Somerset Environmental Records Centre

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Annual Report 2025-26

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Somerset Environmental Records Centre

*Recording **our** environment*

Introduction

‘ I’m writing this introduction, having only been in post at SERC for the latter six months of the year, so it’s been a good opportunity for me to also reflect on the first 6 months of SERC’s efforts, whilst the team provided summaries for this report. Having run the Devon Biodiversity Records Centre for 15 years, I’ve worked closely with SERC on cross border collaborations on numerous occasions, but I now have the pleasure as Head of both DBRC & SERC, to get involved at a much deeper level. And start to build relationships with SERC’s stakeholders and partners, and support and direct the team, in delivery of SERCs mission.

I’m mindful of the great work that the SERC team and wider SWT colleagues have undertaken in recent years, to maintain momentum with the centre’s development, in what have been uncertain political times. For example, LERCs remain central to delivery and monitoring of local and national policies and initiatives, such as the Local Nature Recovery Strategy, but seldom have the resourcing to fully play their part. In addition to external influences, internally, this last year has seen the SERC team tackle significant operational challenges, with reduced capacity, but, we’ve come out of the other side, and we hope for a busy, but smoother year ahead. In the coming 12 months, we aim to concentrate on doing what we do well, but more, to continue to absorb new learning and technology, and turn AI to our advantage responsibly, within a robust framework. There is much we already know about Somerset’s rich ecological landscape, but also so much to discover, and share. ‘

Ian Egerton
Head of the Devon & Somerset Environmental Records Centres.

The Somerset Environmental Records Centre (SERC) is hosted by the Somerset Wildlife Trust and is based at the Trust offices in Taunton. The core work of SERC is to gather, manage and supply biological and geological data, as well as hold the county list of sites recognised for their natural value. Data gathered by SERC is used to build up a comprehensive picture of the biodiversity and geodiversity of Somerset, which helps to monitor the state of the natural environment.

Staff and volunteers

SERC currently has five permanent staff members; one full-time and four part-time members of staff:

- Ian Egerton – Head of Devon & Somerset Environmental Records Centres (Joined Oct 2025);
- Ann Fells – Ecologist;
- Tony Price – Data Management Officer;
- Ellen Phillpot – Data Specialist as of Oct 2025 (previously Interim Manager);
- Anne-Marie Grey –Admin Assistant

We currently have 4 active data processing volunteers and 2 active Local Wildlife Site volunteers

Partners

The SERC Executive Management Group consists of representatives from each of the following partners, some of which hold Service Level Agreements (SLAs) with SERC: -

- A co-opted member from a leading specialist group in the county (currently the Somerset Rare Plants Group);
- Somerset Council;
- Somerset Wildlife Trust;
- Wessex Water;
- South West Water;
- Exmoor National Park

Key performance data and achievements

Data management

During 2025-2026, SERC achieved the following: -

- Currently 4.3 million records in the database – increase of 900,000 records
- 95,000 records entered by SERC staff
- Logging 223 spreadsheets
- Imported 482 spreadsheets
- New data sharing agreement made with BCT Jan 2026

Local Wildlife Sites

20 sites surveyed, 26 sites went to panel. The majority of site re designations and boundary changes were approved.

Local Geological Sites

SGG led the reviewing and surveying of current and potential sites. After panel 1 site was de listed, 2 new sites added and 1 site had a boundary extension .

Projects

Co-ran the BIG Count Citizen science project, 4th year of it running
Assisted in production of the LNRS

Data supply

Service Level Agreements (SLAs)

In 2025-26, SERC held SLAs to supply data on sites (both geological and biological), habitats and species to the following partners: -

- Exmoor National Park Authority;
- Somerset County Council;
- Somerset Wildlife Trust;
- Quantock Hills
- South West Water;
- Wessex Water;

We also hold partnerships of data sharing with the Environment Agency organised through the Association of Local Environmental Record Centres (ALERC), and Network Rail organised through Devon Environmental Records Centre on behalf of South West record centres.

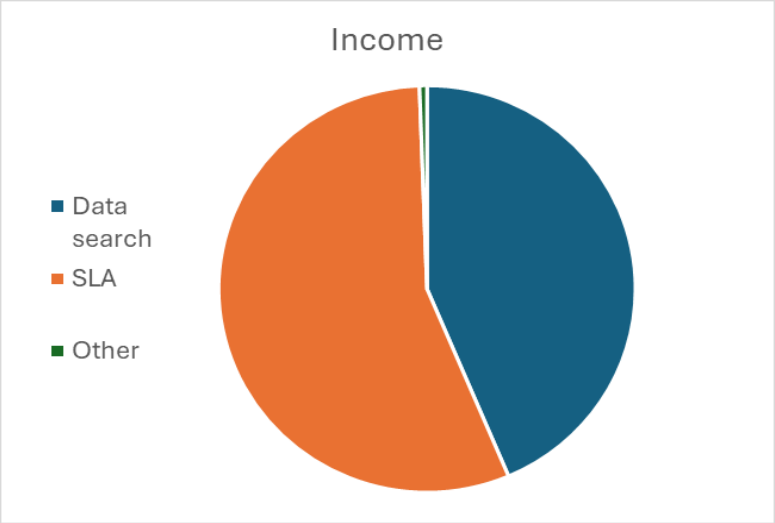
Data searches

Client type	Commercial	Landowner	Parish Planning	Partnership	Other	Total
My LERC	428	37	0	2	0	**467**
SERC	8	0	1	0	18	**26**

Financial summary

Income

The majority of SERC's income comes from SLAs and data searches - income during 2025/26.



Expenditure

Most of SERC's expenditure results from staff SERC's expenditure during 2025-26.

