.

VC46 Ceredigion – Mixed taxa from Emily Foot, online records from Chloe Griffiths, recording day records from Steve Chambers, Arthur Chater, Lin Gander, Steve Chambers.

This year was unusual in that no consultancies are logged as sending us records. There is some indication that individual consultants have been using the online and LERCWales App to record.

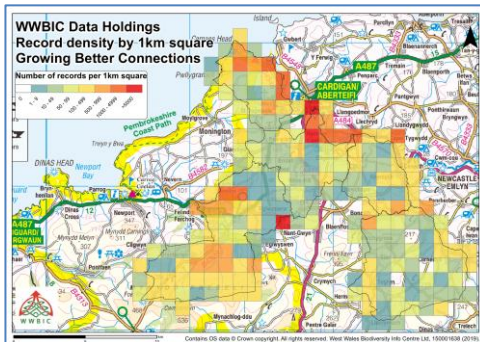
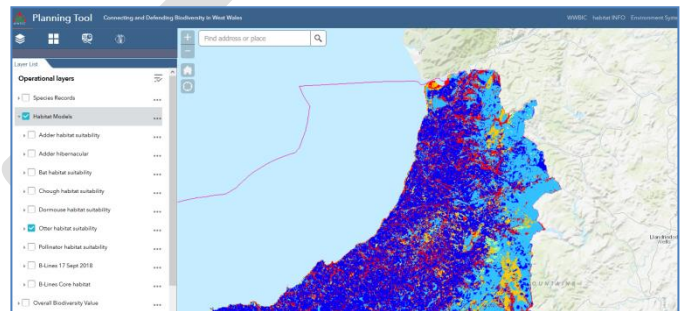


PROJECTS

Local Nature Partnerships (LNP) Cymru

This project was a successful bid by a wide partnership including LERC Wales to the Welsh Governments Enabling Natural Resources and Wellbeing (ENRaW) fund. This grant award is for three years and the LERC Wales offer was to coordinate the activities of the 4 Local Environmental Records Centres, who will work with LNPs to deliver 4 pilot evidence-driven local demonstration projects to set local Nature Recovery Action Plan priorities and to maximise the benefit of the evidence base; development of local priority species lists and provide responsive evidence services in response to local need.

Following a workshop with the our three LNPs, WWBIC began the pilot project element with a West Wales version of the Land Use Planning Tool which has proven it's worth in Pembrokeshire. Ongoing work for the remainder of the LNP Cymru project is to identify datasets that will be useful for the LNPs of each county to have available to them on this online GIS resource.



Other elements of this project have been to draw up lists of Section 7 species audits for each county and mapping support to LNP members in the community working at a much more localised level. While it is challenging to meet the aims and outcomes of the project under Covid-19 restrictions, it has proven to be an important way in which we have maintained our links to the local community.

Plantlife Magnificent Meadows

This was another project funded by an ENRaW grant for which LERCs in Wales would provide training in biological recording. Our involvement was with a cohort of people who trained under David Harries to identify and record waxcap fungi. The project has been successful in that the retention of volunteers has been very good and they have generated many new fungi records for the project.



STAFFING

Staffing levels for the year remain at four with two replacements from last year. Yusef Samari joined us as Technical Officer and Carys Williams as Biodiversity Information Assistant to replace Sophie Pope. Permanent staff of Centre Manager, Colin Russell, and Senior Species Data Officer Kate Smith remain.



PRIORITIES FOR 2020-21

Just prior to the end of this year the UK Government announced a national lockdown as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. All priorities for work in 2020-21 have to be revised with this in mind.

The immediate concern is to maintain our business and this will be the first priority for the coming year. We are in a fortunate position as, over the last few years, we have developed a suite of online services that enable our partners and staff working from home to access our data remotely and run data searches.

Engagement with recorders has been impacted and all face to face training and recording days have been suspended for the coming year unless and until restrictions are eased to the point where we and the recorders feel safe to arrange such events. The first All Wales Recorders Conference arranged for April 2020 has been postponed and dates provisionally booked for 2021. Engagement with national and regional partners and the LERC Wales Board will be through remote meetings. We will explore how we can maintain these links with all our stakeholders through Apps such as Skype and Zoom.

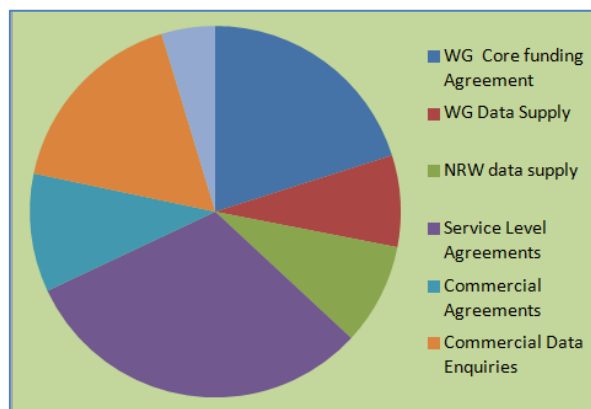
Due to the uncertainty of the situation, LERC Wales Board meetings will be held monthly to monitor the situation until such times as the Board see fit to return to quarterly meetings. Staff will remain on full pay in order to maintain the business and the manager will explore the potential risks to the business and the support offered by government such as the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme and business loans and make the appropriate recommendations to the Board.

DRAFT

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

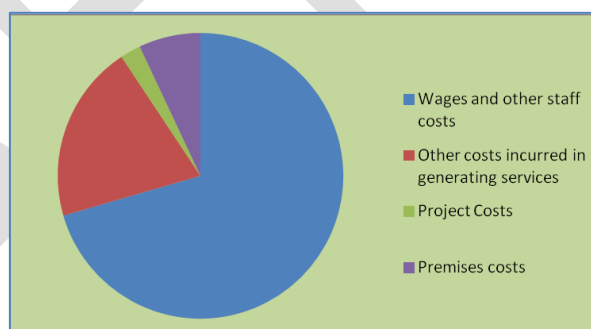
Income

WG Core Fund Agreement	£26,812
WG Data Supply	£10,631
NRW Data Supply	£11,813
Service Level Agreements	£41,500
Commercial Agreements	£13,750
Commercial Enquiries	£22,700
Project Income.	£,6,860



Expenditure

Wages and other staff related costs	£96,712
Other costs incurred in generating services	£27,669
Costs incurred in projects	£3200
Premises costs	£9,600



BALANCE SHEET 31 MARCH 2020

	2020	2019
	£	£
FIXED ASSETS		
Tangible assets	2,259	2,216
CURRENT ASSETS		
Debtors	11,057	1,119
Cash at bank	<u>94,149</u>	<u>104,189</u>
	105,206	105,308
CREDITORS		
Amounts falling due within one year	<u>(8,981)</u>	<u>(5,669)</u>
NET CURRENT ASSETS	<u>96,225</u>	<u>99,639</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES	<u>98,484</u>	<u>101,855</u>
RESERVES		
Reserve for future expenditure	<u>98,484</u>	<u>101,855</u>
	<u>98,484</u>	<u>101,855</u>

APPENDIX 1.

Species Datasets received by WWBIC (from April 2018)

Dataset Name	Supplied By	Date
WWBIC recording form VM January, February & March 19	Vaughn Matthews	02/04/2019
SWOT Otter Records	Lee Jenkins (via Amy,	05/04/2019
Carmarthenshire Moth Records 2018	Sam Bosanquet	26/04/2019
2019 April Pembroke Mill Pond	John Crum	30/04/2019
Pembroke Millponds Record 28.04.19	John Crum	30/04/2019
MOTH RECORDS FOR 2018 & for previous years but not previously	Robin Taylor	02/05/2019
Coleoptera records for 2018 and pre 2017- R Taylor	Robin Taylor	02/05/2019
Insect records (not Lepidoptera or Coleoptera) for 2018 - R Taylor	Robin Taylor	02/05/2019
Hoverfly records A Lucas 2011	Andrew Lucas	03/05/2019
GIS modelling records for WWBIC 2019	Sam Landgon	06/05/2019
New Adder records Jan 2019	Sam Landgon	06/05/2019
Penparcau 15-05-19	Liam Olds	30/05/2019
Fwd reptile sightings	Sam Langdon	03/06/2019
Butterflyrecords2018	Dave Bannister	04/06/2019
WWBIC 2018 data submission form	Steve Lucas	07/06/2019
Strandline beetle 2019	Simeon Jones	13/06/2019
Carmarthenshire	Helen Stephenson	18/06/2019
Ceredigion	Helen Stephenson	18/06/2019
WWBIC recording form VM April, May & June 19	Vaughn Matthews	03/07/2019
Willow crop survey records		15/01/2019
D1886_001_01 WWBIC records deleted from ORS		10/07/2019
Pembroke Millponds Record 13.07.19	John Crum	16/07/2019
2019 July Pembroke Mill Pond	John Crum	16/07/2019
Plant records for Melindwr Farm	Steve Chambers	28/07/2019
Denmark Farm Tom Ottley	Tom Ottley	29/07/2019
BioBlitz - Lake - Volunteers 28072019_(copy)	Linda Bradshaw-	30/07/2019
BioBlitz - Liz Probert records	Linda Bradshaw-	30/07/2019
BioBlitz - Aline Denton 28072019	Linda Bradshaw-	30/07/2019
BioBlitz mixed recorders 28072019	Linda Bradshaw-	30/07/2019
Denmark Farm George Ryley/ Liam Olds	Linda Bradshaw-	07/08/2019
20190728_135037 (BioBlitz Denmark Farm)	Paul Taylor, Aline	28/07/2019
20190728_135044 (BioBlitz Denmark Farm)	Paul Taylor, Aline	28/07/2019
20190728_142119 (BioBlitz Denmark Farm)	Paul Taylor, Aline	28/07/2019
Denmark Farm bioblitz records (flowering plants, ferns & lichens), 28	Steve Chambers	04/08/2019
Melindwr Farm lichens & lichenicolous fungi	Steve Chambers	29/07/2019
Melindwr Farm WWBIC	Lin Gander	05/08/2019
2011 bird records updated and checked	Bob & Annie Haycock	14/08/2019
2012 bird records updated and checked		
2013 bird records updated and checked		
2014 Pembs Bird records - edited and verified		
2018 NDD records in Wales	via Jo (BIS)	19/08/2019
2018 NWVMP data for Wales	via Jo (BIS)	19/08/2019
2018 Other Mammals from the NDMP sites in Wales	via Jo (BIS)	19/08/2019
BHM data Nov 2018 to May 2019	via Jo (BIS)	19/08/2019
Graigina 14 08 19 plant list (1)	Sarah Andrews	23/08/2019

WBBRS WWBIC export 310819	Adrian Fowles	02/09/2019
Location amendments SWTRA road mortality 2013-17 AH changes	via Amy Hicks	05/09/2019
red-squirrel-sightings- reported to MWRSP - March 2019 - Sept 2019	Becky Hulme	09/09/2019
Email: ivy bee record from John Harper		23/09/2019
Carew Quarry 2	Richard Ellis	27/09/2019
VC44 all records added or edited in 2017&2018 sorted by species	Richard Pryce	01/10/2019
Penparcau Invert course days 2019 records	Phil Ward	01/10/2019
12.10.19 Pond Weed & Algae	John Crum	13/10/2019
2019 October Pembroke Mill Pond	John Crum	13/10/2019
Pembroke Millponds Record 12.10.19	John Crum	13/10/2019
WWBIC recording form VM July, August, September & October 19	Vaughn Matthew	04/11/2019
Aggregate Bluestone list 26th June 2019 S. B. Evans (4 other docs & 4	Stephen Evans	11/11/2019
9 individual site plant lists	Stephen Evans	12/11/2019
Cilgwyn, Constantinople - Moths - 2nd & 3rd Sept 2019	Robin Taylor	26/11/2019
Constantinople 04092019 Higher plant list (plus 10 txt files)	Stephen Evans	28/11/2019
WWBIC 2019 data submission form	Steve Lucas	03/12/2019
Pembrey reptile refugia locations and results	Sian Musgrave	03/12/2019
Bronhaul data	Sian Musgrave	03/12/2019
SEWBRc Recording Form Erika Dahlberg 2018	Erika Dahlberg (via	06/12/2019
West wales additional species records 18-19	Richard Gould (via	09/12/2019
Strandline beetle 2019	Simeon Jones	10/12/2019
Copy of PMC_records_updated_checked_updated_2	Paul Renfro	09/12/2019
LRC Record Form CURRENT	Emily Foot	11/12/2019
Copy of Roy Bamford Ceredigion survey 03_06	Hilary Foster	20/12/2019
2019_12_29 STP records for WWBIC	Max Burrell	29/12/2019
bluestone odonata 2019	Stephen Coker	30/12/2019
2019_12_29 Witybush records for WWBIC	Max Burrell	01/01/2020
2019_12_29 Ysgol Caer Elen records for WWBIC	Max Burrell	01/01/2020
S Jones bat records WWBIC 2018	Simeon Jones	02/01/2020
S Jones bat records WWBIC 2019	Simeon Jones	02/01/2020
WWBIC recording form VM November & December 19	Vaughn Matthew	03/01/2020
WWBIC 2018 data submission form	Steve Lucas	07/01/2020
AOC rare and notable plant records		
IRecord LERC Wales App records 01012010 to 31122015 (field record	Download	23/01/2020
IRecord LERC Wales App records 01012016 to 31122019 (field record	Download	23/01/2020
Wales LwM 2019 data	via Jo at BIS	29/01/2020
Wales NWVMP records 2019	via Jo at BIS	29/01/2020
Wales Other Beetle records	via Jo at BIS	29/01/2020
Other beetle records metadata	via Jo at BIS	29/01/2020
irecord ALL 01012019 to 31032019 (field record date)		29/01/2020
irecord ALL 01042019 to 31052019 (field record date)		29/01/2020
irecord ALL 01062019 to 31072019 (field record date)		29/01/2020
irecord ALL 01082019 to 30092019 (field record date)		29/01/2020
irecord ALL 01102019 to 31122019 (field record date)		29/01/2020
WWBIC 2019 data submission form	Steve Lucas	30/01/2020
irecord ALL 01012018 to 28022018 (field record date)		31/01/2020
irecord ALL 01032018 to 30042018 (field record date)		31/01/2020
irecord ALL 01052018 to 30062018 (field record date)		31/01/2020
irecord ALL 01072018 to 31082018 (field record date)		31/01/2020
irecord ALL 01092018 to 31122018 (field record date)		31/01/2020

irecord ALL 01012017 to 31032017 (field record date)		31/01/2020
irecord ALL 01042017 to 31052017 (field record date)		31/01/2020
irecord ALL 01062017 to 31082017 (field record date)		31/01/2020
irecord ALL 01092017 to 31122017 (field record date)		31/01/2020
Paper records from Scolton Manor	Trevor Theobald	13/02/2020
2019 Other Mammals from the NDMP sites in Wales	via Jo at BIS	28/02/2020
LERC Wales BHM records 2015-Jan 2020	via Jo at BIS	28/02/2020
NDD records from 2019 in Wales	via Jo at BIS	28/02/2020
Caermalwas Report 010320	Richard Pryce	01/03/2020
WIDExport	vis Aisling Cofnod	05/03/2020
iRecord ALL 01012016 to 31032016 (field record date)		05/03/2020
iRecord ALL 01042016 to 30062016 (field record date)		05/03/2020
iRecord ALL 01072016 to 30092016 (field record date)		05/03/2020
iRecord ALL 01102016 to 31122016 (field record date)		05/03/2020
Mapmate file for 2019 - recs received up to 07.03.2020 - sent to WWBIC	Robin Taylor	07/03/2020
Records recd. in 2019 for previous years	Robin Taylor	07/03/2020
WWBIC - 2018 - all - Raw Data form - less exRFT annual records - less	Robin Taylor	07/03/2020
WWBIC records from Aderyn - 2019 - Raw data less potential	Robin Taylor	07/03/2020
Trichoptera records - VC45 - 2019	Robin Taylor	10/03/2020
Verified records for WWBIC Feb 2019	Jo at BIS	18/03/2020
Recorder Input File_KestrelBuzzard	Graham Rees	03/03/2020