



Leicestershire & Rutland environmental records centre

Charging and data supply policy

April 2018 (Revised May 2021)

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1. Standard commercial data-searches

LRERC's current standard data-search tariffs are published on our online portal: [LRERC data-search tariffs - MyLERC](#)

All standard data-search requests will also be charged an administration fee and are subject to VAT.

Points or polygons

Pricing for standard commercial data-search packages is based on a radius around a central point. Packages are also available as a buffer zone around a central polygon; costs are automatically adjusted to be proportional to the costs of a standard radius around a central point.

Chargeable searches

LRERC charges for commercial data-searches in accordance with the Environmental Information Regulations: [What are the Environmental Information Regulations? | ICO](#)

The following enquiries are chargeable:

- Consultants and developers seeking data for planning applications, mitigation schemes, environmental impact assessments etc.;
- Infrastructure projects such as pipelines;
- Home-owners and landowners requiring information for planning applications, including information used to fight planning applications from other parties;

- Landowners for information relating to agri-environment schemes.

On-line data requests

Standard commercial data-search requests should be made via the online portal: [LRERC - My LERC](#).

Commercial data-search requests will only be processed if LRERC's online form is completed; by doing this, customers are agreeing to LRERC's Terms and Conditions: [LRERC Terms & Conditions - My LERC](#)

Once the customer has submitted the online form, the request details will be checked and authorised by LRERC and an automated search carried out.

A link to access the data on eMapper will then be supplied to the customer via e-mail.

The link will remain open for 12 months. eMapper does not have a live-link to our database, so the data will not be refreshed during this time.

Where a search returns a particularly large number of records, we may supply Excel and GIS files instead of eMapper access.

Changes to the request received after authorisation may incur additional charges.

If the enquirer does not wish to complete the on-line request form for a standard search LRERC can do this on their behalf but will charge an additional custom administration fee. Enquirers will be asked to accept the search details and costing, and agree to LRERC's Terms and conditions, before LRERC proceeds with the search: [LRERC Terms & Conditions - My LERC](#). LRERC's current tariffs are published on our online portal: [LRERC data-search tariffs - MyLERC](#)

2. Custom searches – non-standard search parameters

For non-standard search-requests, which fall outside the standard packages, enquirers can request a custom search. LRERC will provide a quote for the data. Enquirers will be asked to approve the search details and quote, and agree to LRERC's Terms and conditions, before LRERC proceeds with the search: [LRERC Terms & Conditions - My LERC](#)

Quotes for custom data-searches will be valid for a period of 90 days from the date of the quote. If no response has been received within this period LRERC will cancel the enquiry. Should a response be received after the quote has expired, LRERC will treat it as a new enquiry which will be subject to any price changes implemented in the intervening period.

Requests for non-standard custom searches must be accompanied either by an OS grid reference for the centre of the site (6-fig minimum) or a map showing the outline of the site, preferably as a shapefile. The request must also specify which categories of sites and/or species are required and the search buffer (eg. within site only, 1km, 2km....). LRERC reserves the right to reject plans that are not clear. If the site boundary can only be provided as a pdf, LRERC will plot these to its best ability on the GIS system, but cannot guarantee an exact match to the pdf.

A link to access the data on eMapper will be supplied to the customer via e-mail.

The link will remain open for 12 months. eMapper does not have a live-link to our database, so the data will not be refreshed during this time.

Where a search returns a particularly large number of records, we may supply Excel and GIS files instead of eMapper access.

Changes to the request received after authorisation may incur additional charges.

Costs

These will be based on the area of search, in accordance with the standard packages, but will carry a custom search administrative charge in addition to the standard administration fee.

LRERC's current tariffs are published on our online portal: [LRERC data-search tariffs - MyLERC](#)

All searches are subject to VAT

3. Non-chargeable data-searches

Data-searches are usually provided free-of-charge to partners and for non-commercial uses:

- Research, including undergraduate and post-graduate projects;
- Nature Conservation, includes individuals/organisations that support not-for-profit nature conservation projects;
- Wildlife Recording groups/County Recorders' Network;
- Landowners and tenants seeking information about their land-holdings UNLESS the request is connected to planning applications or agri-environment scheme applications, in which case charges will apply – see above;
- Parish Councils preparing Neighbourhood Plans or similar local projects;
- Members of the public, with a general interest in records for their local area.

LRERC may ask for evidence of non-commercial use before processing non-chargeable requests, eg. supporting information about a conservation project/organisation, a letter from a supervising tutor or the completion of our standard Naturalists enquiry form.

Outputs from non-chargeable data-searches will vary depending on the nature of the enquiry. In some circumstances the enquiry area may be reduced, or a species list rather than full records may be provided.

It is a condition of Naturalists data-searches that any records generated by the individual are sent to LRERC (or an agreed third-party) to be incorporated back into the VC55 database. Failure to do this may result in future data requests being refused

Exceptions

Requests may incur a fee to cover costs if they are time-consuming to process. This will be charged at our current hourly rate.

A photocopying and postal charge may be made for requests for data on paper.

Before doing the search, LRERC will inform the person/organisation making the request if a charge will be applied.

LRERC's current tariffs are published on our online portal: [LRERC data-search tariffs - MyLERC](#)

4. Cross-boundary searches

LRERC does not currently have agreements with neighbouring record centres regarding searches that cross administrative boundaries. Instead, LRERC will automatically adjust its standard area tariff costs to exclude the area outside LRERC's remit. We will not make an additional administration charge for doing this.

5. Response times

LRERC aims to:

- Process all standard on-line searches within 1 working day;
- Process all custom on-line searches within 5 working days;
- Process all other searches within 5 working days.

Note - all response times may be extended if we need more information to clarify your request.

6. Income & fee structure

All income from data-searches is used to support the costs to LRERC of updating and improving its databases and data-holdings. There is no charge for the data itself.

See sections 7 – 10 for information on how LRERC sources and manages data.

Fee structure

LRERC's search fees are made up of two elements. The variable costs cover collection, collation, standardisation, verification, validation and import of data. Costs increase as the search area increases, in a ratio dependant on an equivalent area of set radius.

A fixed administrative charge is applied as a flat fee to all searches, covering the costs of authorising, invoicing and maintaining the on-line portal.

LRERC's current tariffs are published on our online portal: [LRERC data-search tariffs - MyLERC](#)

Proportional adjustments are automatically made to reduce costs of searches where part of the area falls outside the boundary of Leicestershire and Rutland.

A single administration fee will be charged where more than one search location is submitted within the same data-search request.

Reductions

The data-collection element of a search fee will be waived for searches that produce a negative result in either sites or species.

At LRERC's discretion, a reduction in fees may be made for other searches.

Pricing reviews

LRERC will review its prices periodically, increasing them in-line with any increase in running costs.

7. Content of data-searches

eMapper

The results of most standard and custom searches will be made available through eMapper. This has been developed by Cofnod, the Environmental Records Centre for North Wales, and is used by LRERC under licence. eMapper produces search results as interactive mapping of species and sites on Ordnance Survey Maps, aerial photos and other background layers. Features include:

- Customisable display of species records
- Filtering records by year, distance, resolution, species list and more
- Downloading records in PDF, Excel or Shapefile formats
- Trusted (not for publication without LRERC's permission) and Public (for publication) versions.

Source documents

We can supply electronic or paper copies of source documents, where these exist; electronic scans are the preference. This includes Local Wildlife Site citations. We may redact personal information from source documents. Provision of source documents may incur additional charges.

Any copies of Ordnance Survey maps included in our response are there as an aid to geographically locate the information that we have supplied in answer to your enquiry. Any such maps can only be used for that purpose and they should not be used for any other purpose. Our charges are for the supply of our information only and we are not supplying any copy of any Ordnance Survey map as part of that commercial arrangement. If you wish to re-use any Ordnance Survey map you will need to agree a separate contract with the Ordnance Survey.

Site and species data categories

Designated sites include SSSIs and other statutory national/international site designations, Local Nature Reserves (LNR), Local non-statutory Wildlife (LWS) and Geology Sites (RIGS).

Protected species include those protected under:

- European legislation (The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 2010)
- the Protection of Badgers Act
- the Wildlife and Countryside Act. This includes species such as Adder, Palmate Newt, Slow-worm, Common Toad, etc. listed in Sch5 but subject only to Section 9(5) (preventing sale or possession).

Priority species include those listed in:

- the UKBAP and NERC Act Section 41 (See [JNCC conservation designations for UK taxa](#) for a full list of these species.). There is considerable overlap.
- the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Local BAP
- Species listed as 'rare' or 'scarce' in the *Flora of Leicestershire and Rutland: Checklist and Rare Plant Register* (Jeeves, MB, 2011). The local BAP Group has agreed that these have LBAP species status.
- Invasive Non-native species (INNS) defined by the GB Non-native Species Secretariat www.nonnativespecies.org

8. Sensitive and confidential data

LRERC has agreed with some of its data suppliers and County Recorders to withhold certain parts of some records:

- Some recorder names have been replaced with a generic name, eg. records supplied by LROS (Leicestershire and Rutland Ornithological Society) do not show the recorder's name, but are given the generic recorder name 'LROS'
- Site names for some species, Bat roosts and Badger setts have been edited to remove those parts of addresses that may reveal precise locations of a record (e.g. house numbers)
- Other confidential species records may be provided at a reduced grid reference resolution.

Confidential records will only appear in the Trusted data output, which **must not** be published. The Public output will not include confidential or sensitive records/information and LRERC gives permission for this to be published, with acknowledgement to both LRERC and the dataset provider.

Dataset licenses

Some datasets have been provided to LRERC under the conditions of Creative Commons licenses. Information on these can be found within the associated metadata for each dataset on the MyLERC website: [LRERC Datasets - MyLERC](#)

9. Species data

Database

LRERC's species data is held on ORCA which is maintained by Cofnod, the record centre for North Wales. Data is held on Cofnod's servers and accessed on-line by LRERC and enquirers.

ORCA is continually updated. LRERC aim to update protected species data every month.

Sources of data

Data is collated from a variety of sources, including the NBN, iRecord, NatureSpot, County Recorders' Network, in-house surveys carried out by LRERC staff and contractors, national recording schemes, Leicestershire County Council staff, casual records and public surveys, amateur naturalists and surveys carried out by ecology consultants working

for developers. Metadata on each source is maintained in ORCA and can be viewed by clicking on the link in 'Dataset ID' of your 'View Species Records' output.

Date range of species in reports

All records held by LRERC from the last 25 years are included in standard data-searches, with the exception of some species or taxon groups where we feel the large volume of records for 25 years is excessive or unhelpful.

Species names

Names follow those in the Natural History Museum dictionary: [NHM species dictionary](#)

Validation

Through ORCA's in-built validation data-checker LRERC makes every attempt to validate data (i.e. checking accuracy of dates and grid references) before it is imported into the database.

It is not possible to check all parameters of every record from every source.

LRERC welcomes information on errors and inconsistencies and will do its best to correct any mistakes.

Verification

Wherever possible, the records are verified by local experts in the County Recorders' Network, or by national experts and national recording schemes.

Not all of our data (especially the historic information) has been through this process.

Records are stored on ORCA with a verification status as follows: those with a tick appear in standard reports with the appropriate code.

Unassessed	UA/UL	✓	Record awaiting verification
Unconfirmed	UC	✓	Record that cannot be verified, but retained as it is likely/of interest
Known incorrect	KI		
Probably incorrect	PI		
Presumed correct	PC	✓	Generally applied to records from professional ecologists, conservationists and acknowledged naturalists
Known correct	KC	✓	Generally applied to records verified by local County Recorders' Network or National Recording Scheme
Not required	NR	✓	
Not accepted by CRN	NA		A County Recorder has not accepted the record
Accepted by NatureSpot	NS	✓	NatureSpot is the local on-line recording website with its own verification procedures

10. Site and habitat data

Database

LRERC's sites data is held as a GIS layer and is maintained and continually updated by LRERC. A copy of this sites layer is also held in the ORCA database, which LRERC aims to update every month.

Sources of data

Data is collated from a variety of sources, including in-house surveys carried out by LRERC staff and contractors, Leicestershire County Council staff, partner organisations, public surveys, amateur naturalists and surveys carried out by ecology consultants working for developers.

Nationally designated sites

These boundaries and minimal information are obtained from Natural England. More detailed information is available from this source: [Natural England designated sites](#).

- Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)
- National Nature Reserves (NNRs)
- Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)
- Special Protection areas (SPAs)

Data relating to nationally designated sites is not charged for in data-searches.

Locally designated sites: recent data

More recent data (post 2000) is mainly linked to the Local Wildlife Site survey programme, to Phase 1 Habitat surveys or to site-specific surveys. Much of this information is available as an electronic copy or scan. It includes survey work undertaken by external partners and organisations as well as Leicestershire County Council staff.

- **Local Wildlife Sites (Candidate and Notified LWS)**

These are designated following the criteria in the 'Guidelines for the selection of Local Wildlife Sites in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (revised 2011)' published by Leicestershire County Council. The definition of LWS in this publication is: 'Local Wildlife Sites are important reservoirs of rare, local and declining native species and are the best examples of typical Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland habitats. LWS may also be areas of ecological interest that provide people with the opportunity to learn about, appreciate and experience habitats and species of the natural world.'

LRERC holds the register and database for all LWS, together with citations and supporting evidence.

The first LWS were designated in 2000. It is not a comprehensive series of sites, as the designations are not based on a comprehensive survey of habitats. All the designations are non-statutory and are made through agreement of local experts. For a site to be an LWS, LRERC must have clear evidence from expert ecologists that they meet the criteria. Expert ecologists include staff at LRERC, ecologists employed in the Local Planning Authorities (LPAs), the Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust (LRWT), and any acknowledged local naturalists such as County Recorders for botany, etc.

There is an LWS Panel of local ecology experts from LRERC, the LPAs and LRWT that can advise and consult each other on applying the criteria.

Notified Local Wildlife Sites meet the LWS criteria and have also been subject to landowner consultation. For a site to be 'Notified' the landowner needs to have agreed to the designation. This part of the process is no longer done for all sites, as we don't have the local capacity to administer it.

Candidate Local Wildlife Sites also meet the criteria for designation. They have usually not been subject to landowner consultation, and the status has not been formally agreed with landowner.

For the purposes of planning and policy, Notified and Candidate LWS have the same status.

- **Local Wildlife Sites (Potential)**

These are sites where LRERC has recent evidence that they are likely to meet the LWS criteria, but further survey is needed to confirm this. Some sites are also Local Nature Reserves or Planted Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS).

Most LWS citations are available to download via eMapper. Electronic copies of citations not available through eMapper and survey information for Local Wildlife Sites are available on request.

Locally designated sites: historic data

LRERC holds historic data on sites and habitats going back to the 1950s. This is held on paper files for each Parish in Leicestershire and Rutland. Most has been catalogued and scanned and is available as an electronic copy. Most of the information on historic designated sites is information from surveys carried out by Leicestershire County Council staff in the 1980s and early 1990s. LRERC does not hold historic site and habitat information for Leicester City; this can be obtained from Leicester City Council.

- **Local Wildlife Sites (Potential: Historic)**

These are sites that have not been recently surveyed to check their modern status. These sites were designated during the late 1980s/early 1990s, based on comprehensive habitat surveys done largely in the 1980s. Although the system of designation has been superseded by the LWS process, many of these sites have retained their biodiversity value and this series of sites remains an important part of our local biodiversity 'alert' system. Further information on the majority of these sites is available on request. To remove duplication, historic sites that have since been designated (e.g. as LWS or SSSIs) have been removed from the register. Where LRERC has evidence from aerial photos or surveys that historic sites have been destroyed or degraded through development, ploughing, improvement, quarrying, infilling etc., these have also been removed from the register.

Local Geology Sites/Regionally Important Geology Sites (RIGS)

The boundaries of either confirmed or candidate RIGS are shown, based on information received from the Leicestershire RIGS group. LRERC is currently unable to provide background information or citations for these sites. These are not charged for in data-searches.

Local and National priority BAP habitats

Further information is available from LRERC.

Phase 1 Habitat Surveys

There has not been a recent comprehensive habitat survey covering the whole of Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. Parts of the area have been recently surveyed, and LRERC have a rolling programme of re-survey of Parishes. Details available from LRERC on request.

Leicestershire and Rutland Environmental Records Centre, April 2018 (Revised May 2021)



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