**Sheffield Biological Records Centre and Barnsley Biological Records Centre**

c/o SCC Ecology Service, Parks and Countryside, Neighbourhoods Services

Sheffield City Council, Centre in the Park, Guildford Avenue

Sheffield, S2 2PL

Telephone: 0114 250 0500

Email: parksandcountryside@sheffield.gov.uk

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| Sheffield Biological Records Centre Charging and Data Supply Policy (16.6.2025) 1. **Introduction.**

This policy sets out how SheffieldCity Council (SCC) will charge for and respond to requests for copies of data held by Sheffield Biological Record Centre (SBRC). SBRC also hosts Barnsley Biological Record Centre (BBRC) on behalf of Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council (BMBC). This policy will refer to SBRC but cover data held by both record centres.Requests must be made via the Data Request Form (updated May 2025) to clarify the nature of the data required and to help SBRC monitor the distribution and use of electronic data on behalf of data copyright holders.1. **Chargable Searches**

SCC charges for commercial SBRC data-searches in accordance with the [Environmental Information Regulations](https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/foi/freedom-of-information-and-environmental-information-regulations/charging-for-information-under-the-eir/#when)The following enquiries are chargable: * Consultants and developers seeking data for planning applications, mitigation schemes, environmental impact assessments etc.;
* Infrastructure or utilities projects such as pipelines;
* Home-owners and landowners requiring information for planning applications
* Landowners, agents or managers for information relating to agri-environment schemes.

Standard commercial data requests should be made by completing the Data Request Form including ticking the box on the data request form next to the statement: “I confirm that I have read & understood the conditions of data supply & recognise that my organisation / company is entering into a legally binding contract with SCC in commissioning this data search” The Data Request Form contains links to the terms of supply and conditions of data usage: **terms of supply**and **conditions of data usage**.When an online form has been submitted, the request details will be checked by SCC and a quote provided along with a link for the enquirer to pay online before a search is carried out. The results will be shared back to the data enquirer via email. Subsequent changes to the request may incur additional charges.Current commercial fees are published on the SCC webpage and are on the Data Request Form.1. **Standard Commercial data searches – search area**

Pricing for standard commercial data-search packages is based upon either:* A radius around a central point
* A line and buffer

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|  | **Point & Radius**The point should be defined as an OS grid reference. Please specify the radius you wish to be applied |
|  | **Line & Buffer**Please provide a map or GIS layer showing the line. Please specify the buffer you wish to be applied |
|  | **Site & Buffer**Please provide a map or GIS layer showing the site boundary & specify the buffer you wish to be applied |

* A site boundary and buffer
1. **Custom Searches – non-standard search parameters**

For search-requests which fall outside of the standard options, enquirers can request a custom search. Bespoke e.g. major projects, species-specific requests or requests for large amounts of data or any analysis. Large requests will take longer to respond to and the SBRC will provide a quote before proceeding.1. **Income and fee structure**

All income from data searches is used to support the costs of servicing requests and to provide the data and towards updating and improving its databases and data holdings. There is no charge for the data itself.A minimum fee applies. See current fees on the website and Data Request Form. The fee structure will be reviewed annually. Fees and charges across the Parks and Countryside Service are normally increased annually in line with inflation or as otherwise provided for in the Council’s budget setting process. These charges will be included in this approach going forward.A search fee is usually waived for searches that produce a negative result in either sites or species. 1. **Non-chargeable data-searches**

Data-searches are usually provided free-of-charge for non-commercial uses from customers including: * Education and research, including undergraduate and post-graduate projects;
* Wildlife recorders, naturalists, citizen scientists/members of the public with a general interest in records for their local area
* ‘Friends of’ or similar local groups
* Nature Conservation, includes individuals/organisations that support not-for-profit nature conservation projects;
* Landowners and tenants/managers 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

SBRC may ask for evidence of non-commercial use before processing non-chargeable requests.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.**Exceptions**The exception is if the requests are not standard and comprise a large amount of bespoke work. The data request form makes is clear that in these cases SBRC will provide a quote. There is often project funding to cover the time for such bespoke requests. 1. **Cross-boundary searches**

SBRC does not currently have agreements with other neighbouring Local Environmental Record Centres (LERCs) outside of Sheffield and Barnsley regarding searches that cross administrative boundaries. We will signpost you to other relevant LERCs. However, the fee for cross-boundary searches are usually split approximately proportionately. 1. **Response times**

SBRC will respond to all data requests within 10 working days, but most are responded to within 5 working days.1. **Content of data searches**

**Site information held by SBRC includes:** Statutory nature conversation site boundaries (SSSI, SPA, SAC, National Parks, LNR & NR). Non-statutory nature conservation site boundaries (Local Wildlife Sites).**Species information held by SBRC includes:** Species records with details of species name, site name, grid reference & date, as a minimum.**Specific locations of confidential or sensitive records** may be omitted from the search results. The enquirer will be notified if this is the case.SBRC does not currently hold records for the following organisations who may need to be contacted directly in addition if data held by them is required:* South Yorkshire Bat Group
* South Yorkshire Badger Group
* Sheffield Bird Study Group
* Sheffield and Rotherham Wildlife Trust
* Sheffield Area Geological Trust
1. **Terms of Supply**

SCC retains the right not to supply data to clients at its discrection. The release of data will normally be agreed unless one or more of the following situations occurs:1. The data copyright holder is unwilling for the data to be released for the proposed purpose. Data will be withheld if release of the data on this occasion may result in the copyright holder withholding data from SBRC, BBRC or other LERCs in the future.
2. The enquirer cannot agree to the conditions of data usage listed below, has not adhered to the conditions on a previous occasion and/or is not prepared to pay the extraction fee.
3. The enquirer is seeking data that are out of proportion to the case, study or research project concerned, for example the geographical scope of the data supplied would not be appropriate to the enquiry made. Complete data sets for the Sheffield and/or Barnsley metropolitan areas or a significant proportion of it will not normally be released, although context distribution maps for habitats and species may be included were relevant.
4. **Conditions of Data Usage:**
5. The data may not be copied to third parties, published in any form, including on-line, or where the recipient is acting as an agent, supplied to the recipient’s client without written permission from SCC, except in the circumstances given below.
6. Reports which include the data supplied by SCC or BMBC may be provided to the recipient’s client and to consultees provided that any special arrangements made in respect of confidential data area adhered to and full acknowledgement is given in the report to the supplier and, where appropriate, the original recorders. Any specific copyright conditions attached to the data, including Crown Copyright, must be strictly adhered to.
7. The data must not be entered on a computerised database or Geographical Information System without written permission of SCC. The data are supplied for the purpose of informing a short-term case, study or research project and are not intended for storage by the recipient for future use.
8. Permission to use the data expires 12 months after approval. Applications to extend beyond this period should be made before the expiry date, or (preferably) a new data request submitted for more up to date data.
9. The data are to be used by the recipient, agent or client on the understanding that reasonable steps have been taken to ensure the accuracy of the environmental information provided, but this does not make SCC, BMBC legally responsible to the recipient of the data, their clients or others for any losses causes by any erros or omissions in the environmental information.
10. SCC operates in line with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GPDR. SCC undertakes to manage personal information in line with this and all subsequent data protection legislation and SCC’s [Privacy notice | Sheffield City Council](https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/utilities/footer-links/privacy-notice). Names are included as part of biological records with the consent of the original recorder. Names are not passed to data users. Exceptions to this are other related data centres such as the [National Biodiversity Network (NBN) Atlas](https://nbnatlas.org/) and the [Global Biodiversity Information Facility](https://www.gbif.org/) Any other exception would be with the individual’s explicit written consent.
11. The data is to be used by the recipinet, agent or client on the understanding that reasonable measures have been taken to ensure that SCC is vested with the necessary authority to distribute the data provided. Provision of the data does not confer on the data user any form of data custodianship; the data at all times remaining the intellectual copyright of the original data collector/observer.
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| **Terminology** |  |
| **Term** |  | **Definition** |  |
| Recipient |  | The person or organisation instigating the data search and the person to whom the data is delivered |  |
| Agent |  | An organisation or individual requesting the data on behalf of a third-party client such as an environmental consultancy working on behalf of a developer |  |
| Client |  | The end user of the data such as a developer making a planning application |  |
| Data Copyright Holder |  | The data provider, which could be an amateur naturalist, professional ecologist, citizen scientist, student etc |  |