

Forestry Commission

2011 Annual Report on Statistical Surveys in Wales

Purpose

1. This report provides details of the statistical surveys carried out or authorised by the Forestry Commission in 2010-11, sets out the programme of surveys proposed for 2011-12, and presents outline plans for the following two years. Approval is now sought for the survey programme for 2011-12 to proceed in Wales.

Background

2. UK Government Departments are required to provide Ministers with an annual report on all the statistical surveys of businesses and local authorities carried out in the previous year and plans for future years. This report covers regular and ad hoc statistical surveys of businesses and local authorities in Wales. Some of these surveys run at the same time in Scotland and England, so summary information for the three countries and GB totals are presented in an Annex.

Administrative Burden Cost - Summary

3. The administrative burden cost, previously called the response burden, is the estimated cost of the staff time required to fill in the survey questionnaires. The hourly rates supplied by the Survey Control Unit of ONS have been used. In calculating burdens, account is taken of expected response rates, with a nominal cost estimated for each non-respondent. The number of ad hoc surveys and their total burden vary from year to year, depending on the requirements for research related to policy development and monitoring.

4. For surveys in 2010-11, the total administrative burden cost was around £5,100. This was around one third of the level planned, mainly as a result of a delayed start to the survey of woodland owners as part of the National Forest Inventory.

5. Approval is now sought for the programme of surveys to start in 2011-12, with an estimated administrative burden cost of £17,700. Outline plans have estimated administrative burden costs of £9,500 for 2012-13 and £12,400 for 2013-14.

Regular Surveys of Businesses

6. The Forestry Commission regularly carries out five voluntary surveys of businesses in Great Britain to gather information on sawmills, round fencing, private sector removals, pellet manufacture and forest nurseries. Results from the first four surveys and other enquiries to wood processing industries are published in Forestry Statistics and other

statistical publications available on the Forestry Commission website, and are also used in compiling UK statistical returns for international organisations. These surveys are reviewed each year with the Expert Group on Timber and Trade Statistics. Since 2007, a small survey of forest nurseries provides information on the use of improved stock.

7. In 2010-11, a total of 33 businesses in Wales were approached, with an estimated burden of £500. It is planned that the five surveys will continue to run each year with little change, giving a total burden of around £500 in each year.

Ad Hoc Surveys of Businesses in 2010-11

8. Two surveys were run across Great Britain in 2010-11 but not included in last year's plans. A conifer site restocking survey was run to evaluate current practice in restocking conifer sites in relation to problems arising from damage from adult *Hylobius abietis* (pine weevil) on newly planted trees. The survey approached around 200 businesses in Wales, giving a burden of around £1,600. A woodfuel boiler survey was run to establish the installed capacity of domestic woodfuel boilers. The survey approached around 25 businesses in Wales, giving a burden of around £400.

9. The start of the survey of woodland owners as part of the National Forest Inventory was postponed to 2011-12 (see below). The survey of private woodland owners in Wales as part of the EU funded MOTIVE project and the GB-wide Forest Business Health survey did not proceed.

Ad Hoc Surveys of Businesses – Plans for 2011-12

10. A survey of woodland owners is being considered as part of the National Forest Inventory to obtain background information on selected sample squares. The survey is expected to seek data from around 740 woodland owners in Wales in 2011-12, giving an estimated burden of £4,300 for businesses and £300 for local authorities.

11. A survey on potential jobs and related skills in forest management and harvesting is planned for 2011-12, approaching up to 800 businesses (farmers, woodland owners and others involved in forest management or harvesting), with a burden of up to £7,800. The possibility of combining this survey with the National Forest Inventory woodland owners survey is being pursued and is likely to result in a reduction to the overall administrative burden cost.

12. A short survey of around 150 community woodland groups is planned for 2011-12, with a burden of around £800.

13. The woodfuel boiler survey is expected to continue in 2011-12, approaching around 25 businesses in Wales, with a burden of around £400.

14. A Plant Health Service import/export customer survey is planned for 2011-12, but is only expected to approach up to 5 businesses in Wales, with a burden well under £100.

15. Previous outline plans for 2011-12 had included a continuation of a GB-wide Forest Business Health survey. This survey has been dropped from current plans.

16. We propose to make provision for other miscellaneous business surveys not yet identified to cover up to 120 businesses, with a burden up to £1,000.

Ad Hoc Surveys of Businesses – Outline Plans

17. The survey of woodland owners as part of the National Forest Inventory is expected to be a major ongoing requirement, as described above for 2011-12. Estimated burdens are around £4,400 in 2012-13 and £4,600 in 2013-14 for businesses and around £300 each year for local authorities.

18. The outline plans for 2013-14 include plans for a survey of around 250 forestry sector businesses in Wales, giving a burden of around £2,600.

19. The woodfuel boiler survey is expected to continue, with estimated response burdens for businesses of around £400 in 2012-13 and around £500 in 2013-14.

20. We propose to make provision for other miscellaneous business surveys not yet identified to cover up to 120 businesses with a burden of up to around £1,000 in each year.

Surveys of Local Authorities

21. The Schools Education Service of FC Wales runs a customer satisfaction survey for school visits to forests and for the service's visits to schools. For survey control reporting, all surveys of schools are classified as surveys of local authorities. It is planned to continue the surveys, covering around 600 visits a year. The estimated burden was £2,600 in 2010-11 and is expected to be around £2,700 in 2011-12 and £2,800 in 2012-13 and 2013-14.

22. Local authorities as woodland owners are included in the National Forest Inventory plans reported above.

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