



# Websites

Many potentially interested community members or potential participants in the planning process use computers to organise their own information and use the Internet to find out information about local events and activities. A Website can provide access to information about the forest or woodland and the planning process. By visiting the site people can get information on the planning area, the stages of planning, the implications of different alternatives and opportunities for participation. A regularly maintained, well-designed Website is good publicity and provides another avenue for beginning the process of bringing people into an active relationship with the forest or woodland. It is also a good, inexpensive medium to disseminate news, reports and other updated information about progress. Discussion lists enable interactive communication and provide a good opportunity to network.

## Resources and requirements

### Skills

- Good computer design and programming skills are needed, but these can be hired on a short-term basis.
- Good graphic design and writing skills are required to develop a site that people will want to visit and revisit.

### Resources

- Computers are needed for generating content and servers to provide access to users.
- Central network servers should be available for public access to information on equipment that receives routine maintenance.

### Time

- Regular updating is a continuing commitment.

## Useful sources of information

### Books

- Participatory approach to natural resource management: a guide book. T. Loikkanen (1999). Forest and Park Service, Finland.

### Web

- [www.communities.org.uk](http://www.communities.org.uk)
- Marking the Net Work: [www.makingthenetwork.org/index.htm](http://www.makingthenetwork.org/index.htm)

## Level of engagement

INFORMING: ★★ ★

CONSULTING: ★

INVOLVING:

PARTNERSHIP:

## Strengths

- The public can have access to current material.
- Distribution costs are low.
- Links to other information are relatively easy.
- Interested people who are distant from the local area are given the opportunity to see what is happening and find ways to have their opinions heard.

## Weaknesses

- The information is unavailable to people who do not have access to computers.
- Continual updating is required.
- Irrelevant responses can be generated which still require resources to serve.
- Website experts may be needed to build and manage the site.

- [www.ngflscotland.gov.uk](http://www.ngflscotland.gov.uk)
- Partnerships Online: [www.partnerships.org.uk](http://www.partnerships.org.uk)



Local Websites can be used to inform and consult people on forest plans (Forestry Commission Wales).

This toolbox is designed to assist Forestry Commission staff when they are considering which tools they could use to involve the public in the forest and woodland planning process. For more information please visit the website at: [www.forestry.gov.uk/toolbox](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/toolbox)