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BETTER
WOODLANDS
FOR WALES

NEWSLETTER

Issue 6 - February 2007



**Customer
Reference
Numbers
necessary for all
WGS contract
holders**



Editors note

Our main feature in this, the first issue of 2007, highlights the importance of Customer Reference Numbers for Woodland Grant Schemes contract holders. We look at the current situation with Internet Explorer 7.0™ and the Land Information Search and also urge Management Planners to encourage owners to register with Better Woodlands for Wales (BWW) and use the electronic system, G&L Online Service. There is much more in addition to this so please continue to read on.

Customer Reference Numbers (CRN's) and the Woodland Grant Scheme (WGS)

In the October Newsletter we explained that BWW applicants must be registered with a CRN with the Assembly's Rural Payments Division before their BWW management plan can be approved. Management Planners were asked to contact applicants about this and if appropriate to forward a standard letter (that accompanied the Newsletter) to their clients. If you have not done this and want to get hold of the letter it can be found on the FC Website.

The Newsletter also indicated that we were having further discussions with the Rural Payments Division over whether it would be necessary for WGS contract holders to have a CRN. Unfortunately, the answer to this is **YES** and we have prepared a standard letter to explain this. Given that there are around 3,700 WGS contracts in Wales which contain unclaimed grants and that many owners have not retained an agent, we will send this letter directly to all the contract holders very soon.

A copy of the letter is attached for your information. It explains that we will publish, on our website, answers to common questions and guidance to help woodland owners get through the registration process. We would be pleased to hear about problems that people are having with registration. Please send these to con.sw@forestry.gsi.gov.uk so that we can collate them and provide useful guidance.

Latest advice on the Land Information Search & Internet Explorer 7.0™ conflict is provided across page



A Letter of Authority is needed for BWW applications where the agent is acting as a signatory on behalf of the owner

In order to prevent any unnecessary delay in making your grant payments, we urge people to register in the next few weeks before Divisional Offices are flooded with the 2007 Single Application Forms from every farm in Wales!

The CRN will initially be used to register the beneficiary of the grant i.e. the WGS applicant. For the time being, grant claims will continue to be paid by the FC to the payee identified on the WGS or BWW contract. We will keep you informed about any other changes.

BWW – Land Information Search (LIS) functionality and Internet Explorer Version 7 Conflict

In December, Management Planners received urgent notification that the Forestry Commission LIS Internet Service would not work if accessed by a browser configured using Microsoft's latest Internet Explorer 7.0™ software.

Information had been highlighted for some time on both FC Wales's and FC England's respective web sites about the system incompatibility yet a number of reports were received in both England and Wales that a number of you had recently accepted and installed the automatic Microsoft™ updates in relation to upgrading your existing Internet Explorer 6.0™ software packages to the latest Internet Explorer 7.0™ edition.

We advised at the time that there would be no other option than to uninstall Internet Explorer 7.0™ and suggested that you sought professional advice on how this should be undertaken in relation to your own personal computer.

You may also wish to visit the main Microsoft™ web site for information on Internet Explorer 6.0™ and how you can download it. The link for this page is <http://www.microsoft.com/windows/ie/ie6/downloads/default.mspx#ELC>.

Although tests have now been carried out which show the problem to have been resolved, technically, Forestry Commission Wales still only recommends and supports the use of IE 6.0 – upgrading would be at the risk of the user. If users upgrade and problems become apparent we would ask that you report them to our Technical Services Team for further investigation.

Agents as signatories

As was the case with the old Woodland Grant Scheme, agents who want to act as signatories on behalf of the applicant will need to provide FCW with a signed letter from the applicant giving their permission to do so.

A template letter of authority can be obtained from the Technical Services team - contact details towards the end of this issue.



20-year felling and restock plans required for submission with the Management Plan



BWW Technical Group

Thanks to everyone who expressed an interest in joining the BWW Technical Group. Julian Miller, Graham Heath and Rob Marsh have been chosen to join the panel. The first meeting will be during February.

Mapping requirements for consultation

We have had some questions in relation to consultation arrangements within BWW. The printed booklet: 'A guide to information sharing & consultation within Better Woodlands for Wales', explains on page three, that plans will be approved in outline for 10 years. Grant aid and a felling licence will be approved in detail for the next 5 years, but if no major changes are proposed for the next 5-year period, there will be no need for additional consultation.'

For plantation forests in which clearfelling is proposed, a 20-year felling and restock plan is required, in line with the United Kingdom Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS). A long-term felling / restocking plan will avoid the need to re-consult after the initial 5 year Plan of Operations. It will be the responsibility of the Woodland Officer dealing with the case to establish whether this is necessary for the small/farm woodlands.

We ask that two maps are sent in with the application. The first needs to cover the detailed felling and restocking proposals for the first five years and will be digitised by the Technical Services Team. The second should highlight the long-term plans and will be scanned and attached to the case.

Please note that we cannot approve a plan that has not undergone the consultation identified in the Foundation Plan. If evidence of consultation is not provided, the plan will be returned to the planner. The Woodland Officer will only carry out consultation when the Planner has tried but failed to get a response from a statutory consultee or where the planner and consultee cannot agree.

Staff changes

With five new appointments in so many months the final few pieces of the puzzle are falling in to place. Greg Vickers assumed the role of G&L Operations Manager in October and quickly set about the task of filling the G&L Support Managers role and the Technical Managers position. The trawl resulted in Patrick Green being appointed to the position of Support Manager, moving from a Woodland Officer role in Mid Wales and Martyn Potton joining the FC Wales team as Technical Manager, leaving his position in Cambridge as GIS Manager. Simon Mead also took up post as Woodland Officer in West Wales in place of Richard Curtis and Ken Smith is returning from Scotland to rejoin the team shortly as Woodland Officer in place of Patrick.



**Register with
FCW G&L
Online Service
now and
manage your
BWW
application
from the
comfort of
your armchair!**



Use of G&L Online service

FCW are urging Management Planners to encourage owners to take full advantage of our G&L Online Service.

Designed with the user very much in mind, there are many facets to the system that will benefit both agents and landowners alike and allow them to manage their BWW contract more easily once approved.

The route to registration is via our web site and upon the completion of a simple, one off, registration process an email will be sent to you confirming a username and password which will enable successful login in to the system at any time that is convenient.

The major features of this service are that the owner or agent will be able to follow the progress of the management plan online while it is being prepared. Once the plan is approved they will be able to request amendments, manage their plan including running reports and make claims online.

To register you can access the Forestry Commission Wales web site using the link www.eforestry.gov.uk

Alternatively you can enter the Wales [Grants & Licences](#) section, clicking on the top left-hand menu link, [G&L Online](#). From here scroll down to the bottom of the page and select [Go to G&L Online Service](#). The top bulleted option, [G&L Online Service – to make a grant application online](#) will take you into the G&L Online Service from which you are able to select the [click here to register](#) option.

Once you access this page there is a help icon in the form of a question mark which will give you more information about how to proceed with the registration.

You must now use your ID and password to log in to the system and in order to fully activate your account you need to email the Technical Services team and inform them that you have set up as a new user. The team will then attach you to your case and you will be able to view your scheme details in full.

Digitising delays in the North

Throughout December the BWW Technical Services team in Ruthin were busier than usual but faced with the wrong kind of technical challenges!

A software programming error and the installation of a new telephone system caused significant problems. The team has also been digitising a number of WGS claims. Locating these faults and rectifying the problems encountered meant that the team was without the necessary facilities for a considerable period of time.

We can only apologise for any inconvenience caused as a result of these events and reassure you that all issues have now been resolved and the team have now cleared the backlog of case work.

FCW BWW Internet Site Update

All available Specialist assessor Continuous Cover Forestry (CCF) / Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS) / Stakeholder templates and guidance documents are now on the main BWW Reference Library website, <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/infd-6upk3s>.

Please note that the most recent additions of SA03 (CCF) and SA08 (PAWS) are in the process of being updated and once completed will replace the existing pre launch BWW editions.

Also please note that a new "How to guide" GOH05 "How to prepare and submit a management plan" is now available on this same page. Likewise there are now, 90% complete, new reformatted / amended copies of the MP & SA application forms available.

Contact details

- General BWW enquiries: Telephone 0845 604 0845 or log on to www.forestry.gov.uk
- Technical queries: Email bww.ts@forestry.gov.uk
- CRN's: Email con.sw@forestry.gsi.gov.uk
- Microsoft web link:
<http://www.microsoft.com/windows/ie/ie6/downloads/default.msp#ELC>.
- G&L Online Service: Link www.eforestry.gov.uk
- WIG Cost Calculator queries: Email wig.costings@forestry.gsi.gov.uk
- Suggestions for future issues: Email Sam.davies@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

Next Issue:

April 2007

Current issue and back issues available on the Forestry Commission Wales web site www.forestry.gsi.gov.uk



**Contact details
and quick links
across page**

