



COETIROEDD
GWELL
I GYMRU



BETTER
WOODLANDS
FOR WALES

Grantiau a chymorth
i greu a gwella coetiroedd

Grants and support for creating
and improving woodlands

Approach to IT Infrastructure & IT Skills

Introduction

Forestry Commission Wales' (FCW) Better Woodlands for Wales (BWW) scheme supports sustainable woodland management through sound management planning and grant-aid. Management Planners approved by FCW will prepare all Management Plans and these will be a precursor to grant-aid. Some plans may require the input of Specialist Assessors.

The BWW process will be administered using the G&L Online Service, a web-based computer software application held centrally on a Forestry Commission server. Planners will access G&L Online from their workplace via the Internet. Once a plan is approved the owner or others (with the owner's permission) can access it electronically via the Internet.

A key requirement of the Planner and Specialist role is to have the appropriate IT skills and infrastructure. Planners accessing G&L Online electronically via the Internet will prepare all plans. Specialists or Planners using electronic templates will prepare all Specialist Assessments.

This document specifies the IT hardware, software, communication links and skills required by Management Planners and Specialist Assessors working within the Better Woodlands for Wales scheme.

All Management Planners and Specialists must read this document. It is their responsibility to ensure that they have the appropriate skills and equipment.

BWW Approach to IT Infrastructure & Skills

It will be impossible to prepare Management Plans without the appropriate IT infrastructure. People without the appropriate IT infrastructure, or who are unwilling to get it upon becoming a Planner or Specialist, will not be approved as a Management Planner or Specialist Assessor.

Anyone can access G&L Online using the Internet to make a Felling Licence Application or request an Environmental Impact Assessment Determination.

Hardware: Planners and Specialists must have a PC which is capable of running Windows 2000 or higher (e.g. Windows XP) and has a 56k modem or higher (preferably a broadband

connection). Hard-disc space of at least 100 megabytes is required. The PC must have a minimum XGA screen resolution (1024 x 768).

Software: Planners must have software which is capable of using Microsoft Word (.doc) and Excel (.xls). This includes saving as .doc and .xls. They must also have Microsoft Internet Explorer 5+ web browser software. No other browsers are supported. Specialists must have software capable of using Microsoft Word 97 or later and Excel 97 or later.

IT Links: Planners must have a URL Internet connection and associated browser. Broadband would be beneficial but not essential.

IT Skills: Planners must have the following IT skills:

1. Ability to use IT hardware and software to access the G&L Online Service via the Internet.
2. Ability to use the G&L Online Service Management Plan formats. Training will be given on how to use these but Planners must be familiar with the basic principles of IT use e.g. saving and storing data, filing and data input.
3. Ability to use computer word processing and spreadsheet applications.

Specialist Assessors must be able to use word processing and spreadsheet software applications.

Geographical Information System: Some Planners may want to send electronic GIS generated maps to FCW instead of paper maps. This may be acceptable but is not a requirement of the scheme. FCW uses ESRI GIS products which are capable of importing most other GIS data formats. However, users should check the compatibility of their product with FCW. See 'FCW Approach to Digital Mapping' for full GIS rules.

Guidance: The following points are for guidance only.

- Any PC manufactured in the last five years should be capable of accessing G&L Online Service.
- A computer with a 56k-modem and standard Internet connection should be adequate for accessing G&L Online Service. However, a Broadband connection will increase speed and usability.
- Planners wishing to use GIS maps should seek advice on hardware and compatibility with ESRI Shapefiles from the software provider.