

# ***Recorder 6***

## **Managing Data Access in *Recorder 6***

Sarah Shaw

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## Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction</b> .....	4
<b>2</b>	<b>Survey Level Restrictions</b> .....	4
<b>2.1</b>	<b>Reporting</b> .....	5
<b>2.2</b>	<b>Exporting</b> .....	7
<b>3</b>	<b>Recorder Level Restrictions</b> .....	8
<b>3.1</b>	<b>Creating an access policy document</b> .....	9
<b>3.2</b>	<b>Associating an individual with a document</b> .....	9
<b>3.3</b>	<b>Using an XML report to only export records by recorders associated with an access policy</b> .....	10
<b>3.4</b>	<b>Other XML reports available</b> .....	12
<b>3.5</b>	<b>Modifying the reports to use your documents</b> .....	12
<b>4</b>	<b>Record Level Restrictions</b> .....	13
<b>4.1</b>	<b>Reporting</b> .....	13
<b>4.2</b>	<b>Exporting</b> .....	15
<b>5</b>	<b>Summary</b> .....	16

## 1 Introduction

This tutorial is suitable for all skill levels.

When managing data such as species and habitat records, the situation often occurs when some data can be made more available than others. This could be for a variety of reasons, you may have agreed with the data supplier to distribute the data further, records could be considered “sensitive” (where disclosing the record’s location could potentially cause that species harm), or perhaps the data is also held elsewhere and redistributing the data could cause version control problems. Managing data access in Recorder 6 can be approached in a number of different ways. This document outlines some of the ways in which access can be restricted at the survey, recorder and record level.

## 2 Survey Level Restrictions

In Recorder 6 surveys can be organised by survey ‘tags’, which are displayed in the observation hierarchy as top-level folder icons. Survey tags essentially allow surveys to be grouped into categories. Surveys can be assigned to one tag or more, and these can be used to determine which surveys will be included in reports and exports. For further information on survey tags and how they are created please see the ‘Survey Tags’ section in Recorder’s Help files. The main advantage of using tags is that you can flag a large amount of records as having access restrictions. However this can only be applied at the survey level and therefore subsets of data within surveys cannot be flagged. Also as the tagging system is flexible and not specifically designed to control data access, there is the risk that a user not familiar with procedures could potentially export restricted data.

## 2.1 Reporting

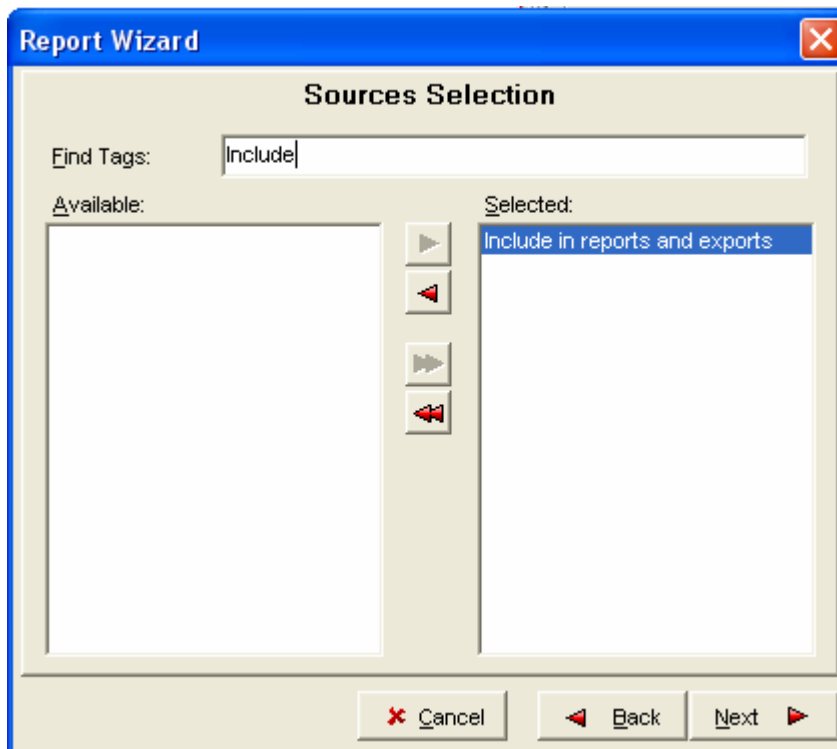
Tags can be used to ensure that a particular group of surveys are included/excluded in reports. At the moment *excluding* particular tags is only possible using custom written XML reports, but you can use the report wizard (and saved reports created this way) to *include* particular tags in the report output. Therefore, if the Report Wizard is the primary tool used for reporting purposes, it would be better to have say, a generic 'include data in reports and exports' survey tag, than an 'exclude data' tag. To include surveys that have a particular tag open the Report Wizard (**Reports – Wizard**) and in the first screen select to 'Restrict report to one or more sources' (as below):



Click [**Next**] and in the following screen select '**Survey Tags**':



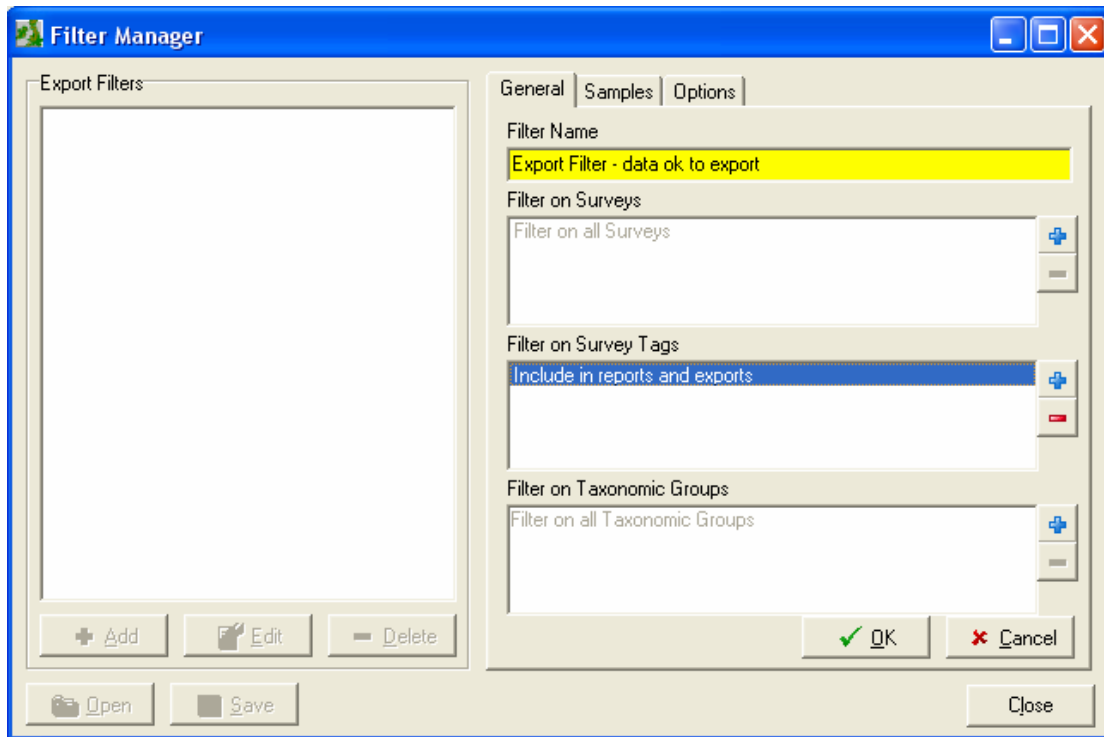
Click [Next]. In the 'Sources Selection' (below) type the first few letters of the name of the survey tag(s) you wish to use. Select these from the 'Available' pane on the right hand side of the screen and then click on the [Insert] icon so that this tag is added to the 'Selected' pane.



When you have added all of the survey tags that you wish to include in the report click [Next] and proceed with specifying the rest of the report.

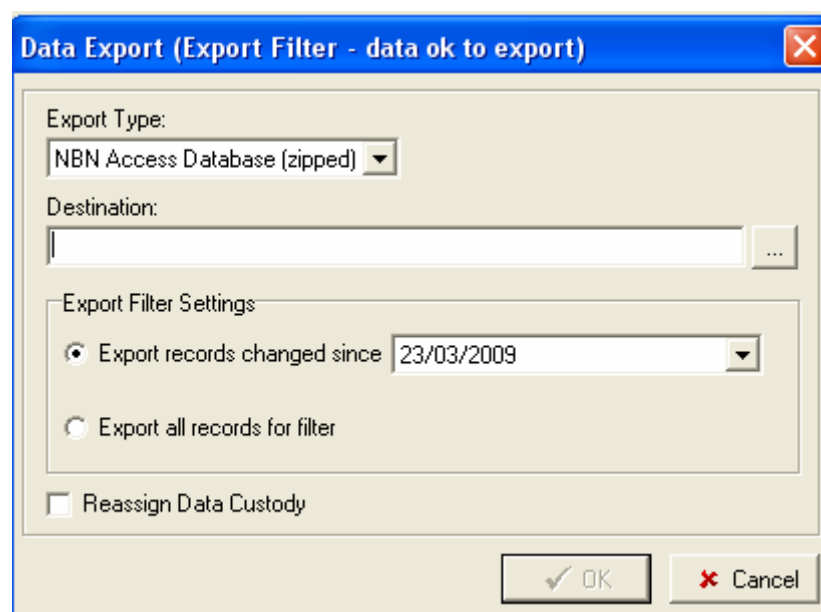
## 2.2 Exporting

Survey tags can also be used to restrict data exported. Again, this works by selecting to *include* rather than *exclude* particular tags. To create an export filter in Recorder 6 go to **Tools – Export Management – Manage Export Filters**. The following screen is displayed:



In the above screen you can create an export that, when used, will only include data in the export file from surveys that have the survey tag(s) selected. Click on the [Add] button to create a new export filter and enter a filter name. Then click on the [+] button on the left-hand side of the ‘Filter on Survey Tags’ field and type in the first few characters of the tag you wish to use and click [OK]. This tag should now be added to this field. Select to filter on further tags and other options if required, and then click [OK] to create the export filter. You can then close this screen.

To use the export filter go to **Tools – Export Management – Export Using Filter** and select the name of the filter you have created. The following screen will be displayed:



Select the export type, destination and other export filter settings and then click [OK] to export the data in the format selected.

**Please note that the survey tags facility is a local organisational tool and if using the report wizard this information will not be included in the report output or be exported.**

### 3 Recorder Level Restrictions

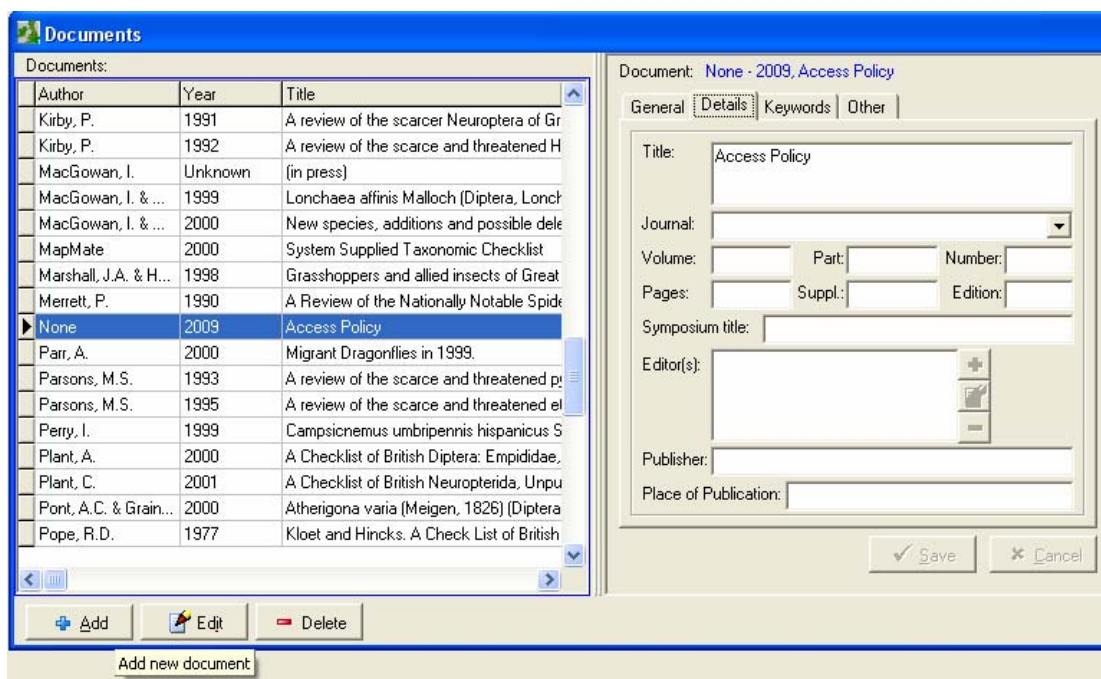
A common reason for restricting access to records is down to individual preference. Sometimes recorders want to restrict access to the records they have provided because of fears of data being misused or perhaps because they are completing a publication. Restricting the inclusion of records made by particular recorder(s) within reports and exports in Recorder 6 is trickier. The results output by the Report Wizard can be restricted to only include those records made a selected recorder or recorders by selecting 'Restrict report to one or more sources' and then 'Individuals (Survey Event Recorders)' - please see above screenshots in section 2.1. However, as this option suggests, this restricts the report at the survey event level, and therefore might cause complications if you have multiple recorders for one survey event. This process would also be very time-consuming, if say for example, you wanted to include all records made by recorders who had signed an access policy, not only in terms of adding them all in this screen, but also in identifying which recorders had signed the policy.

JNCC has developed a relatively simple solution to this problem. In Recorder a 'Document' is created which represents the access policy, and then this is associated with individuals using the 'Source' tab. JNCC has provided five XML reports associated with this solution, one of which can be used to restrict the report output to only include records by recorders who are associated with the access policy. This solution may not meet all of your or your organisation's requirements, but should at the very least highlight the possibilities and provide a step in the right direction. The advantage of this approach is that it allows you to quickly export records submitted by

particular recorders, and you have a system whereby this ‘selection’ of recorders can be reused, modified etc. However reporting (without customisation of XML reports) is at the moment limited, and again there is a risk that users unfamiliar with your procedures could still potentially export restricted records. The following sections outline the steps required to implement this solution.

### 3.1 Creating an access policy document

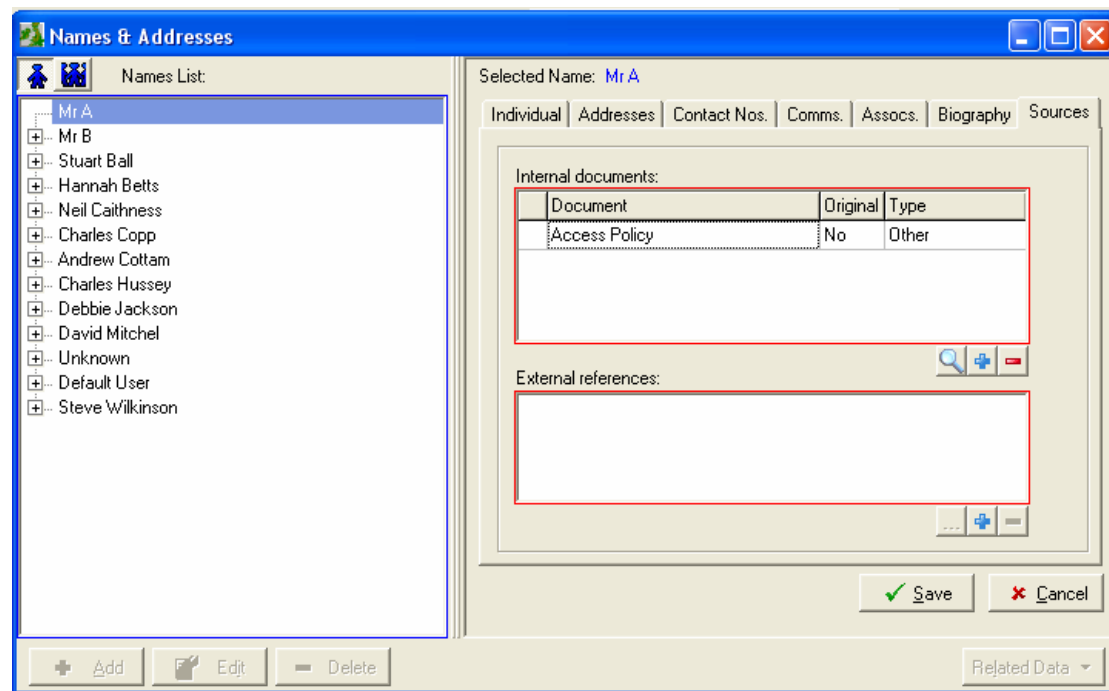
In Recorder open the Document screen by clicking on the **[Insert]** icon or selecting **Data Entry – Documents**. Here create a new document by clicking on the **[Add]** button (see below):



As above, you could for example, create a document that reflects your organisations ‘Access Policy’. Association with this document could mean that the individual has agreed for their data to be distributed externally.

### 3.2 Associating an individual with a document

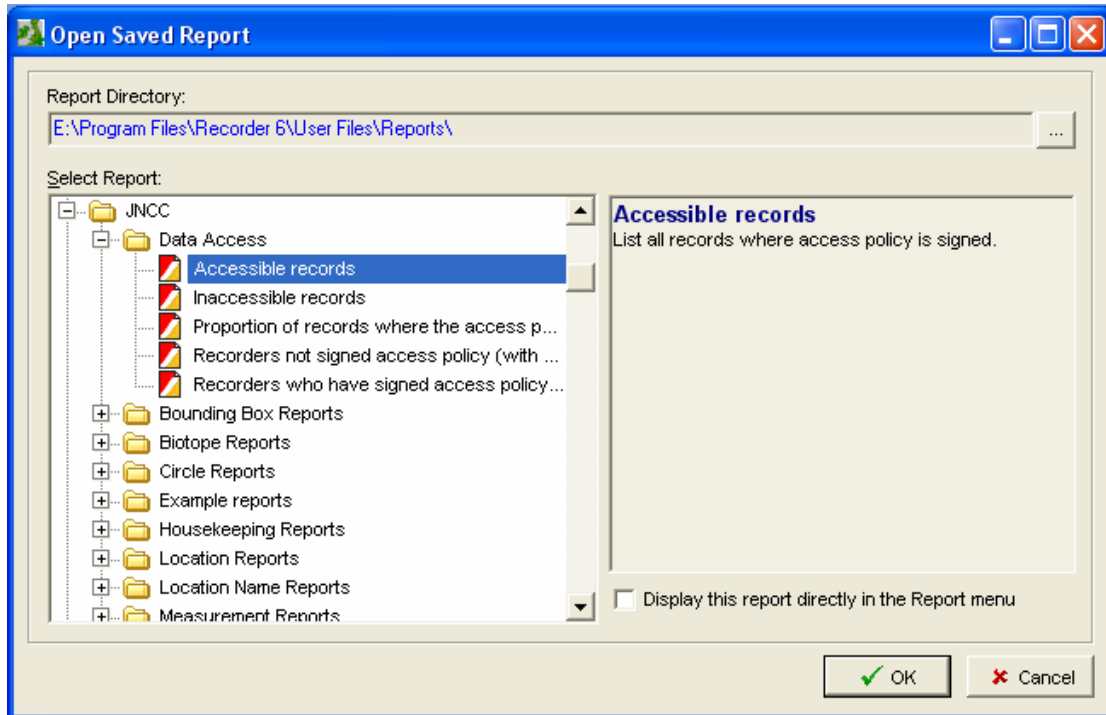
Open the Names and Addresses hierarchy, select an individual (or organisation) and click on the **[Edit]** button. Then click on the **Sources tab**, browse to and select the document, and **[Save]** the changes (see below):



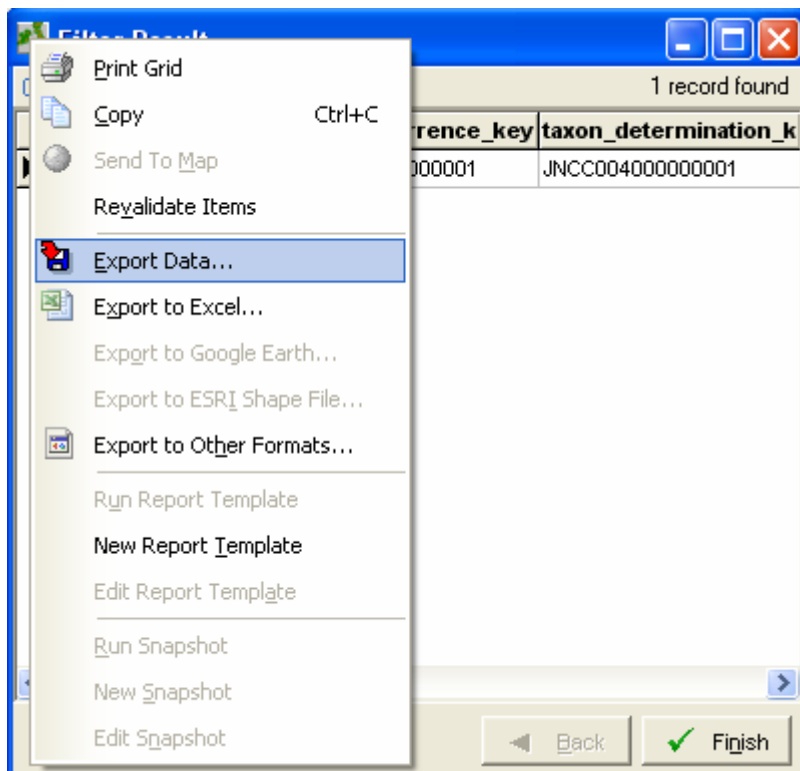
### 3.3 Using an XML report to only export records by recorders associated with an access policy

An XML report “JNCC\_Accessible\_Records” is now available that will return all records by recorders who are associated with a particular document. By default, this report restricts the results to only include records where the recorder is associated with the “NBN Open Access Policy”, a document that is now supplied with Recorder 6. However, this report can be easily modified to use any other document you have added to your system – please see section 3.5 for information.

To make the report available in Recorder 6, copy the ‘JNCC\_Accessible\_Records.xml’ file to your Recorder 6\User Files\Reports folder. If you copied this file whilst Recorder was still open, you will need to close and restart Recorder. To run the report go to **Reports – Run**, expand the ‘JNCC’ and then ‘**Data Access**’ folder, select the ‘**Accessible Records**’ report and click [OK]:



The report produced perhaps isn't very useful by itself, but the results can then be exported (including the survey, sample and other relevant details) in a number of different formats (for details of the formats available please see Recorder's Help files). To do this click on the **[Report Output]** button and then select **'Export Data...'** as below:



### 3.4 Other XML reports available

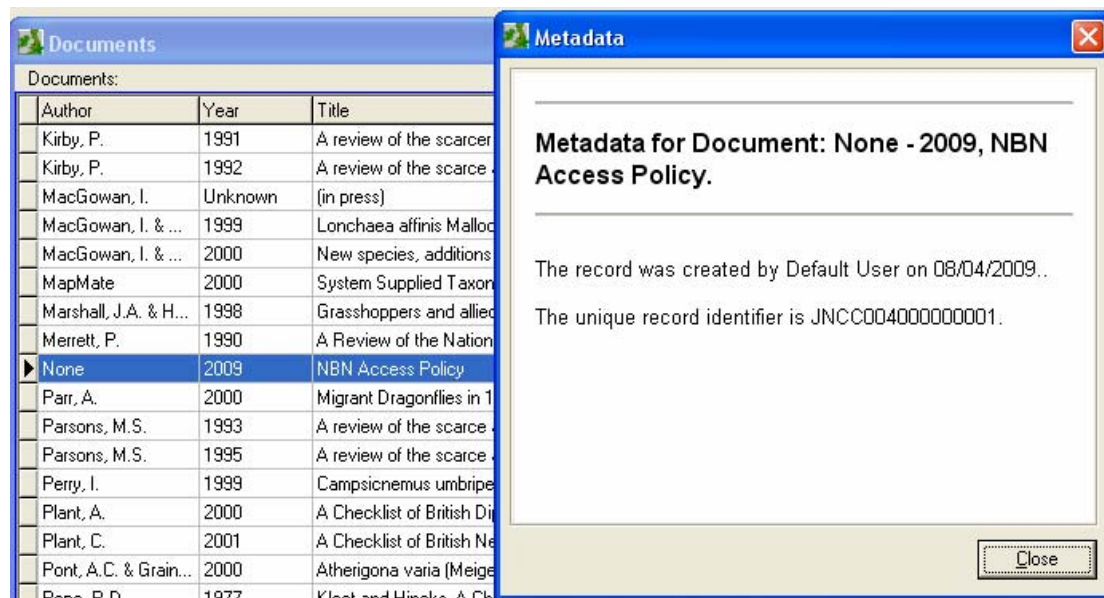
If you decide to use the approach outlined above and manage data access in Recorder using agreement to an access policy document, JNCC has also made the following reports available:

- JNCC\_Inaccessible\_Records – lists all records by recorders who have not signed the access policy
- JNCC\_Proportion\_Records\_Available - displays the number of records in the database where at least one recorder associated with the record has signed the access policy, and the number of records that have been made solely by an individual who has not signed the access policy
- JNCC\_Recorders\_Signed\_Access\_Policy – lists all the recorders who have signed the access policy with a count of the records made by them
- JNCC\_Recorders\_No\_Access\_Policy - lists all of the recorders who have not signed access policy along with a count of the records made by them

For details on how to modify these reports so that they use documents you have created in Recorder please see section 3.5.

### 3.5 Modifying the reports to use your documents

Each XML report mentioned in sections 3.3 and 3.4 can be modified so that the results returned are restricted by a document of your choice. To do this open Recorder 6 and the Documents screen (see below), then select the document you want the report to use and click on the metadata icon:



Select and copy the unique record identifier key e.g. “JNCC004000000001”, then close Recorder.

Then open the Recorder 6\User Files\Reports folder and right-click on the XML report file that you would like to modify (as a precaution it may be worthwhile copying the report before editing). Open the file using Notepad (or equivalent). Then locate the following line within the report:

```
set @documentKey = 'JNCC0043000A0012'
```

Replace the highlighted text with the unique key you have copied, e.g. “JNCC004000000001”, then save and close the file.

Now when you reopen Recorder and run this report the results should be restricted by the new document you have selected.

**Note: It may also be worth changing the filename and the name of the report, folder and description (as displayed in Recorder), so that it is not confused with the original created by JNCC. For further information please refer to Recorder’s Help files.**

## 4 Record Level Restrictions

You may want to stop individual records (at the taxon or biotope occurrence level) from being included in reports or exports because they hold sensitive information, or perhaps because the Recorder does not wish for these particular records to be distributed further. This can be achieved in Recorder by marking the record as *confidential*.

The confidential flag system is tightly integrated into the core functionality and should therefore be considered very reliable – the risk of reporting on or exporting confidential records is minimal. However, the system is completely polar (all information associated with a record is either included or not) and managing data access at this level may take a significant amount of time.

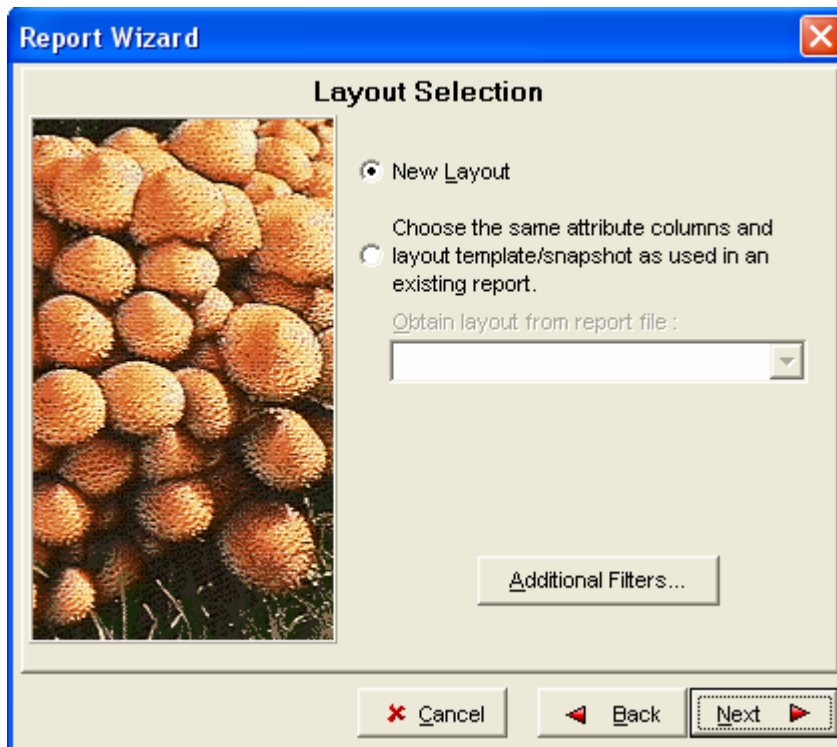
To flag a record as confidential, open the observation hierarchy, select a taxon or biotope occurrence and click on the [**Edit**] button. Then tick the confidential checkbox in the General tab and click on the [**Save**] button. Alternatively a ‘**Confidential**’ field can be included in import files (please see ‘**Import Wizard – data format**’ in Recorder’s Help files).

**Please Note: Records that are flagged as confidential can only be viewed by users who have ‘Full Edit’ access or above.**

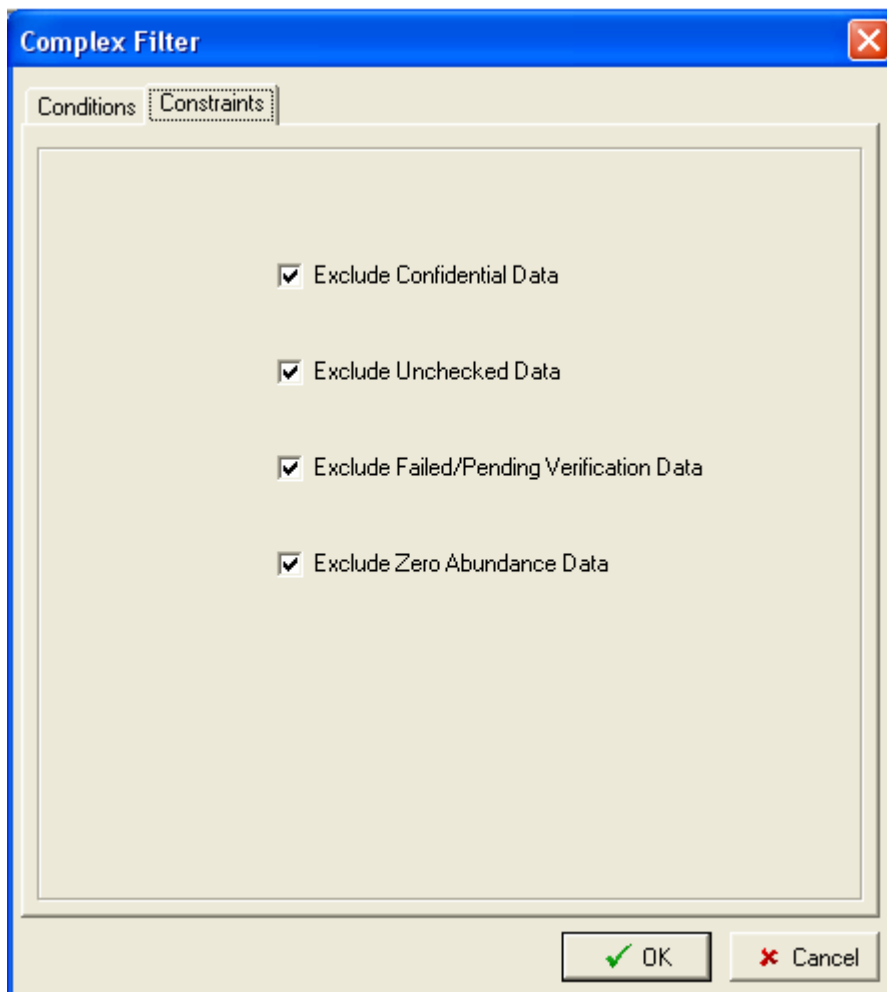
For further information please see ‘**Confidential observations**’ in Recorder’s Help file.

### 4.1 Reporting

In the following screen in the report wizard you can ensure that confidential records are not included in the report produced:



Here click on the [Additional Filters] button and then click on the 'Constraints' tab to view a number of options:



To ensure that confidential records are not included in the report, the first option in this screen must be checked (and is by default).

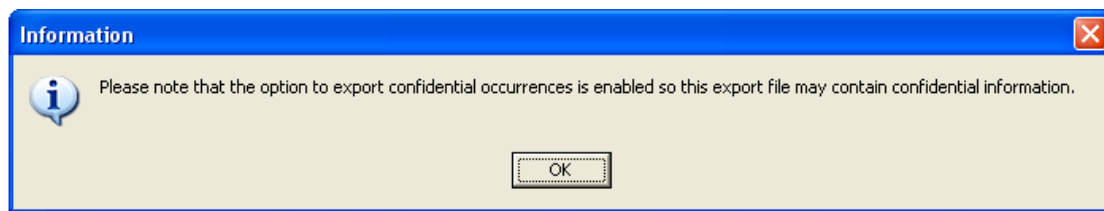
Custom written XML reports can also choose to include or exclude confidential records.

## 4.2 Exporting

Firstly, records that have flagged as confidential can only be exported if the system manager has selected the option to 'Enable export of confidential occurrences' in the **Tools – Options** screen. This option overrides everything else, so if you *always* want to exclude confidential records from exports simply ensure this option remains unchecked.

If in some circumstances you do wish to export confidential records then this option should be checked. Even if this option has been enabled, only users with 'Full Edit' access and above are able to export confidential records.

When you have enabled the export of confidential records, any export file created (by users with 'Full Edit' access and above) will potentially contain confidential records and the following warning will be displayed:



The only way to stop the export of confidential records when this option is enabled is to export data after running a report in the report wizard. When the 'Exclude Confidential Data' option in the **Additional Filters – Constraints tab** is enabled (see section 3.1) the results will not contain any confidential records, and these records can then be exported using the [**Report Output**] button.

For further information on exporting data please see Recorder's Help file.

## 5 Summary

It would be useful to consider all of the above solutions when determining your approach to managing data access within Recorder. You may find that a combination of all of the above and/or other methods is needed. In summary, the confidential flag (at the record level) is the most appropriate solution if you are dealing with a small amount of genuinely sensitive records that need a high level of protection. The use of survey tags on the other hand, allows you to flag that a high number of records have restricted access, provided they are all part of one survey (or more). This method is easy to apply when individuals or other organisations have provided data as a whole survey, but not when you want to restrict access to a subset of data within a survey. The recorder level approach outlined has been documented specifically to help users manage and implement access policies, whereby individual recorders agree to the release of their data.