



National Forum
for Biological Recording

Charity No 1152948

Annual Report and

**Statement of Financial Activities
2013**

The National Forum for Biological Recording
Annual Report 2013.
Charity No 1152948

The trustees of the forum are pleased to present the first annual report and financial statements for the year ending 31st December 2013. The report focuses on the formation of the charity and its activities during the year.

1. REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION:

Registered office: Stonecroft, 3 Brookmead Close, Sutton Poyntz, Weymouth DT3 6RS. Website www.nfbr.org.uk

Trustees: elected at the EGM held on 19th April 2013.

Mr G. Walley (2015)	Chairman
Mr J. A. Newbould (2016)	Secretary
Mrs C. Langrick (2014)	Membership Secretary and Treasurer
Mr S. Whitbread (2014)	Vice Chairman
Mr P. Harding (2014)	
Mr T.J. James (2016)	
Dr H. Roy (2015)	

Independent Examiner: Mrs Shirley Bell The Cottage, 7 Grammar School Lane, Northallerton DL6 1DA

Bankers: Barclays, Winchester Group

Webmaster: David Slade

Newsletter Editor: Dr Martin Harvey

Staff: NFBR employs no staff.

2. STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE and MANAGEMENT

Legal Structure:

The National Forum for Biological Recording is an unincorporated society of members and a federation of charities, and local government organisations practicing biological recording within the United Kingdom, but mainly in England. It became a registered charity no 1152948 on 18th July 2013 and operated under a constitution dated 18th June 2013. It incorporates its predecessor organisation the National Federation for Biological Recording.

Election of trustees:

The initial trustees were elected on 19th April 2013. Each year two trustees step down by rotation whilst every third year starting in 2014, a third trustee stands down by rotation. Trustees standing down may seek re-election. The dates for re-election were drawn by lot and are indicated in parenthesis in the table above.

Training Trustees:

All trustees have received a copy of the Charity Commission guidance *The Essential Trustee CC3*. The secretary keeps trustees apprised of periodic guidance issued by the Charity Commission relevant to their duties. All trustees are experienced in the practice of biological recording and are able to exercise their judgement when

consulted on biological recording issues.

Administrative Structure:

The trustees have held two meetings to agree future plans for the Forum. In addition a Council of members elected at each AGM advises trustees. The Council consists of the following: Martin Harvey, David Slade, John van Breda, Richard Fox, Damian Mc Ferran, Paula Lightfoot, Jonathan Willet, Lucy Carter, Craig Slawson, Alan Stewart, Martin Hicks and Louise Bacon. During the year, Richard Burkmar and Dr Michael Edwards were co-opted. The Council includes representatives from all UK countries. Council has met three times during the year and in addition, a small group met in early December to consider proposals for a marketing strategy. At the year-end, an Awards for All Bid was being prepared to advise on and produce marketing materials and a strategy. At all Council meetings a quorum of trustees has been present and able to authorise actions agreed but are the responsibility of the trustees. Nominations are invited before each AGM for members willing to be on the Advisory Council.

Risk Management:

The trustees consider that, in view of the limited future financial contracts e.g. pre-booking the Forum's annual conference, our financial commitments are within our financial reserves.

In terms of meetings, we mainly meet indoors and advice on appropriate evacuation procedures in case of an emergency is given at the start of each session. On the occasional instance that we meet outdoors an appropriate risk assessment is provided to participants.

The trustees considered the question of young people under the age of 18 attending meetings and have issued the following guidance: young persons under the age of 18 are welcome to attend all meetings. However, the Forum has no member with CRB accreditation and the parent or guardian must accompany young persons.

3. OBJECTIVES and ACTIVITIES

Aims and Objectives for public benefit:

The Forum aims to conserve the UK's biodiversity and landscapes by promoting and supporting biological recording and the use of information on wildlife and wildlife habitats.

We qualify for charitable status as a charity for the advancement of environmental protection and improvement.

- We welcome as members all who wish to promote and enhance biological recording of the UK's biodiversity, habitats and landscape.
- We are founder members of the National Biodiversity Network Trust.
- We published electronically two editions of our *Newsletter* under the editorship of Dr Martin Harvey.
- Craig Slawson maintains the electronic register of local biological records centres on behalf of the NBN Trust and other organisations. The list is available on our website.
- We have active Facebook and Twitter accounts promoting our activities.
- The Forum neither owns nor leases any office space, with administration provided by the Secretary and Treasurer in their homes using their own equipment. We are indebted to the Trustees of the Natural History Museum for the use of meeting facilities at the Angela Marmont Centre for our Council

and Trustee meetings.

- John Newbould and Paul Harding have advised the Biological Records Centre on the establishment of a 50th anniversary conference to be held at the University of Bath on 26th and 27th June 2014, followed by a field meeting on the 28th of June on MOD land on Salisbury Plain.
- Trevor James represents NFBR on the All Party Parliamentary Group for Biodiversity chaired by Barry Gardiner M.P.
- John Newbould gave a presentation to the Plenary Session of the Linnean Society's Taxonomy & Systematics Committee in September 2013 outlining the detrimental effects of regional museums losing professional natural history staff, with the resulting loss of access to collections being detrimental to the volunteer biological recording community.
- Members attended conferences organised by the Association of Local Environmental Record Centres, The National Biodiversity Network Trust and the first meeting of the British Ecological Society's Citizen Science Group.
- Representations have been made to a Natural England consultation on data priorities, a consultation on privatisation of the NERC Centre for Ecology and Hydrology and a Defra consultation on proposals for habitat offsetting in the planning process.
- **Annual Conference: *Biological recording from the local perspective.***
The annual conference was organised by Trevor James with the assistance of Graham Walley and administration provided by John Newbould. This group met once to discuss a conference structure and identify speakers.

Along with many organisations NFBR has been considering whether the way biological recording is being carried out is really 'fit for purpose' in the modern world following the November 2012 NBN conference, which had focussed on this issue putting forward a range of options including the concept of 'citizen science'. Our conference held at the R.N.L.I. College, Poole, Dorset was a refocus on the issues but looking at what was both being done and needs to be done from the perspective of people working on the ground but also posing the question of what more do we need.

The main event on the first day was a workshop session led by Graham Walley and Sue Townsend of the Field Studies Council debating the question "do we have the people and tools to deliver the right information and the various ways we want to use it. Many delegates wanted to see more mentoring for new recorders.

On Friday our main speaker was Nicky Court (Manager of Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre) with a topic of *Fifty ways to make good use of local data* including many tips of sensible sharing and saving money. Other speakers included Dr Andy Foster from the National Trust who gave an overview of that charity's biological surveying followed by David Brown who introduced the local to Poole Cyril Diver Project resurveying Diver's work of the 1930s on Studland Peninsula. Linda Smith from Hertfordshire Natural History Society presented "*Getting to the heart of it – monitoring a local landscape*". The final speaker of the morning session was Paula Lightfoot of Seasearch North-east who spoke on Marine Conservation Zones.

The afternoon session opened with Martin Harvey who has experience of both a local records centre and national experience with the Ispot programme giving a though provoking talk on the missing links between local and national records. Roger Morris reported on the Hoverfly Recording Scheme and the

problems associated with maintaining the enthusiasm of people who had benefited from the excellent training programme he and Stuart Ball organise. Trevor James (a past Chairman of NFBR) gave an outline of things that need to be considered nationally in *Putting records to work – indicators, predictors, criteria*. Finally Tom Oliver from the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology talked on “Assessing the resilience of local ecological networks” A fuller report on the conference is available in *Newsletter* 46.

The following day many members joined local naturalists at Studland surveying South Haven Peninsula for the National Trust’s Diver project.

4. MEMBERSHIP REPORT.

Total membership at the end of 2013 stood at 144. This is a drop of 12 from the end of 2012. There have been 11 additions (two organisations and nine individuals) and 23 removals. Many of those removed have not paid subscriptions for two or more years. A severe restriction in local government financing has resulted in many organisations that have previously supported NFBR being unable to do so with numerous changes in personnel. However 73% of members had paid in 2013.

5. FINANCIAL REPORT.

Income is recorded on its date of receipt, whilst expenditure may include VAT for which we are not registered. Although subscription income is marginally down on 2012, we have outstanding invoices, which cover the shortfall. With an increased attendance at the conference coupled with lower costs the conference made a surplus of £1360 against the 2012 loss. [2012 (581)]. The donation of £250 represented consultancy work undertaken on behalf of a registered charity.

Council travel costs were down by £176 in 2013 and the trustees wish to express thanks to those members or their employers who carried their own costs. Publication of the *Newsletter* electronically has produced significant savings and the trustees wish to express thanks to CEH for printing around 20 copies for those members who do not receive electronic copies.

STATEMENT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE’S (TRUSTEES’) RESPONSIBILITIES.

The Charities Act 1993 requires the Executive Committee of the National Forum for Biological Recording to prepare a financial statement for each financial period. In preparing these accounts, the Executive Committee has adopted the recommendations laid out in the Statement of Recommended Practice - Accounting and Reporting by Charities – (SORP 2005) issued by the Accounting Standards Board and confirmed by the Charity Commissioners. The Executive considers that in preparing these accounts, it has used appropriate accounting policies, consistently applied and supported by reasonable and prudent judgements and estimates and has complied with current statutory requirements and the charity’s constitution.

The Executive Committee is responsible for keeping proper accounting records to enable it to comply with the Charities Act 1993. The Executive Committee is also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Forum and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approved by the Trustees and signed on their behalf

John A Newbould (Secretary)
1st April 2014.

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE NATIONAL FORUM FOR BIOLOGICAL RECORDING

I report on the accounts of the National Forum for Biological Recording for the year ended 31st December 2013, which are set out on page six

Respective responsibilities of the trustees (National Forum for Biological Recording) and the examiner.

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this period (under section 43(2) of the Charities Act 1993 (the 1993 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- . examine the accounts (under section **43(3)(a)** of the 1993 Act);
- . to follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners (under **section 43(7)(b)** of the 1993 Act); and
- . to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of the independent examiner's statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent examiner's statement.

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:-

- (1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with **section 41** of the 1993 Act; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 1993 Act

have not been met; or

- (2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Shirley Bell
The Cottage,
7 Grammar School Lane,
Northallerton DL6 1DA

Income and Expenditure for the year ending 31 December 2013

	Note	2013 £	2012 £
Income			
Subscriptions	2	1,330	1,440
Conference & AGM	1	3,927	1,895
Donation		250	-
Miscellaneous Income		-	-
Bank Interest		2	3
		<u>5,509</u>	<u>3,338</u>
Expenditure			
Conference	1	2,567	2,476
Administration		-	25
Website Costs		5	5
Newsletter Costs		-	382
Council Meeting Travel Costs		911	1,087
Contribution to NBN		340	340
2011-2015 Strategy Document		-	-
Subscription Reimbursement	2	-	20
APPG Biodiversity Membership		240	240
NPPF Conference Attendance		-	254
Bank Charge		-	15
		<u>4,062</u>	<u>4,843</u>
Surplus (loss) of Income over Expenditure		<u>£ 1,447</u>	<u>-£ 1,505</u>

Balance Sheet at 31st December 2013

Current Assets			
High Interest Bank Account		4,476	4,474
Current Account		2,115	610
Conference 2013 pre-payment	1	-	841
Un-cashed cheque 100506 from 2012		-	60
		<u>6,591</u>	<u>5,144</u>
Current Liabilities			
Creditors		-	-
Subscriptions in advance	2	-	-
		<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Net Current Assets		<u>£ 6,591</u>	<u>£ 5,144</u>
Represented by			
Capital b/f		5,144	
Surplus (loss) for the year		1,447	
		<u>£ 6,591</u>	
Conference surplus (loss)	1	519	(581)
Total subscriptions	2	1,330	1,420

membership end of 2012 - 156

membership end of 2013 - 144

plus 11 and minus 23

Approved by Council 28th January 2014

National Forum for Biological Recording

Charity No 1152948

www.NFBR.org.uk



NFBR in 2013
Conference at the R.N.L.I.
College, Poole in April followed
by a field trip to the Studland
N.N.R. to assist with recording
for the Cyril Diver project.