



Hampshire Biodiversity
Information Centre

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www.hants.gov.uk/biodiversity/hbic

HBIC Access Policy & Charging Schedule Updated January 2016

Introduction

The purpose of the Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre (HBIC) is to “collect, collate, manage and disseminate information of known quality on Hampshire’s biodiversity to those who require it, to increase knowledge and understanding, and to enable informed decisions to be made about factors affecting the environment”.

HBIC offers an interpreted and enhanced biodiversity information service. Most of the data held and produced by HBIC is in digital format and comes from a variety of sources, including data supplied by voluntary recording groups and individuals through data exchange agreements, and surveys funded by a range of organisations via service level agreements and other contracts. These organisations include Hampshire County Council, all District and Unitary authorities in Hampshire, New Forest and South Downs National Parks, Natural England, Hampshire & Isle of Wildlife Trust, and the Environment Agency.

The data supplied comprises boundary and attribute data for designated sites, priority habitats and notable/protected species locations and has been verified, evaluated, filtered and aggregated to ensure the requestor receives only the most relevant and up-to-date data with key attributes such as status, date history and number of records. The data is accompanied by explanatory notes and definitions of terminology with links to legends and complex species legislation to provide valuable further information.

Data Quality

All users of biological data should be aware of the limitations of the data supplied. Notable species records reflect the information held on our databases and do not represent a comprehensive list of notable species present within the search area. Also, presence of a species on the list does not necessarily indicate breeding status.

Data supplied by HBIC has been validated (in terms of geographical accuracy and other accuracy attributes in the data capture process) as far as possible. Errors, however, cannot be totally eliminated. The HBIC Partnership cannot guarantee the full accuracy or completeness of the data. The data supplied should be viewed as static upon release and may be liable to change without notification. The HBIC Partnership is therefore not liable for any actions that may be taken as a result of using the data.

Copyright & Restrictions

The ownership of all information collected under the service level agreements remains the property of Hampshire County Council except where the Service Level Agreements state otherwise. Data provided by recording organisations and individuals through data exchange

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agreements remains the property of that organisation or individual and the terms of any licence issued by HBIC to re-use data reflect this. HBIC can only provide copies of data to data requesters as set out in the individual data exchange agreements. This may include the release of sensitive species records at a lower resolution than that requested.

The Environmental Information Regulations allow for the fact that sensitive information, including that supplied and owned by third parties, is only released after careful consideration of the request and with the consent of all the parties involved. Regulation 12 lists all the exceptions to the duty to disclose environmental information including where “ its disclosure would adversely affect – the protection of the environment to which the information relates” The associated guidance states that information on the location of nesting sites, rare habitats and endangered/protected species may need to be withheld to avoid the risk of damage. However, the disclosure of such information can also be vitally important to ensure protection of that species or habitat.

Requesting data

A request for data should give the;

- name and contact details of the person requesting the data and the name and address of the person or organisation they are acting for (where applicable),
- geographical extent of the area of interest defined on a map at a suitable scale.
- precise nature of the information required
- purpose for which the data is being used – this will help determine whether sensitive data can be released.

Under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 a request for data must be responded to within 20 working days of the request being made. An extension can be sought for more complex requests. If HBIC holds data belonging to a third party, organisation or individual who has not consented to its disclosure then that data cannot be released and the person requesting the data will be transferred to the original Data Custodian with their consent.

A request for data, the disclosure of which would make it more likely that the site, habitat or species to which such data related would be adversely affected, may be refused or the information about the location might be given out in lower precision than held in the database.. An example of this could be the location of a rare or threatened species. In such cases the enquirer may be referred back to the original Data Custodian.

When a request for data is refused the reasons for refusal will be specified in writing in accordance with the Environmental Information Regulations.

Biological Users Declaration & Re-Use Declaration Licence: When submitting a data request the enquirer has to agree to the conditions of the Biological Data Users Declaration and Re-Use Declaration Licence (where applicable) which states that they are aware of restrictions on copyright & use of the data, and limitations on data quality.

http://www.hants.gov.uk/landscape-and-heritage/hbic/hbic-datarequests/hbic-data_users_declaration.htm

<http://www.hants.gov.uk/landscape-and-heritage/hbic/hbic-datarequests/data-re-use-declaration-licence>

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Charging Schedule

1. Data requests for re-use

(See also Section 3 for requests from farmers & other landowners)

Information from HBIC in itself is free at point of use, however HBIC reserves the right to charge a licence fee for re-use. This is to contribute towards the cost of collection, production, reproduction and dissemination of data and a reasonable return on investment for when data is being re-used. A percentage of the income received is also redirected to the Hampshire species recording groups in recognition of the data they supply to the Centre.

HBIC may waive charges to the following individuals and organisations, except where additional costs are incurred which HBIC would otherwise be expected to cover:

- Members of the public (including students) for non-profit making private study, research and local interest projects.
- Voluntary non-profit making organisations including community groups and species recording groups.
- Local authorities as set out in their Service Level Agreements.

Charges may also be waived for the supply of data for projects that are of direct benefit to the work of the HBIC Partnership.

A search fee will apply to all standard data searches and **will be charged at the rate of £200 + VAT per hour, followed increments at £100 + VAT** for each additional half hour that the data search might take. See section 6 for where reduced charges may apply.

To improve efficiency, HBIC no longer provides quotes for requests likely to take 2 hours or less to complete, unless specifically requested. On receiving a completed Data Request Form HBIC will conduct a brief check to ensure relevant data exists within the search area and to estimate if the request is likely to take longer than 2 hours to complete.

If relevant data exists and the request is estimated to take **2 hours or less** to complete (i.e. the charge will be £400.00 + VAT or less) then **no estimate** of the cost to supply the data will be sent to the data requester. The request for data will be processed within 10 working days of receiving a completed Data Request Form and the commercial body will be invoiced for the staff time taken to supply the data.

If no relevant data exists within the search area, then the fee will be waived.

If requested, a quote can be provided within 5 working days of receiving a completed Data Request Form. There will be a charge for providing a written quote of **£50 + VAT**; however this fee will be waived if the quote is accepted. Please note that requesting a quote could delay HBIC in providing the data and incur extra staff time. If a quote is required, this needs to be clearly stated in the Data Request Form by way of a tick box. Data will normally be supplied within 10 working days of the enquirer confirming they still wish to proceed.

If relevant data exists and the request is estimated to take **more than 2 hours** to complete, (i.e. will cost more than £400 + VAT,) a quote to supply the data will be sent within 5 working days of receiving a completed Data Request Form. This estimate of the cost will need to be agreed with the data requester before work commences. Data will then be sent within 10

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working days of this confirmation. However, if no response to the estimate is received after 15 working days from the date the quote is sent or if the data requester decides not to proceed with the data request, then the requester will receive an invoice for the cost of the initial search of **£50 + VAT**.

Requestors can set an upper limit of cost greater than £400 +VAT if they wish to avoid waiting to receive a quote. This upper limit of cost should be clearly stated in the comments box on any Data Request Forms submitted.

Urgent requests: If data is required more urgently than within the 10 working days specified then a priority response can be made. This will be subject to staff availability and may incur a 100% surcharge. Urgent deadlines should be stated in the comments box of the submitted Data Request Form.

Please note once a Data Request Form has been submitted and no quote has been requested then the request for data will be processed within 10 working days and the requestor will be invoiced as set out above unless no relevant data exists. Requestors are invited to contact HBIC before submitting a Data Request Form if they would like to discuss any aspect of their data request.

3. Supply of data direct to landowners

If HBIC is providing biodiversity data (including maps of designations, priority habitats and species both on the landowners land and nearby) for entry into the Countryside Stewardship Scheme or equivalent or for supporting a planning application then charges will apply as set out in Section 1. For a trial period all requests to support woodland grant scheme applications will be charged for at **£100 + VAT** depending on area covered.

If a habitat (Phase 2) survey report has been carried out by HBIC for a particular site then it is normally provided free of charge directly to the landowner. If a landowner or his agent requests a second copy of a habitat (Phase 2) survey, or if a new landowner requests previous existing survey data of their land, then this will be provided for a fee of **£50 + VAT**, depending on the volume of data requested.

4. Office visits

A data requester may come into the HBIC office by prior appointment to examine any electronically held data including site survey reports. If electronic or paper copies of the data are then required, then charges for staff time in locating the information may apply unless the data is for commercial re-use when charges as set out in Section 1 under RPSI will apply.

5. Standard data searches

The following types of data can be supplied:

- Provision of GIS maps for a given search area, with supporting data. The maps can be in hard copy or .pdf format and can show sites designations and Broad or Priority habitat types. Supporting text and legend will include details of the designations and habitat types shown.

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- Copies of Phase 2 habitat survey reports detailing descriptions of vegetation communities and taxon lists for particular sites, provided in .pdf format.
- Output from MapMate/GIS listing Notable and Protected species found within a search area.
- Lists or maps of locations with attribute details for a particular taxa at the resolution agreed with the species recording groups.

Since a proportion of the search fee covers the staff time taken to retrieve and compile the above types of data, the fee can be dependant on the size of the search area, the type/s of information required and the volume of information, where it exists (subject to sensitivity status), within the particular search area. As a guide, a standard data search for designated sites, habitat data and notable/protected species information within a 1 or 2km radius of a specified grid reference normally takes about an hour to complete.

6. Reduced charges

Reduced charges may apply where requests only cover single species/taxon groups, sites designations or priority habitats requests, depending on the area covered.

Data searches by householders for householder planning applications will be charged **a fee of £50 + VAT** where documentary evidence is required to support the planning application biodiversity checklist. Verbal output over the telephone will not be charged for.

7. Provision of digital GIS data

When digital GIS data is provided on a CD ROM or sent by email then a limit on the area of GIS data to be made available will be set at a maximum of one 10km x 10km square (100km²) per request. Where the request is for re-use then the standard minimum charge (£200 + VAT) will apply to any area covering up to 100km². All requesters will be required to sign a separate data supply agreement which covers use of the data for the limit of the project specified, or for up to one year - whichever is the shorter period.

Where a great deal of staff time is expended in preparing the data for download, there will be an additional charge of £100 + VAT applied in half hourly increments.

8. Provision of Wader and Brent Geese data

Wader and Brent Geese data can be made available for a specified search area through a normal data request. In addition it is possible to purchase the 'Solent Waders and Brent Goose Strategy' November 2010 CD produced by the Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust for £100+VAT, as a one off payment and this can be used in all subsequent projects. The income derived will be used to fund future wader & Brent Geese work. The CD contains a copy of the strategy (pdf) plus tables of Brent and wader records, as well as maps and GIS files of current and future use. More up-to-date data on wader and Brent geese is available through a standard data search.

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9. Conditions on Use and Re-use of data

Please refer to the Data Users Declaration at:

http://www.hants.gov.uk/landscape-and-heritage/hbic/hbic-datarequests/hbic-data_users_declaration.htm

Please refer to the Re-Use Declaration Licence at:

<http://www.hants.gov.uk/landscape-and-heritage/hbic/hbic-datarequests/data-re-use-declaration-licence>