"INFORMATION FOR COMMUNITIES - YOU KNOW I.T. MAKES SENSE"

Meeting community information needs through new technology

REPORT OF THE SEMINAR

August 25th 1999

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1. The Projects

1.1 Dùthchas

The Dùthchas Project[1] secured funds from the EU LIFE Environmental Programme (1998) for a 3 year project that started in January 1998. The aim of the Project is to develop mechanisms for achieving sustainable development within remote rural areas.

People living in remote rural areas may enjoy a high quality of environment, but they often experience lower standards of income, employment, public services and communications.

The Dùthchas Project recognises the critical relationship between the welfare of local communities and the condition of the natural environment that underpins them. It also recognises the potential of a rich environmental and cultural heritage to create new opportunities for economic development and overcome the relative disadvantage of remoteness and sparse population.

The work of the Project is being carried out in three pilot areas in the Highlands and Western Isles (North Uist, Trotternish in Skye and North Sutherland), and closely involves local people, interest groups and public bodies in:

- Identifying the values of the area, and the qualities which make it special;
- Agreeing a shared vision for the area, and its future sustainable growth;
- Developing a plan for co-ordinated action to achieve this;
- Establishing ways in which social, economic, cultural and environmental issues can be more closely integrated;
- Enabling the public bodies to work more closely together to achieve agreed objectives.

It is a central aim of the Project to achieve clear results, which are likely to include:

In the pilot areas:

- New ways to involve local people in planning and decision making;
- Improved, more accessible and better organised information about the locality;
- A local sustainability strategy for the development of the area;
- A range of demonstration projects;
- Public funding and support directed to activities consistent with local sustainability;

At overall Project level:

- Publication of experience and results of the Project;
- Evaluation of the applicability of the approach to other areas;
- Development of a Sustainability Award for rural communities;
- Networking between European projects linking natural heritage and sustainable development issues.

In the long term the Project will aim to:

- Influence Scottish rural policy;
- Improve the prospects of peripheral communities;
- Improve the management and use of natural and cultural resources;
- Increase the level of sustainable environment-based enterprise;
- Reduce the perception that environment and economic development are at odds.

1.2 Moray Firth Partnership

The Moray Firth Partnership is a voluntary organisation[2] that exists to improve communication between all users of the Moray Firth, and to work towards more effective integration of development and planning with environmental management, for the benefit of all.

[1] Steered by a partnership of 19 public bodies and two NGO networks.

The Partnership has funds from the LIFE Environmental Programme (1998) for a 3-year project that started in November 1998.

The aim of the Project is to develop and implement a programme of integrated coastal zone management that effectively involves communities and brings together voluntary and statutory measures.

The planned outcomes of the Project are:

- Improved environmental management of the Moray Firth area;
- Integrated local projects giving specific, localised environmental benefits;
- Increased awareness of the work of the Partnership, and local involvement.

The planned outputs of the Project are:

- Management arrangements developed at an area level;
- Strategic Management Guidelines for the Moray Firth;
- An implemented strategic Action Programme for the Moray Firth;
- Wide dissemination of existing information about the Moray Firth;
- An information system on the Internet available to all those with an interest in the management of the Moray Firth.

The project will pilot its approach at 3 levels: local residents, area and regional level.

Local Residents' Programme

- to encourage and enable local residents' groups in the Moray Firth area to plan and implement their own integrated coastal Projects;
- to stimulate awareness and understanding of integrated coastal zone management around the Moray Firth at a local level;
- to encourage local residents, agencies and businesses to become actively involved in the work of the Partnership.

Area Planning Programme

- to develop a new area liaison group for the inner Moray Firth marine candidate Special Area of Conservation;
- to devise management arrangements that effectively integrate statutory requirements with the voluntary measures that are being developed by the Moray Firth Partnership.

Regional (Moray Firth) Programme

- to raise awareness and increase involvement in integrated coastal zone management planning for the Moray Firth;
- to work towards sustainable development – reducing current tensions and perceived conflicts between "development" and "conservation";
- to make information more accessible to decision makers, and help resolve some of the difficult and sensitive issues involved in promoting integrated management of the Firth.

[2] Made up of representatives from industry, local authorities, conservation bodies, recreation groups, local residents and other interested in the well being of the Moray Firth area.

2. "Information for Communities - You Know it Makes Sense" Seminar Aims and Objectives

2.1 Introduction

The two projects, Dùthchas and Moray Firth Partnership have secured funds over three years from the EU LIFE Environment Programme to look at ways of achieving sustainable development within the more fragile and remote areas. To do this they each are looking to implement community based processes, including community access to information. To take this forward they planned a joint seminar to enable the projects to review where they are, what is available to build on or learn from, and to develop action plans for the future.

2.2 Aims and objectives

To explore how community information needs can be met through the appropriate use of information technology, in such a way that it enables local people to make informed decisions on planning for sustainable development.

To raise the awareness of the potential and the problems of using IT to meet community information needs.

To identify good practice and lessons learnt thus ensuring resources are used to their full effect.

To stimulate ideas on how the Dùthchas Project and Moray Firth Partnership can each take forward the community information system element of their work.

To stimulate ideas more generally on how communities and agencies/local authorities can take advantage of community information systems in developing their areas sustainable.

2.3 The participants

There were around 80 participants at the seminar, including presenters, speakers at the demonstrations and workshops. The participants were drawn from the agencies, local authorities and communities involved in the Moray Firth Partnership and the Dùthchas Project. The participants, in the main, were not technical specialists, but keen to find out the potential of IT in meeting their needs.

A full list of participants and speakers are in Appendix 1 and 2 including contact details.

Presentations Session 1

3. What information Do Communities Need?

3.1 Craigmillar Community Information System
Dr. Andy Macdonald

Who are we?

Craigmillar Community Information Service (CCIS) is an Urban Aid funded initiative established in January 1994 to set up networks of digitised electronic intelligence for the "have not's/have late's".

Where are we?

Craigmillar is Edinburgh's most socially economically deprived estate. Hell on earth, an urban Calcutta...but a geographical community of community groups

What we are

Our Mission statement is:

"To encourage community based agencies to migrate to, and through, the super digital highways, by widening ACCESS to CMC NETWORKS and bringing low cost, high value, user friendly cyber facilities to individuals, businesses and groups with little or no knowledge of digital technologies. CCIS achieves this by 'road testing' digitally inclusive ideas on the local super highway and catalysing DIGITALLY INCLUSIVE solutions that engage the otherwise digitally deprived. So allowing Craigmillar residents to keep pace with the employment and other opportunities in the Information Society/Knowledge Economy."

The Project is about ACCESS; It's about INTERNET WORKING (WANs/LANs/W3)[3]; It's about EDUCATION; It's about SKILL DEVELOPMENT; It's about LIFELONG LEARNING; It's about PUBLIC ACCESS.

1998 EU[4] funding was used to develop Teleport. This is a "port" of quality with digital applications and services, including a range of enhanced IT facilities that allows opportunities for SMEs[5], the unemployed and those in employment to develop their IT skills and vocational qualifications. The Teleport fits with a culture of enterprise development and the enterprise culture while promoting inclusion, with lifelong learning opportunities for all in the community and the promotion of education, education and education.

What we do

CCIS Teleport is a community based, on-line, telematics initiative dedicated to developing digitally inclusive computer mediated communications so that individuals, groups and businesses can avail themselves of the following services:

- Free in house Web surfing;
- Free email accounts (for the past five and a half years);
- Free user support and guidance;
- Free access to the Craignet and OneNet, both Wider Area Networks;
- Free skilling and upskilling on SVQ courses;
- Assistance with the creation, hosting and posting of Web sites;
- Access to video conferencing, video projector digital camera; conference theatre etc;
- Supply of dial up Web accounts;
- Free access to IT for specific groups i.e. Cyber Grannies.

[3] WAN - Wide Area Network LAN - Local Area Network, W3 - World Wide Web
[4] EU - European Union
[5] SME -Small and Medium Enterprises

Types of information on CCIS WANs and FCC Networks

Technical Information: user help; software archives; system information; user manuals; games; reading room (pdf. files[6] – reports)

Community Information including, local events, local news, local jobs, creative Craigmillar - the sunny side, community archives, housing - Edinburgh Tenants Fed, just voluntary; environment; what's on in Edinburgh; colour mellow yellow; dear sue agony aunt; Craigmillar police, crime prevention, credit union, Craigmillar Euro programme, urban regeneration.

Other WANs: Carers Connect Scotland, Christian Net, the Clearing House, The Democratic Left, trade union, OneNet (with 242 folders).

W3: Web pages/sites for community groups and businesses.

Information needs

Information needs are determined by supply and demand; mixed economy of choice and contribution, with a need for peripatetic training/perambulating PC doctor.

Evaluation

Council is carrying out a range of evaluation, by management, staff, focus groups (users), by academics, Europe, and external consultants.

Evaluation is also carried out by using success indicators and these have been:

- Citation in the Government's Vision Paper, "Our Information Age" (May 1998);
- Citation in the Scottish Office Green Paper, "Opportunities Scotland: A Paper on Lifelong Learning" (Sept 1998);
- Winner of a prestigious EU Bangemann Challenge Award presented by the King of Sweden (Feb 1997);
- Only one of four super hubs in the world for a freenet of 3 million users worldwide called OneNet. Here, we feed over 640 European computer sites;
- Recipient of a "BT in the Community" award in 1995;
- Recipient of an IBM "Community Connections" award in 1996;
- A finalist in the BT/Sunday Times, "Towards the Superhighways" competition in 1995;
- First mainland UK programme to accepted as an affiliate member of the US based Community Technology Centres' Network;
- Founder member of Edinburgh Telematics Partnership;
- Being chosen as the venue for the Ministerial launch of the Scottish Devolution Web site;
- The fact that CCIS has presented papers at 25 conferences in the last 3 years;
- Being invited to become an inaugural partner in the DTI[7] "IT For All" campaign (Dec 1996) and becoming a DTI accredited "IT For All" Centre in March 1997;
- The fact we work with 80 different people per week from the community;
- The fact we Internet work 30 Craigmillar groups making Craigmillar a 'smart' community.

Who we do it with

Examples of digitally inclusive work and programmes are:

- The Cyber Grannies - Hi tech priestesses of the steamie age dispelling the myth that seniors can't use IT. This is part of our IT for All -from the Womb to the Tomb/Cradle to the Grave project.
- Techno Tots & Keyboard Kids - working with kids using educational software/email and W3 design. www.ccis.org.uk/castlevale/
- Timelines - The past & future cross paths on this cross-generational, computer mediated communications local history project. www1.ccis.org.uk/timeline/
- CAST - Craigmillar Adult Story Tellers _ taking the work of Cyber Grans & Granddadsinto a

[6] pdf file - a file that can be shown exactly as it is in printed form - useful for officially documents and forms
[7] DTI Department of Trade and Industry

new dimension, developing their life strands into stories on the Web. Ditto Craigmillar Child story tellers. www.surf.to/cast/ and www1.ccis.org.uk/storytellers/

- Inter EcoNet Edinburgh - A Local Agenda 21 environmental network of digitised eco intelligence.
- IT for mental relief - working with people with mental health difficulties and learning difficulties.
- TAT2 - Technologically aware Teachers for the Year 2000 - working with local teachers building up their confidence to work with IT with pupils and nursery children.
- Dear Sue - Craigmillar's on-line agony aunt.
- Multi National Computing - working with local ethnic women.
- Accredited SVQ training for unemployed people etc.
- Access course and training for 'cultural industries' in partnership with Queen Margaret University College.
- Operating, in partnership with Napier University, as a Scottish University for Industry Learning Centre - promoting on-line learning, guidance and advice.
- Craignet training - how to use email etc.
- "IT For All" training in partnership with the DTI
- Comms for Comms - Information Communication Technologies for Craigmillar Companies- working with SMEs to harness the benefits of IT for enterprise development.

Conclusion!

It's about defining your own future – digitally at the start of the millennium, embracing a spirit of community for a new century, a spirit of community and PARTNERSHIP imbued with the belief that CMCs can help us build an inclusive Craigmillar and afford people the opportunity to define and share in the prosperity of the Information Age/info economy/knowledge Age. Don't just grasp the future…shape it your way.

It's not just about databases, information and statistics. It's about creating infrastructures; it's about Internet working; it's about community development; it's about creating opportunities. Ultimately, it's about vision and your vision statement.

It's about learning from other models; experiences and importing good practice…but just do it. There's plenty of experience, toolkits and advice out there. Check out www.ctcnet.org and www.ctcnet.org/toc.htm and www.partnerships.org.uk and www.partnerships.org.uk/internet/index.htm also www.benton.org. On evaluation check out www.ctcnet.org/biblio4.htm.

It's about developing a communications strategy for your target audience. Having a mission and identifying problems to be solved.

3.2 Electronic Community Networking - Building Electronic Bridges Geoff Walker, Newcastle NewNet Project.

Grounded & Seamless

NEWnet is quite a unique project, it is an Internet based virtual organisation and was set up with only £150 for rental space for the server. It engages communities in the power of the technology but is grounded in the needs of the community. It is seamless in that it adds value to what you do every day. It is a network of people who know how to use the technology and is about empowering people.

NewNet believes that the digital age should be seen as an extension of ourselves. If we relate this extension of self to the concept of community we are all part of one community or another and we network in lots of different ways. Therefore, electronic community networks should be well grounded in the needs of the communities they serve and seamless in that they are freely and openly accessible to all members of the community."

The Three Phases of NewNet

The three phases of NewNet are, the Pilot Project in 1995, Newcastle NewNet Limited In 1997, and NewNet and Regional Development.

Phase 1 - The Pilot Project

The components of phase 1 were, the Baseline Survey, identification of partners, and meeting with the voluntary sector.

There were 12 Strategic Projects developed alongside Internet and HTML training, development of the web site and volunteer support.

An evaluation was carried out and was the only evaluation report of a community network in the UK.[8]

The Partners

The partners in the project were Newcastle City Council, Onyx Internet, Tagish, WebWork, Northern Informatics, and 12 Voluntary Sector Projects.

Four Key Criteria

The key criteria for making the project work were:

- An appropriate level of computing skills;
- The capacity to upgrade hardware and software;
- A vision of the future application of the electronic delivery of services;
- An ability to dedicate resources, including staff time, to the project.

Four Key Network Functions

The four key network functions are:

- Communication;
- Accessing Information;
- Achieving Visibility;
- Collaboration.

[8] See evaluation report in Appendix 3

Content

The content for the project came from a variety of areas:

- Community Organisations;
- Project Development;
- Information Exchange;
- Project Archive.

Phase 2 - NEWcastle NEWnet Ltd

Products & Services

The NEWcastle NEWnet Ltd took forward the:-

- Website;
- Training Package(s);
- Volunteer Support.

Phase 3 - NewNet and Regional Development

A Network of Networks

The networks that have been built up range from Urban to Rural with Regional and Sub Regional Hubs and Electronic Village Halls.

3.3 Six Villages Community Web Site.
Alison Simpson, Portsoy and District Ltd.

An Awkward beginning

The Portsoy & District web site began in 1996 as one of 11 small group projects resulting from an Aberdeenshire council initiative. Computers were supplied, a small amount of HTML training was delivered to 3 people for each group, and a seed amount of money handed over to start-up a community enterprise which was intended to be based on writing and setting up a web site and internet marketing to local businesses.

By December 1997, the Portsoy & District computer was languishing in someone's shed, the Web site had not been updated for a year and those individuals who had received training had dispersed in disgust.

Why?

Possibly it was an idea ahead of its time

- There was no locally perceived need for marketing on the Internet in an area which had an underdeveloped tourism industry, and which most reasonably successful businesses had all the work they needed, or depended on immediately local trade.
- Too few Scottish people were on the Internet
- Writing HTML, though not taxing, is quite time consuming and takes certain precision and attention to detail. You cannot just sit down and do it. You have to learn. The prospect was just too daunting for the uninitiated, particularly older folk.
- The individuals involved lacked the capacity to involve others.
- Technical support for maintenance was not built into the project and some of the machines were giving problems. Frustration swiftly followed.

So how did it develop?

The situation just described was where it started from when I came to work for Portsoy and District Ltd. in late 1997. As Community Economic Development Co-ordinator engaged by the communities of Aberchirder, Sandend, Fordyce, Cornhill, Portsoy and Whitehills. The work, amongst other things, was to find way in which the Web site could be made to work for the communities.

I confess I didn't know what to do, despite having been on-line for a couple years at this point, writing HTML was not one of my skills and there was no time to learn.

The main job was supporting groups to plan and implement projects, which would develop, enhance and sustain local amenities and the local economy. There were several vibrant groups in the area developing community buildings, tourism events, heritage based businesses and walking trails to name a few.

The web site had been a project without a group and the general perception was that it was a failure, to be thrown in a shed and forgotten.

However, the vibrancy and enthusiasm of various emerging Community-led groups about their own projects led to a resurrection of the web site.

A number of members from different groups and communities undertook training through Portsoy and District Ltd. (the vehicle for community led planning which pays me), ostensibly to enhance their own projects. Several went from not even knowing where the on-switch was, to sophisticated and career enhancing use of databases, DTP to - yes - writing web pages. Not by this time with HTML, but mainly with FrontPage 98, the WYSIWYG nature of which is ideal for people who are not enthralled by the technology. IT is a tool for communication, like the telephone. Most of us do not need to know how it works.

How does the community use the facilities?

As for the use being made of the facilities - this has grown organically, is still growing and is completely demand driven.

Interestingly, what many people want is a publicly accessible platform for local history, stories and reminiscence and somewhere that old photographs can be stored and viewed without the owner having to part with the originals. This has drawn in, and is still drawing, a significant number of older people.

Information generated by the community so far includes:

- Information about events/projects often linked to fund-raising;
- Meeting minutes (Community Councils);
- Basic overviews of the area for tourists;
- Links to business web sites (still not many of these).

The web site is an organic and evolving thing. The material people wish to publish emerges and changes through time. This is not by its nature a time limited intensive process. But this is not a problem as we are not agents driven by an external agenda. Being a community-led organisation we are the community and we grow and develop with every day that passes.

Uses being made of the IT facilities:

The public access points are becoming better known and better used. So far people have come in to:

- Check emails while on holiday;
- Research for lesson plans in primary school;
- Check exam results;
- Look for jobs;
- Investigate prospective employers;
- Find out about local craft businesses;
- Search for information that in a city you would seek from a library.

There are regular requests from abroad for genealogy type information. This comes mainly from people representing the areas broader community of attachment, which includes living elsewhere in the world.

So far there has not been electronic sharing of information between the various community groups in Aberdeenshire but we can see that changing quite quickly as more people become computer literate and Internet connected. It seems inevitable that IT should be used in support of the physical networks and partnerships that are already developing steadily over the last few years.

Planning for sustainable development with communities

This conference has the sub-title " Meeting community information needs through new technology", from the Six villages point of view the technology is not an issue as it gets cheaper and easier to use all the time. The issue is rather one of defining the communities information needs.

Through community action, and reflection on that action, the pattern of community information needs emerge and evolves. Some degree of high level second-guessing is doubtless useful for planning purposes but genuine sustainability requires carefully listening too what the communities themselves reckon they need and then quickly and flexibly responding to those needs.

The Aberdeenshire Practitioner's Forum believes in planning for sustainable development **with communities** rather than **for communities**. Forum members receive mentoring and support from the Community Economic Development section of Aberdeenshire Council - the approach is innovative, exciting and achieve - it is commended to this conference.

3.4 Summary of Discussion at the end of Session 1

One of the main issues that people addressed was what information do people want and how do you identify the need.

There seemed to be no simple answer to this as the information required has to be looked at in the context of the need or the knowledge required. The difficulty is in identifying the context and the only way to find this out is to ask and listen to local people and organisations.

One way of testing if you have the right information is to publish on the Internet and if people are interested the will access it. This is only helpful if people know it is there and they have access to the Internet.

To develop an electronic system you need three elements - graphic designer, technical person and the community – and the three tend not to understand each other. (You also need researchers/evaluators and content providers)

There is a problem with information being demand led – people often don't know what they want.

How do you provide public access points in rural areas?

The scale of the problem re-telecoms is underestimated. Eg in rural areas village halls do not have a telephone.

Issues

- How do you engage people, involve them in projects, and ascertain their needs?
- Should HTML be hand crafted or should be using packages such as FrontPage, Dreamworld, NetFusion etc.

Session two

4. How is Information Being Provided?

4.1 Geographical Information Systems for Local, Regional and National Information - Information Technology for Communities - Web-based Approaches to Public Participation.
Richard Kingston, School of Geography, University of Leeds

The outline of the presentation:

- Virtual Society? Programme
- Virtual Slaithwaite
- WOODS
- Role of the Internet
- Design Issues
- Data Access
- Technical Obstacles
- General Observations
- Summary

The Virtual Society? Programme was an ESRC[9] funded research project that looked at public participation in environmental decision making and evaluating the role of Virtual Decision-Making Environments. It also looked at the role of web-based GIS and decision support

There were three case studies:

- local: Virtual Slaithwaite
- regional: WOODS, Yorkshire Dales NP
- national: radioactive waste disposal

Virtual Slaithwaite (1)

Virtual Slaithwaite was a local level, village planning exercise using a virtual "Planning For Real"® model which included community involvement and consultation.

It used basic GIS functionality with map display; pan and zoom, spatial query and database update.

The advantages of the Virtual Slaithwaite system were the:

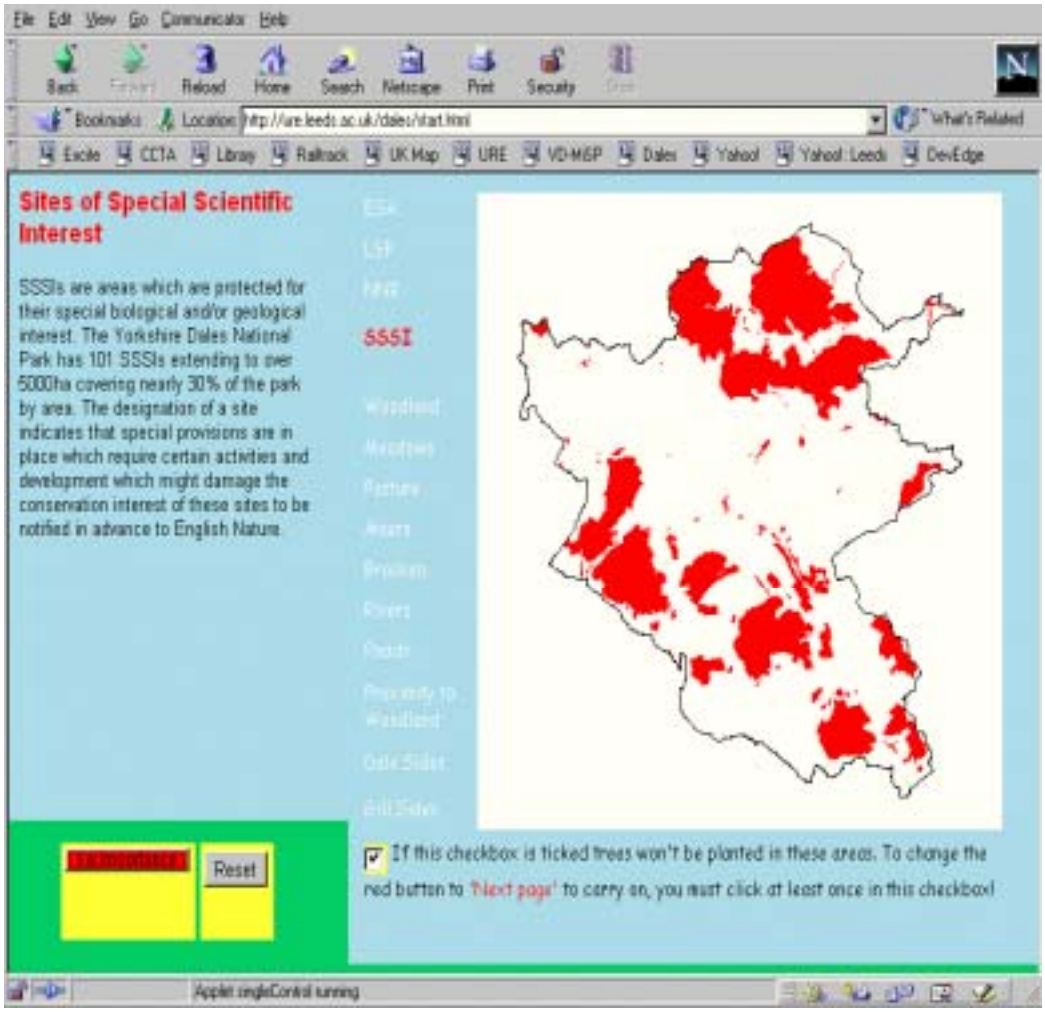
- interactivity (pan, zoom, query, update);
- instantaneous update of database,;
- ability to profile users online;
- long residence time of virtual PFR model;
- faster collation of results from log files;
- use of web site to disseminate results/feedback.

WOODS

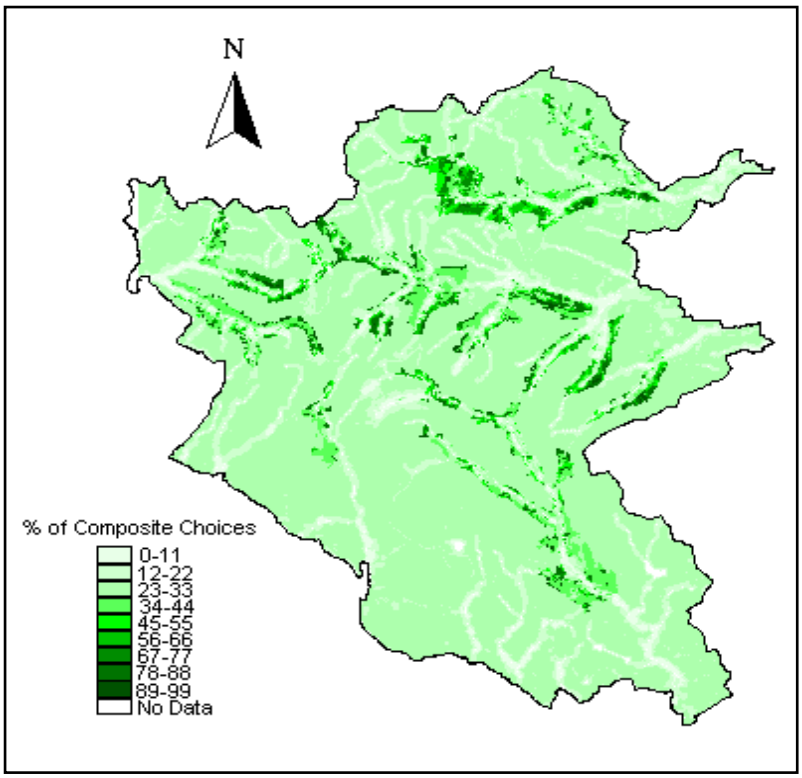
The Woods project was a regional level landscape planning exercise using online GIS for public participation that located areas for regeneration of native woodland. It enabled professional, resident and visitor consultation.
It used advanced GIS functionality with a display of maps and spatial metadata and enabled user selection and weighting of map data. It also had overlay and MCE-based suitability mapping with user decision tools

[9] ERSC - Educational Research and Science Council

WOODS - decision map



WOODS - results map



The advantages of the systems used in the Woods project were:

- it was interactive (you could explore, experiment, and formulate);
- it gave instantaneous mapped solution;
- it had an ability to profile users online;
- it had a long residence time of online GIS;
- I had a faster collation of results from log files;
- It used the web site to disseminate results/feedback.

Role of the Internet?

The Internet was the mechanism for delivery and gave a web-based consultation exercise to augment traditional methods and had two-way information (server-client-server)

The content of the Internet is multimedia, it has tools available to use it and you have stakeholder feedback via questionnaires, log files, comment boxes, etc. and you have a method of establishing dialogue.

Design issues

The presentation of information has to be clear, unambiguous and comprehensive and you have to distinguish between fact and interpretation

The methods of interaction have to be easy to use and understood by everyone with transparent methods and flow of information

4.2 Council Web Sites - What Should They Contain and Who Should be Involved. Geoff Wilcock from Moray Council Telematics Unit

"New Technology is allowing us to work with and for our communities" - Moray Telematics

The presentation was about how Moray Council are preparing themselves for consultation with the community and the delivery of information and services through new technology.

The background to the Telematics Unit (ICT) in Moray Council was that IT was a specialist unit formed in 1997 using seconded staff to improve services and reduce costs using emerging technology. They have come a long way since then, and it is important to stress what Telematics is not. It is **not a technical section**, or a rival information technology section. It is a unit dedicated to reviewing the way in which the organisation works, and - where appropriate - **improving our business processes** by the application of technology. **The technology is secondary - it is the means not the end.**

The means of carrying out the purpose was the modern technology and a number of tools are used to re-engineer business processes eg:

- **Intranet / Internet,** which is like a cross between teletext and a magazine… a constantly updated source of easily accessible reference information.

- **Electronic mail**, which allows us to send memo's, letters and messages, across an office, across the Moray and across the world, in seconds and without the need for paper and postage.

- **Document Imaging**, which allows us to take paper copies of documents and make them available electronically. This means we can clear valuable office space of paper, and make documents available across the council in an easy to find, easy to access form.

- **Voice recognition** allows officers who have difficulty typing to dictate directly into their computer and have the results appear on screen. As well as freeing up administrative staff for more productive work, it also offers opportunities for disabled people who find computers unusable in their present form.

- **video conferencing** allows meetings to take place without users having to be in the same place, thus avoiding the cost of travelling and the waste of officers time in travel time and sitting through irrelevant parts of meetings.

The New Culture for Public Services has to take on board:

- Sustainability
- Accountability
- Value for money
- Best Value
- 'Modernising Government' (which discusses many of the ideas for change).

Many new factors are now being considered in the delivery of public services and the recent white paper on Modernising Government discusses many of these ideas. New Principles embodied in the Modernising Government White Paper are:

- 'Modernising for a purpose - to make life better for people and businesses'
- 'Inclusive and Integrated'
- Policy making is 'Joined-up' and strategic.
- Public Service users, not providers, are the focus.
- Services are high quality and efficient.
- 'Government should improve the quality of our lives'

The majority of the initiatives in the white paper are **underpinned by Telematics Technology**. There is a recognition that citizens use a variety of services from different public sector agencies- such as the Council, the DSS[10], the Inland Revenue and others - and therefore we need to work together. For example, to rent a home may require approaches to the DSS, Council Tax Office, Council Housing Office, Scottish Homes, and others, all requiring that a different form is filled out each time, often with essentially the same information. Because public services often seem confusing, bureaucratic and disjointed to its users the White Paper has looked at:

- Increased cross agency working;
- Shared Clientele;
- Greater service uptake (social inclusion);
- Community consultation.

The Future will need to focus on:

- Integrating the work of departments and other organisations;
- Better customer service;
- Holistic infrastructure to allow community working, participation and planning;

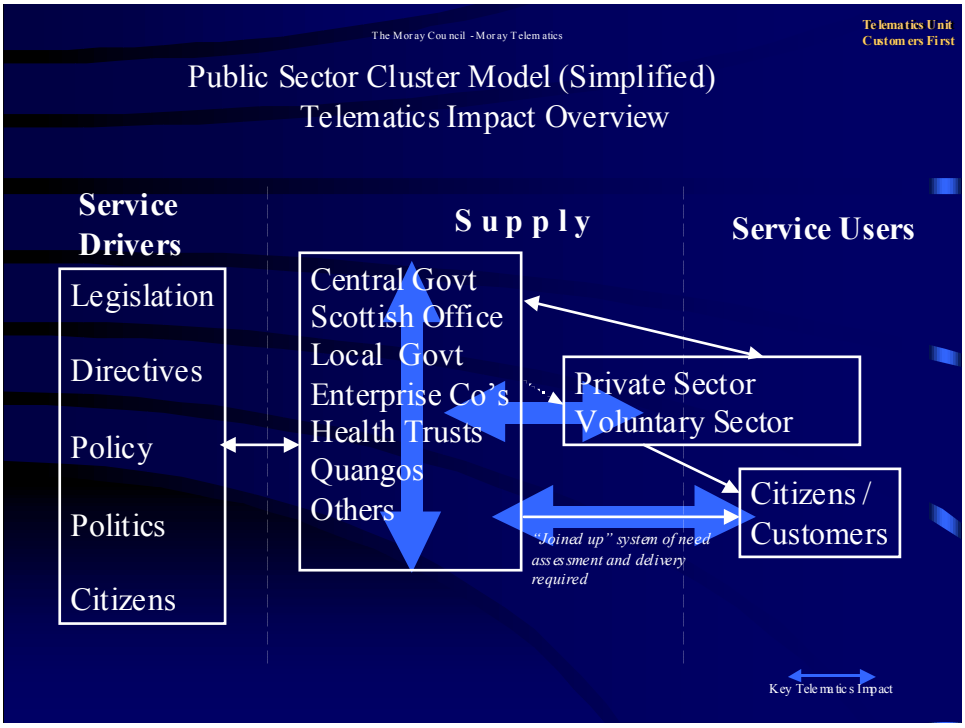
Telematics in Moray has been about enabling the organisation to work better - across departments, across the council and across the Community. It has been about joining up the work of organisations to deliver an integrated public service, which removes duplication of time, effort and resources leading to the potential for more investment and savings. It has been about a focus on **better customer services** and modernising our working practices to meet the expectations of our customers for a first rate service tailored to their needs.

It is also about making sure that citizens have better access to services, both through service provision and through greater input into how services work. It is about setting up the infrastructure and cultural environment in which we can work better with other agencies to reduce cross agency duplication and make access to essential services more straightforward for our customers.

The Infrastructure that has been built is also for community participation and for Best Service, including:

- Inclusive Access - internet, digital television, access points, libraries, telephone, personal visits, members;
- "Joined-up" using Telematic technology;
- Effective, easy, one stop access to public services and information;
- "Customers First"

[10] Department of Social Services



Public Sector Cluster Model

The development of ICT will allow the model above to work.

The Internet continues to be an effective medium to deliver services and information. Access to Council decisions, to strategies, to forms and to service information, 24 hours a day is invaluable. However, despite the growth of the Internet and digital TV, it continues to be a minority of individuals who have access to it. Here the Council has a role in making access readily available through community initiatives and libraries, but even then - Council offices or access points, library staff, telephone calls, visits by council staff to individuals and to businesses will continue to be key to service delivery.

Using telematics technology we can join up departments, computer systems, knowledge bases, databases, files and link with external organisations to provide easy, effective access to council services for all, at times that suit our customers, all at less cost.

4.3 Reaching Out to Rural Communities
Anne Quilter and Jacq Wightman from the Genesis Project

The Genesis Project is about reaching out to rural communities and the presentation covered the:

- Background to Genesis;
- Making IT Accessible;
- Lessons learned;
- The way forward.

The background

The challenge facing the Council was the geography of the area that included long distances between rural communities with a sparsely populated area and a decline in industry. The distances created difficulty in access to learning, with no University in Cumbria and a 100 miles between major towns. The M6 corridor is most heavily populated area with areas of economic decline along the West Coast.

Aims and objectives

The aims and objectives of the project were to overcome obstacles of remoteness by providing an information technology network, accessible to all in the county and to enhance the economic & social potential of Cumbrian communities.

Funding

The funding was through Objective 2 & 5b - £380k, Capital Challenge - £4million, Cumbria County Council - £750k.

Making it accessible

The services and information were to be made accessible through the use of technology which in the first phase was ISDN2 based, using multimedia PC's and Kiosks with touch-screens, with video-conferencing and an Intranet was developed.

The Web based services are to be developed in the present phase.

In Phase 1 there were 80 sites with 140 PC's and kiosks based across the County in suburban, urban and rural areas.

A high profile launch was carried out in March 1998 and a review of Phase 1 sites is now underway.

To develop the services a range of partnerships were formed with close working with the information providers.

The videoconferencing links were to 3 experts, childcare, Cumbria carers and the Council Information Centre. The email feedback to the information providers and multimedia included video, music and animation.

The services included, access to lifelong learning, E-Government, Internet Gateway for Cumbria County Council & Elected Members and services for business - Genesis Business Club.

The lifelong learning was CCAD ADAPT, multi-media & Tourism, Newcastle University Philosophy Course.

As the first step towards electronic-government the project has bought space on PSI Net, Internet and have offered these services, along with e-mail facilities, and offered them to all Cumbria County Council departments at a discounted rate.

They are now working in partnership with other departments to develop CCC Intranet and re-design

CCC web site that will be housed in the Cumbria Portal.

The Genesis Business Club has obtained funding to provide kit and to develop a business info service. 40 businesses have signed up already, 15 more for phase 2. The aim is to have 250 members by March 2000. Cost to join is from £250.

Lessons learned

The success stories were: the training courses, Kendal library, Alston summer project and Sedbergh (working & publicising IT to the farming community)

Increased the public access to I.T., the public access was also increased through the schools, libraries & businesses throughout the county.

Internet vs. Intranet - High cost of maintaining an authoring tool as opposed to ease of Internet delivery.

Need to be aware of the costs of supporting sites & infrastructure Costs of supporting sites especially if there is no revenue. There is also the cost of ISDN lines, helpdesk etc

The way forward

The project is looking at a new structure and developing the "Cumbria Portal" and taking the system into the Millennium, with the new structure being Genesis (Cumbria) PLC. The Trust, with Charter Objectives, will retain the three pillars of, GENESIS, NewCO , the trading arm, and the Innovation Partnership.

THE 'CUMBRIA PORTAL' will retain the GENESIS brand Image and be the gateway to access information on Cumbria. It will increase access and ease of access to the Internet, and include benefits, One-stop shop for information for Cumbrians and others and will strengthen the brand of the County.

Into the Millennium

Partnerships - we have established partners within and outside Cumbria and indeed internationally- for example, the Higher and Further education sector, Cumbria Tourist Board, the local media, Central Government Departments and the voluntary sector. Internationally we are a member of the ARIN network.

The Business Club will encourage e-commerce, and share resources with the E-government work, assisting SME's to establish trading partners within the county and electronic delivery across sectors.

The project has built up considerable skills in consultation and would be keen to work with others in sharing their knowledge and to set benchmarks.

To sum up we are ready to deliver services in line with Central Governments' targets for e-government.

Best practice

It is essential that projects work in partnership with others whether this is by cultivating partners, buying in, or approaching the experts.

Project Management has to be done with an empathetic approach, to allay fears and the feeling of competition between organisations.

Political support is essential to take things forward, especially when working within local government.

Need to work with a variety of other ventures to avoid re-inventing the wheel and to take other local projects along with you.

Continuous analysis and review is important and whilst phase 1 was based on the original business

plan, time and changes have meant the need to employ business consultants to identify a revenue stream, changing the perception of the project from local government to the wider community.

ALL OF THE ABOVE REFER TO PARTNERSHIP IN ONE FORM OR ANOTHER

For further information

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The Courts
Carlisle
Cumbria CA3 8NA

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E-mail:genesis@cumbriacc.gov.uk

4.4 The Scottish Parliament and Local Democracy
Rowena Hennigan & Alison Mackay, SCVO

The presentation covered two Projects:

- Com.Com/holyrood.
- Parliamentary information and advisory Service.

Com.com./holyrood is providing:

- Technological infrastructure;
- Support;
- Training;
- Motivation and meaning.

The Parliamentary Information and Advisory Service is about:

- Improving the interface between the parliament and the voluntary sector
- keeping voluntary organisations informed of events affecting them;
- Providing - networking, policy development, information.

In developing a Policy Case you need to:

- Identify the issue;
- Describe it in accessible terms;
- Produce research to back up the case;
- Target decision-makers;
- Seek meetings to put the case;
- Gather support;
- Seek a media profile.

Technological Solutions to help with keeping contact:

- Web Based, but need to be aware of who you are targeting;
- Create and influence infrastructure;
- Hardware/Software;
- User Support;
- Empower User = Technology Ownership

Management Solutions:

- Partnerships;
- Networks;
- Information -> Content;
- Tracking and Feedback;
- Ownership and Empower;
- Infrastructure Management:
- Sustainability.

Evaluation:

- Use the Web to find out who is using your system, how many people are visiting your site and what pages/areas are most popular;
- Use the Web to get back responses on the site by the use of questionnaires;
- Make sure that you react to the information.

Good Practice Recommendations

- Use the infrastructures and networks that are already there;
- Train people to use the technology so that it empowers them;
- Use the technology that is right for the job, don't use complicated technology when it is not needed.

SCVO Networks has 56 Councils for voluntary Service from Lerwick to Stranraer with Infrastructure organisations of - Communities, children, poverty, health, the environment, disabled people, mental health, racism, young people, arts and sports, animal welfare, women's' rights, older people, education, culture and language, unemployment, equal rights, housing, natural heritage.

5 Demonstrations

5.1 Aims and Objectives for the Demonstrations

During the lunch break each demonstrator ran two demonstrations each of 15 minutes and they covered:

- The aim and intended audience of the system;
- A guided tour of the system, its functions and features;
- An explanation of the technology behind the system.

Except for the reports below all the projects who demonstrated are reported in the presentationsor the workshops

5.2 Norway - Video link - Community Council Use of GIS and the Internet. Ivar Petter Grotte - West of Norway Research Instititue and Anders Anderssen-County Governors Office - Sogn og Fjordane

A video link with the organisers of the TITAN Project in the County of Sogn og Fjordane in Norway

The presentation was made by Ivar Petter Grotte of Vestlandsforsking (the West of Norway Research Institute) and Anders Anderssen of Fylkesmannen I Sogn og Fjordane (the County Governor of Sogn og Fjordane)

The TITAN project is an EU funded partnership project, involving Norway (lead partner), Scotland (Highlands), Ireland and Italy (Tuscany)

The presentation began with an outline of the administrative system in Norway, which wasessential to understanding the role of the local Communes (Councils).
The structure of public administration at the local level in Norway is as follows:

The County Governor	represents national government at the county level and co-ordinates the national ministries within the County
The County Council	Locally elected Covering in Sogn og Fjordane a population of 108,000 Responsible for county level hospitals, secondary schools (17-19yrs) transport, regional development
The Commune	Locally elected, independent of central government Covering local areas of 1,000-10,000 population Approx. 100-500 FTE direct employees per Commune Funding: Administer approx. 20% of income tax, plus earmarked funds from government, local property tax (discretionary), business enterprises (eg. Hydropower); user fees from services and property sales. Responsible for delivery of most services, including health, education, technical services, culture, church, local roads etc. Plus planning, economic development and administration

This system brings administration and service delivery very close to the people. The TITANsystem in Norway has aimed to integrate and deliver service information at this level.

TITAN in Norway has been developed in association with the ICT Forum involving the County Governor, County Council, and Association of Communes and West of Norway Research Institute.

A Regional Policy Procurement Network provides a national infrastructure aiming to equalise services, infrastructure and resources across all parts of Norway and avoid rural areas being placed at a disadvantage. This has been able to pressurise Norwegian Telecoms to agree to equalise the pricing structure, to provide an equal and appropriate quality of service and local service backup.

The TITAN organisers believe that a regional approach to supporting small local enterprises is the key, and that it is better to concentrate effort on a small number of large, integrated and productive support initiatives than on many isolated small ones. The philosophy of TITAN is that in order to encourage greater local Internet use it is necessary to:

- apply information technology to meet user needs and solve problems for the end users
- integrate information across service providers, profiling the services not the providers.
- Local user groups have been used to identify needs.

The system comprises information at a County and Commune level, and includes spatial (GIS based), infrastructural and political information. It includes spatial information on such aspects as the environment, natural resources, fisheries resources and zoning, tourism infrastructure etc.

The organisers believe that access to this kind of knowledge and a holistic approach to infrastructure is essential to enable the region to develop and to increase local capacity.

Technical support to the information providers and users of the system will be provided through networking the IT technicians across the County, and by using other networks eg. life long learning.

Difficult issues to be addressed relate to the long-term viability of the TITAN system. In particular, issues of copyright especially relating to the Internet use of maps and long term funding

The contacts for the Norwegian TITAN Programme are:

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6. Workshops - Session 1 Identifying Good Practice

6.1 Aims, Objectives and Methodology for Session 1 Workshops

There were 5 workshops each covering a different aspect of community information systems. Each group had a facilitator who lead the group through the case study and the exercises that identified good practice points and pitfalls.

The case study was used to stimulate the discussion and the facilitator encouraged the participants to draw on their existing knowledge and the points they had learnt during the day.

The case study presenter was asked to cover:

- How local people were involved in the process of developing the project;
- What partnerships are important in developing IT projects with local communities;
- The choice of technology - functionality, ease of use and accessibility;
- How to ensure that the technology is easy to use and accessible to local people;
- Information management - access and updating.

The group was then split into small groups and asked to record "what would they ensure happened if they were developing the system". After discussion of the first set of ideas the groups were then asked to record, " what pitfalls would they have avoided". This was then followed by a discussion of the points raised. The flipcharts were put in the main area for people to read over the tea break

6.2 Workshop J – Community Information Systems as a Development Tool. Case study - HiPoint, Douglas Gibson

The workshop focused on working at community level and looked at how community information systems can be self-sustainable.

Background to the workshop: The workshop considered the issues of working at Community level and developing local structures for the development of a community information system, and looked at some of the issues in making this a viable and self sustaining system. Gairloch was used as the main example.

How were local people involved in developing the project? - The proposal was developed at council level, and then taken to the people – really a bit of a “top down” project. It was far sighted, however, had vision, and used leading edge technology to address issues of rural living in an information - driven society. Local people were approached to fine tune the information which would be available on Hi Point, and to assist with setting up the controls in a way that would make it easy to operate and to understand. Initial approaches were through the Community council, Community Education, and playgroups etc. There were also public meetings and an open day.

As somebody who was living and working in the community at the time, my own recollection was that many people were under the impression that it was a council / European project if not a privately run business. Certainly there wasn’t a great sense of “this is our project” This gives rise to questions about how representative a given group or organisation actually is.

What partnerships are important in developing IT projects with local communities? -
As outlined previously, Hi Point was “leading edge, spaceship” type of stuff to most people. It’s probably safe to say that very few of the initial people who took part actually understood what it was all about. Being a council project in many ways, the approach was to go via bodies like community education and the community council. The community council did not really show much serious interest in the proposal. Without mentioning names, some of the original Hi Point members in the Gairloch area still can’t open an e mail successfully, never mind deal with the intricacies of video links and web surfing. Partners must see the potential benefits, be enthusiastic, and supportive. Not much good if one of the main partners says “Yeah well, it’s ok I suppose, but I can’t see the future for it!!

Circumstances have altered since the early days of Hi Point – people are much more aware

nowadays of the influence of the "Web", and how to use e–mail as a development tool. There's always a problem with technically orientated projects between the originators and the majority of other folk. What an IT project ideally needs is somebody to act as a bridge between "The project" and "The Community". That somebody should be equipped with the ability to understand both sides. Some traditional community organisations are not the best partners for IT projects, it is more important to have proactive, committed individuals or groups within the community involved from the start.

What issues need to be taken into account to ensure the technology used is easy to use and available? - Meetings were held on a local basis to discuss this. The "technology" problem still cropped up, however – touch screens are all very well in theory, but they have to work all the time! People also tend to be a bit afraid of the thing. Whether they are afraid of getting 25,000 volts up their arm OR think they will break the equipment by touching it, I don't know. The fact is that most reverted to using the mouse! And use of the video links – often, there was nobody at the other end, which rather rendered the system ineffective. ***Did sections of the Highland Council itself appreciate the potential of the system?***

As mentioned before, Hi Point was "leading edge". In practice, there were technical problems with the system, and people tended to shy away from the level of technology involved. One of the things which wasn't clearly picked up by the initial users was that this was very much a "prototype" and because of this, people expected it to work perfectly & immediately. The glitches which subsequently showed led users to think
"Sod this etc…", and is one reason why user numbers remained low for the first three years. Aside from anything else, if the system breaks down then obviously it's no use to anybody until it gets repaired. If that happens more than a couple of times then people will stop relying on it. Nowadays, however, technology has advanced apace – possibly the same problem would not occur today – or would it? This type of stuff changes and alters all the time!

Issues to consider from above are the issues:

- around fear of technology;
- what happens if it breaks?
- can an IT illiterate use the interface? (note: not IT Novice)

How was the information decided on and where was it found? - Local people were asked what they felt should be included in the system at the early meetings and open days. All those years ago, however, most people had very little idea what could be achieved through IT. Computers were widely regarded as a device for writing letters and adding numbers, with the potential of the web for information and communication being only a hazy notion. Much of the original information was Highland Council derived, and contained items such as housing benefits, advice on grants, etc. Now, with the introduction of web based information the new interface provides, there is a much wider choice, and it is possible to have just about everything you can think of accessible. Cinema times in Inverness, transport, community news and links etc.

What has been learned from the project, and what has changed? - As mentioned earlier, this started out as a "top down" project. Because of the type of project it was, coupled with the level of public awareness of IT's potential at that time, it probably couldn't have started any other way. However, as public understanding increased, and as familiarity with computers developed in tandem with usage of the web, the Top down approach actually began to stagnate the project to the point where it underwent a crisis in both direction and cash. Nobody was there to take responsibility, and the fact was that it always had been a project to explore possibilities – sustainability and so on wasn't really a feature of the original plan! After the initial development period, not only did funds dry up but there were political changes to the Highland map, people went off and did different things etc.

An enforced gap of about six months led to a step back, a re–examination, and a rethink about how HiPoint should proceed. The first meeting after the six month lay off decided conclusively that the initial development phase had shown the way forward for IT in remote areas of the Highlands, and that the communities involved in Hi Point did not want to lose the lead which they had acquired in this type of technology. The decision was to form a new company to progress the project, formed from the representative communities, with the result that now the communities are taking this forward as a long term project with built in sustainability proposals.

We are seeking funding to allow the siting of a HiPoint machine at seven different locations, with

RACE providing valuable funding to allow a year long pilot project to proceed in order to demonstrate the viability of the project. Each HiPoint unit will be used in a variety of ways to benefit the local community – distance learning / conference / Internet café facilities / tourism web site.

Lessons learned:

- Top down approaches limit success – bottom up stands better chance
- Essential to involve local people from start, and to look closely at who / how this takes place
- Establish a medium between high tech equipment and low tech understanding
- Make certain the information delivery system WORKS from the START

Good Practice Points

Principles behind a project

- Collaboration
- Shared vision

Preparation of a project

- More time planning / research
- Learn from other people's experience
- Conduct skills audit
- Do get sustainability strategy
- Ensure it's legal.

Running a project

- Training
- Committed individuals
- Social/ human aspects – keep it fun
- Target existing groups for information
- Ensure information is relevant
- Make sure information is accurate
- Raise awareness constantly
- Do keep information updated
- Do answer e-mails/ enquiries

Evaluating a project

- Have an ongoing evaluation process
- Encourage and act upon feedback

Pitfalls to Avoid

- Don't underestimate people's ability to learn
- Don't duplicate effort
- Don't be funding driven
- Don't rush
- Don't get hung up on technology
- Don't be afraid to let go
- Don't create indispensable people

6.3 Workshop K - Community Networking Case study - Craigmillar Community Information Service, Dr. Andy McDonald

This workshop focused on how you use IT to develop community networks.

For details of the presentation see the first presentation in Session 1 - "What Information do Communities Need"

Good Practice Points

Principles behind the project

- Be clear about aims of project
- Relevant to community needs
- Access to be as open a possible eg a hall people already use for other things, a welcoming environment, open all hours, wheelchair accessible
- Ensure it is clear who it is aimed at?
- Patience
- Be representative
- Be brave
- Community to be in charge of development
- Need the system to be appropriate to user skills?

Preparation of a project

- Ensure the community has access to Information technology
- Have competent advisors and a good support structure
- Find out what the community needs/wants Consult the community
- Suitable name
- Emphasis on not re-inventing the wheel / using good ideas worldwide
- Target particularly those who are involved in public/voluntary work
- Well designed, easily accessible interactive web site, Use of graphics
- Involve the schools and community councils
- Who already communicates?
- Agree who will control the site
- Ensure there is sufficient guidance /knowledge of future cost/commitment
- Beware “free” services for which there may be a charge late
- Secure funding / premises / interested people
- Secure copyright of name
- Can you afford to provide / run / update / secure / insure system?

Running a project

- Relevant information
- Update site regularly
- Appropriate discussion/ collaboration mailing lists
- Assistance available for the uninitiated
- Offering support to absolute beginners
- On line toolkit(s)
- Training
- Information – exchange – training – security – funding – content – future vision
- Pilot design with appropriate groups - do not “publish and be damned”
- Flexibility – range of access, response to users

Evaluating a project

- Monitoring of site access by log file analysis
- Be interactive/flexible and open to change, additions etc

Pitfalls to Avoid

- Don't offer projects to or for communities, prejudge user needs and don't allow control to go to the wrong people. Information designed by "experts - not responsive to community needs
- Don't let minorities or a narrow target audience dictate content – exercise some form of editorial control but don't be exclusive.
- Don't spend money on web site "consultants" when information is free on the Internet anyway.
- Don't have too much irrelevant information obscuring what is really needed by the community
- Using many partners means "creative chaos"
- Increasing isolation – "computer junkies" obscuring real conversations, etc but don't create the isolation with the use of the technology.
- Don't talk like a "nettie" – speak in a language people can understand, don't use a lot of technical expressions to confuse and watch out for "teefal heids"! and "gifted" amateurs
- Internet consultation replacing traditional forms – throwing the baby out with the bath-water
- Don't trust the technology
- Failing to get proper technical support
- Allowing the technology to get in the way of communication of information
- Don't expect too much

6.4 Workshop L – Providing information to Communities Case study - Titan, John Brown,

This workshop focused on the issues involved in working from a local authority perspective in developing a technology based information service for local people.

What is Titan

TITAN is a European Commission project designed to bring advanced telematics applications to the population of rural areas in Europe. It will be an information service integrating data from all consortium members and presenting it in an easily accessible manner via the Internet.

Regional Drivers

The need to develop regional and local economy and better exploitation of public sector info. through partnership.

Localisation & devolution of services, the need for Inward investment, tourism development and Community safety.

Partners in the Scottish part of the project:

- Business Information Source at Highland and Islands Enterprise;
- Highland Council;
- Highland of Scotland Tourist Board;
- Northern Constabulary;
- Albanet;
- BT;
- University of Highlands and Islands;
- ICL.

Titan Objectives

To deliver to citizens and SMEs in largely rural and remote areas, popular, integrated, regional public services across the Internet with facilities for personalised access and map based query and visualisation.

Titan Service Domains

SME and business support with start-up-guides, funding, advisory services, contacts.

Local and public services with local planning and environmental services, open Government type services

Tourism, travel and events.

Education, training and lifelong learning with regional study, training and career services.

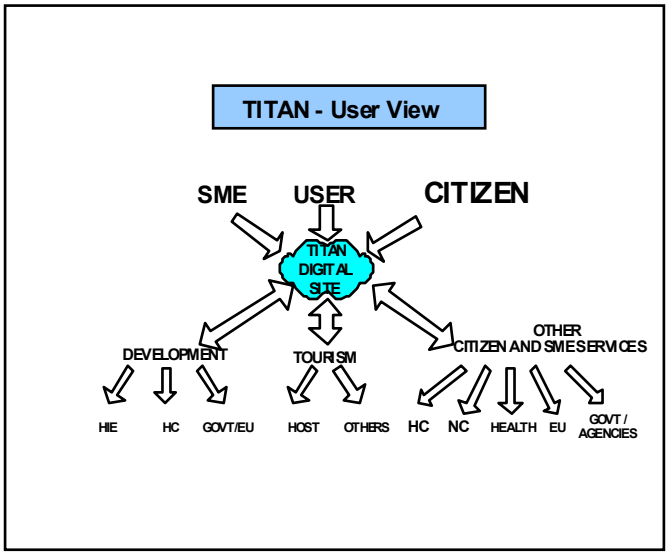
Community networking and information for local communities, development, and community groups.

End user Features

Access to one or many sources of information and access from many different types of units with more locations.

Map use and personal interface, i.e. one suited to an individual's purpose.

Standard services and products.



Good Practice Points

Principles behind the project

- Define aims and objectives
- Ensure easy access with public accessibility
- Make it user friendly, interactive, accessible Two way active participation Interactive – possible to access views on line
- Use existing partnerships
- Flexibility
- Self regulating, with the community rather than technology being the driver
- Involve the community
- 360 degree communication
- Empathetic as opposed to prescription
- Adopt best practice, avoid waste, duplication, and lack of clarity/aim
- Address social exclusion

Preparation of project

- Outsource for expertise – existing systems, partnerships
- Identify and ensure funding and resources – what can you achieve

- Publicise and raise the awareness of the project – people need to know about what is being proposed before they are consulted about it and need to know the context of the project
- Promotion (a continuous issue)
- Seek out the available range of information providers, what information already exists and the gap.
- Find out / consult on format which is most accessible
- Public perception of delivery of information – will they use it?
- consult with, client groups, local community groups, businesses (or business groups), voluntary organisations, the community/all sections of the community/wide interests. Consultation must go beyond those with access to technology, and actively seek participation rather than merely consult.
- Front line staff - what do they think their customers needs are – what is being asked for now.
- Consultation should include, focus groups, surveys, questionnaires, market research, discussions with community members, debate,
- Test a range of needs against a sample population.
- Consult on local needs, check what information is wanted,
- Assess interests and main concerns.
- Prioritise requirements.
- Try to find a few common needs and concentrate on these first.
- Who will compile the information?
- What availability of access to IT is there already?
- Identify what technology will be used and viewing of information
- Can you link into local web sites?

Running a project

- Generate enthusiasm to keep it going
- Information must be up to date and needs to be current and fresh
- Training
- Adopt appropriate marketing and promotion

Evaluating a project

- Pilot
- Evaluate and reform
- Hand over
- Re-test and validate the needs/providers to arrive at a holistic integrated service

Pitfalls to Avoid

- Is it the solution?
- Update information, statistical data resources to be managed
- Not flexible – difficulties accumulate
- Low IT ownership
- Impersonal
- Vocal community members dominate
- Static data – only get the answer that is available
- No training
- Is relevant information available?
- 'Standards' not ground rules
- Avoid too high expectations of what can be done
- Too much information made available
- Static data
- Improper use
- High expectations / unrealistic expectations
- Duplication

6.5 Workshop M - Geographical Information Systems for Local Use Casestudy – Assynt Crofters, Diarmid Macauley

The workshop focused on how GIS systems can be used locally for accessing information for future planning and development in a local community.

Assynt Crofters Trust (ACT) had a need for recording and collating information. Information collected by outside bodies e.g. SNH, was removed from the community both in a geographic sense and the ability for local people to access it. The information was not kept in a format that was usable by ACT- i.e. needed expertise to be able to use the system that held the information and the information was not organised but scattered about the UK.

Sustainable Telematics for Environmental Management (STEM) This project was to allow ACT and other land users to gain access to information and use it for their own needs – a GIS system. There was a difficulty of different partners understanding each other's needs and having different levels of knowledge and expertise. The experts were liable to provide either what they want the answer to be or what they think the user wants and not really listen.

Computers are machines –given the adage of rubbish in etc. Nobody is born knowing how to drive a car yet people are expected to know about computers. You need to train people. I was a guinea pig for ACT- and had a certain level of expertise. In communities this means finding people with the time and resources to be trained and run a system.

Organisation - There is a danger of expertise or knowledge being confined to too few in the community. If the person who knows all leaves then projects can be left high and dry.

ACT was not really needing just information but also help in how to interpret and use the information – information v knowledge. Also there is the almost blind belief that if information is written then it must be true! It is very hard for non-experts to question information.

STEM came to the conclusion that at some stage human intervention was going to be needed in the distribution and use of information.

Conclusion -There is a need and use for systems like GIS for community use but it is not easy in terms of resources, time and expertise.

Good Practice Points

Principles of a project

- Simple
- Access for all
- Key local concerns / info needs met
- Research in the community first
- User friendly
- Marketing
- Establish goals and aims and an organisational framework – what is the purpose of your GIS system
- Live system
- Incorporate training or “buddy” system
- Link to existing information provision
- Define your community
- Resources – human, financial, etc
- Consult your community – ensure all members are consulted
- System for feedback on use and value
- How will the system be presented? Text, maps, interactive, multi-media – and expertise to implement
- Establish technological and financial limits of community – and then get funding/ help with resources
- SMART targets
- Well defined purpose and audience
- Legal context, and copyright issues – need to establish where you stand

- Iterative process with pilots and prototypes
- Sustainable project resources (not just 1 or 2 years)

Developing a system for communities to access information we would ensure we:

- Involve as many organisations/individuals as possible BUT STEERING GROUP
- Easily accessible
- Training/awareness/education
- Infrastructure in place
- Managed - information/ IT backup – jobs
- Resources – money – human – accommodation
- Legal setup – copyright etc
- Information must be relevant and current and what the community wants
- Proper evaluation system – SMART targets
- Reason for having it – Purpose
- flexibility

Pitfalls to Avoid

- Static system
- Duplication due to lack of communications
- Key individuals (reliance)
- Non accurate data
- Over stretching resources
- Insufficient consideration of future generations
- Poor project management
- Setting up a system no one wants
- Inappropriate technology for the purpose
- Lack on an organiser/ framework for organisation and management
- Information without knowledge
- Unsustainable resources/budgets
- Don't put all your eggs in one basket
- Not knowing why you are having an information system
- Not knowing your audience
- Emphasis on technology
- Data sensibility
- Over optimism
- Under enthusiasm
- Unsustainable resources/budgets
- Not to consider very young people and their potential

6.6 Workshop N-Geographical Information Systems in Planning for Real Casestudy – University of Leeds, Richard Kingston.

This workshop focused on how GIS systems were used for developing a virtual Planning for Real system.

The Virtual Society Programme

The research project is funded by the Economic and Social Research Councils Virtual Society? Programme and the title of our project is "Public participation in environmental decision making: evaluating the role of Virtual Decision-Making Environments". Essentially this is investigating the potential of web-based GIS and decision support systems using real world case studies.

We have undertaken three case studies at local, regional and national scales in a village, a national park and our national case study looks at the controversial issue of radioactive waste disposal.

Virtual Slaithwaite

The local level planning exercise mirrored a traditional Planning For Real® exercise developed by the Neighbourhood Initiatives Foundation (NIF)[11] through the implementation of a web based virtual "Planning For Real"® model with local community involvement and consultation.

The virtual system developed by Leeds University provided basic GIS functionality such as map display, pan and zoom, spatial query and on-line database (attribute information) update. There were several advantages to this method over the traditional PfR exercise in that the virtual model allowed interactive pan, zoom, query and update. The ability to instantaneously update the database and profile users online was a useful advantage of the system. The virtual system has a long residence time allowing people to use the system anytime, anywhere. The **public does not need to attend a meeting at a particular time or place**. The system allows faster collation of results from log files and the web site can be used to disseminate results/feedback.

Woods

The regional level landscape planning exercise worked closely with the Yorkshire Dales National Park using, again an online GIS for public participation in locating areas for regeneration of native woodland. This system was used by professionals, residents and visitors to the National Park and provided similar GIS functionality as the local case study. This system also allowed users to select and weight particular datasets using overlay and Multi-Criteria Evaluation based suitability mapping. Once again the same advantages to the village case study relating to the public not needing to attend a meeting at a particular time or place was one of the advantages of this method, particularly in a larger geographical area. The system allowed an instantaneously mapped solution to where trees should be planted according to the users choices.

The Role of the Internet?

It must be stressed that in the research we have undertaken we see the web and the Internet as a mechanism for the delivery of a consultation exercise to augment traditional methods rather than replacing them. The great advantage with the web is that it allows a two-way flow of information from the server (local authority etc.) to the client (public) and then back to the server.

The web allows the use of a wider range of content such as multi-media information and tools to use and interrogate it. New ways of engaging users can be put into practice such as on-line questionnaires, analysis of log files to see what people have been looking at etc.

Design Issues

There are several design issues that need to be tackled in implementing these types of systems. The presentation of information needs to be clear, unambiguous and comprehensive and there needs to be a distinction between fact and interpretation. The methods of interaction need to be set up in such a way as to be easy to use and understand by everyone and the methods used and flow of information need to be transparent.

Data Access

One of the most important issues relating to on-line GIS concerns the actual data that is central to system. The actual ownership of all the different pieces of information and data can cause major problems in relation to who controls and owns the information.

Any system, which is map based, is bound to be tied up in complex copyright and legal issues. **The major problems encountered so far relate to Ordnance Survey maps being distributed via the Internet!** Current OS thought relating to this matter is suggesting that a copyright fee should be paid to OS every time one of their maps are view/downloaded on-line. As well as the initial expense in buying the OS digital data in the first instance the thought of paying a fee every time someone visits your web site to look at a map could make the whole exercise pointless. I would recommend that

[11] The Neighbourhood Initiatives Foundation (NIF) is a National Charity, founded in 1988, with the main aim of maximising the participation of local people in decisions that affect their neighbourhoods and their quality of life. The founding director, Dr Tony Gibson, devised "Planning For Real"® in the 1970s as a technique that is employed by the NIF fieldwork team. NIF has continued to develop and adapt this primary tool to meet both local and strategic consultation needs and as an essential process in community development programmes. NIF fieldworkers usually facilitate the process using large 3D scale models of the local area.

you have a look at the following OS documents relating to this matter. **The copyright issues is probably the single most important factor which will prevent organisations from developing web based GIS!!**

Ordnance Survey, (1997) *Developments for the World Wide Web (WWW)*. Information paper 13/1997. Southampton: Ordnance Survey. Ordnance Survey, (1999) *A new pricing policy for mapping on the Internet*. Information Paper 1/1999 Version 2. Southampton: Ordnance Survey.

Technical obstacles

Authoring: who is responsible for putting the site together and are the necessary skills required for doing this in place.

GIS skills: to be able to put GIS on the web requires someone with knowledge of using GIS.

WWW/IT understanding: does the public understand how it works and are they comfortable using IT? As more and more people become IT aware this will become less of a problem but some people will be unsure of the technology and may need help and training.

General observations

Representativeness: 25% of UK population are supposedly online (NOP, 1999) although there is a bias toward young and professional people. There are severe problems of outreach to some social groups.

The Human-Computer Interface: there is lack of basic computer skills in some social groups and issues of interface design need to be addressed. Systems can be developed which can be set to different levels of skill, dependent upon the user knowledge.

Spatial cognition: there is a varied public understanding of maps and definitely on the understanding of GIS principles. Then again, do the public really need to know that they are using a GIS.

Trust: the publics trust of system, the data contained in it and the purpose of the exercise needs to be made extremely clear. There is the potential for (dis) information and abuse of the system by people who may have other motives. The web is worldwide and thus accessible by anyone and this can lead to abuse. Results can be misleading if they are not checked to see who has been looking at your web site and from where. Is someone's comments/views from Perth, Australia as valid as someone's from Fortrose?

Summary

Public involvement can be maximised by Internet-based approaches. The web should be seen as a means of enhancing current practices, not replacing them!

It has an extremely valid use particularly in dispersed rural areas where there is no need to be in attendance at a particular time or place - the web is available anytime, anywhere so long as access is made easily available!!

Best Practice Points

- Allow enough time for most residents to participate – publicise locally
- Ensure community involvement – factual and anecdotal
- Ensure that a representative cross section of the community are surveyed
- A general understanding for people to understand what GIS stands for
- That all age groups are represented
- That it touches areas that might interest lots of different people
- Local people/groups can enter data for presentation
- Live links to alter people's attributes data
- Two way ability to gather data from the community

Pit Falls to Avoid

- Avoid too much detail on maps – not to be off putting to participants
- The results not being representative
- Skewed profile of respondents
- Presentation of too much information – need distillation without leaving out anything vital
- That everybody might not have access to the Internet, might be computer literate, or want to use this method
- Beware too much top-down influence
- GIS an addition to other foras of communication/consultation not a substitute
- Work with local people defining agendas

Session 2

7. Workshops - Way Forward

7.1 The Aims of the Way Forward Sessions

To establish the best way forward for the Moray Firth Partnership/Dùthchas Project in establishing information systems for their project areas

The workshops were structured so that the Project staff gave on the aims of the information system and of this workshop. Set parameters for the following discussion.
Group splits into two. Each group to looked at the following

- In addition to the projects we have heard about today, are there other projects, reportsor other work we should be aware of? - list to go on a flip chart sheet 'other relevant projects'
- Given what we have heard today and the aims of the MFP/D what featuresdid you find most useful (both technical and how things were done) - list to go on flip chart 'most useful features'
- What now needs to be done - list to start matrix on a flipchart 'what now needsto be done"? Prioritise - top 3.
- Who should be involved, why and how? - add to matrix on a flipchart 'who should be involved'

This was put onto 3 flipcharts and put into the main room for people to read.

- 'other relevant projects'
- 'most useful features'
- Matrix with columns 'what now needs to be done', 'who should be involved' and 'how'.

7.2 Moray Firth Partnership

Other Projects

Group 1

- Firth of Forth, Tay
- Aberdeenshire Council – database of community groups and GIS system
- Linked groups in Aberdeenshire (community)
- Moray community web sites
- Partnership and planning in Highland (Ann Clark CE in HC) well being
- Agenda 21 – Highland Council
- Local bio-diversity action plans

Group 2

- Minch Project web site
- Forth Estuary Forum
- SNH web site
- Community newspapers
- Local radio
- Local press
- Local heritage projects
- Ice House
- Small museums
- SCRA UN Project
- Buncrew/Kirkhill 20/20 group
- CVS Network
- HEN

Group 3

- Speyside
- Intranets – internet – extranet
- NewNet
- Specific community sites:
- Aberdeenshire community
- Rosemarkie
- Portsoy
- Moray site – Forres/Buckie
- Cromarty
- Dornoch
- HEN

Most Useful Features

Group 1

- Representation of communities – how is this done
- How do you make sure people know about your project?
- Local democracy – issues to be taken on board

Group 2

- Variety
- Large/small provider groups
- Highlighting pitfalls (don't reinvent the wheel)
- Discussion opportunities
- Networking
- Horses for courses (right application for the job)
- How to get started (technically)
- Legal constraints highlighted
- Combination of those with technical expertise and those involved with the community
- Contacts

Group 3

- Interactive GIS / Virtual
- Interest group pages
- Internet
- Geography
- Access availability
- Intrastructure
- Cost
- Link into MFP site
- Discussion pages : raise points, open discussion
- (www.egroups.com)

Who should be involved?

Group 1

- Information providers
- Everyone in MF – representation very broad – stakeholder
- Lack of public
- RAF
- Police
- Agency driven reps
- Community lead reps

- How do you identify interest groups?
- Attachments

Group 2

- The Partnership groups
- More enthusiastic individuals
- Front line staff
- Community groups
- Youth organisations
- Church groups
- All levels of education
- The media (local and mass)

Group 3

- Identify human centre networks
- Who are key contacts in the area?
- What do you want from information system?
- Practicalities of systems – eg GIS
- Who can provide services and information
- Pilot studies
- Down your street
- Market information systems
- Organisations and MFP members
- Information holders – making information available and understandable
- Communities
- University and colleges

What was learnt and taken forward

Group 1

- Practical tips on running a web site – eg logging – evaluation and analysis
- Expense of BT lines – more expensive in Highlands and less bandwidth than urban areas– MFP to put forward
- Norway insistence on broadband in rural areas as well as urban
- Top down initiatives tend to founder – need bottom up approach
- Links with university to use students (NewNet)
- Open to change – eg Genesis and Intranet

What needs to be done?

Group 1

- Take decisions and development to a much wider public. There seems to be a small representation at the conference – can IT be used for this? Is the wider public aware of the Moray Firth Partnership
- Ensure all "disgruntled" community councils are kept informed of MFP – as far as possible use the internet to enable two way communication, e-mail conferences
- Outline to community councils exactly what information it would like to receive over 6 months, 12 months
- Invite community councils to outline what information needs they want from MFP
- Survey of all interested parties to see what they want in terms of a system, and in terms of information, and for what purpose
- Work with the community
- Specify information required – users not providers
- Statements of MFP's intent regarding its role as a powerful lobbying body
- Make manifest the political purpose of MFP
- Raise profile of the MFP and its aims
- Publicise MFP by all possible means

- Outline and underline what has been achieved so far and distribute it widely
- Networking
- Instigate neighbourhood forum
- Identify revenue source
- Make available specific guidelines for setting up community action groups, templates, etc
- Establish and update? web site
- Active response opportunities for users
- Information structure:
- Access to all members public information sites
- Access to all advisory committee minutes
- Political statements of purpose and method
- Public access IT – encourage, raise funds for public access sites in association with HIE, HC, PFI, in libraries as a start
- Ensure the information system is usable to all

Group 2

- Set a realistic timescale
- Publicise the partnership
- Information should go to schools
- Market research
- Inviting participation
- Recruit enthusiastic individuals to assess views of the communities
- Involve community groups
- Create a diversity of channels
- Appropriate forms of communication
- IT is not the only solution

7.3 Dùthchas

Lorna Walker from the project introduced the session and explained that Dùthchas will produce local sustainability strategies for each area, looking at the key issues like transport, land use, natural and cultural heritage etc. This will require people to have local information at their fingertips – information which is mostly held by LECs, local authorities, SNH, etc

The idea is that the system brings together datasets from different organisations in a map-based GIS (Geographical Information System), and to make it as easy as possible for people to access this. However they have lots of questions about how to develop the system – what data people want to have access to, how they want to access it (eg. laptop in the village hall, on the internet, etc), what outputs they want etc - Some of these questions were addressed in this workshop.

Jon Shepherd of the Highland Council introduced the system that he was developing for the project, and outlined some of the issues being addressed:

- One of the main problems with putting the system on the Internet is the cost of the software, and the cost of the OS copyright.
- The system that is being developed is built using Visual Basic and Map Object. It is not a full GIS system, rather a map viewer. It already has some functions, but could have more and the OS mapping they are using is very limited at the moment.
- The system shows different datasets – eg SSSIs, archaeological sites, estates, rights of way etc, etc – alone, or in combination and Information is provided about each site shown – at the demonstration this showed a limited selection of fields from the databases held.
- Using the technology is not a real problem, but before you can use the data you have to understand a bit about it –
- At present it is not possible to request all data relating to (for example) a certain parish, but it is possible that this could be
- Map Object software – a user license is needed for each computer (NB. Educational establishments can get GIS software very cheap).
- For OS copyright, the OS have to be assured that access is being controlled. This would cause problems in providing the system on the Internet or CD or DVD for use on home computers
- In the long term the system is probably not really viable unless it can go on the Internet.
- The system can be used by anyone that can use a mouse and windows should be able to pick up using the system in about 30 minutes.

Dùthchas are planning an extensive period of user testing – linked to the development of the area strategies. To date the system has not been tested on the public.

Discussions

The groups were then split to discuss the project and participants were asked to place a x on a line marked with 1 at one end, and 10 at the other. The placing of each x is bound to be inexact. The tables below therefore give a general feel, rather than having a high level of accuracy.

The following tables record the number of votes on a 1-10 system, where 1 is not desirable and 10 highly desirable. The numbers in the boxes indicate the number of people who put their 'x' in this box.

What Functions do you most want the GIS to have?

Group 1

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
Zoom in and out										9	9
Viewing layers										9	9
Getting information										9	9
Printing out		1			2	1	1	1		3	9
What's the nearest?				2		2	2	3			9
Distance from A to B				2	1		5			1	9
How big is?		1			1	1	2	3		1	9

Issues:

- Pointers to metadata
- Ownership
- Password protection on internet
- Locally owned datasets

Group 2

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
Zoom in and out						1	2	2	7	2	14
Viewing layers					2	3	1	3	2	3	14
Getting information								3	3	7	13
Printing out			1			1	2	1	3	5	13
Changeability?	2	1		1	2	3	1	1	2	1	14
Links to other info, eg on www		1				1	1	1	4	5	13
Clear, large buttons/ minimise jargon					2	2	1	1	4	4	14
Easier search facility							2	3	4	6	15
Pick an area to find out all relevant?						1	2	2	3	4	12
Search by town or postcode				1	1	2	1	2	3	3	13
Opportunity for comment/feedback				1		1	1	3	2	7	15

What access do you want Locally?

Group 1

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
On PCs in communities, organisations, eg libraries, schools	2	1		1				1	2	2	9
On laptop	3	2	2	1		1					9
Internet									1	8	9

Questions/Comments:

- Who looks after it?
- Communities don't have anywhere for it to go.

Group 2

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
On PCs in communities, organisations, eg libraries, schools	1					1	2	2	4	2	12
On laptop	3				1	1		2	3	2	12
Internet									3	8	11
CD-Rom sent out	1	2			3	1	2			2	11
Combination	1			1	1	2	1	1		4	11
Ask somebody to find out for you				1	3	2	2	1	1	2	12

Group 2 Where would you want the access

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
Local halls	1	2		1	1	2	2	1		1	11
Community centres	1	1			1	2	2	2	2	2	13
Community schools	1				1	1		1	2	3	9
Church	3	2	2	2	1						10
Open door places							1	3	2	3	9
Libraries							2	2	1	5	10
Mobile Libraries	1	2					1	1	2	3	10
Supermarkets			1		1	1		1	3	3	10
Tourist Info Centres				1	1	1		2	2	2	9
Council offices					1		1	1	3	3	9

How many should there be?

Group 2

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
At least one for each community council area		1	2					2	2	5	12
One per 1000 people		1	1			2	1	1	1	6	13
One within 10 miles	5	2	1	1	1		1	2			13
In each house	1				2	2	1	1		6	13

Issues:

Who is going to look after them? Who is going to help people use them?

Who should be involved in testing?

Group 1

- Police
- Actual community group
- Community council
- Advisory group
- Secondary school

Group 2

- School-kids/ teachers/head
- OAPs
- WRI/ Women's Guild
- Parents
- Police
- Disabled people
- Crofters
- Fishermen
- Tourists
- Unemployed people
- People on benefits
- Local Councilors
- JPs
- MPs
- A cross section of the community
- Nobody was forthcoming about individuals' names

Appendices

Appendix 1

Speaker Contacts, useful web sites and references.

1. Speaker Contacts

Name	Organisation and address	Tel	Fax	E-mail	Web Page
Dr. Andy MacDonald	Craigmillar Community Information Project Unit 29- 31 Castlebrae Business Centre Peffer Place Edinburgh EH16 4BB	0131 6595558	0131 6596023	staff@ccis.org.uk	www.ctcnet.org Also see below
Mr. G. Walker	Newcastle NewNet Ltd 23 Avondale Ave Penshaw Houghton le Spring Tyne & Wear DH4 TQR	0191 2116222	0191 2116276	geoffw@geoffw.demon.co.uk	www.newnet.org.uk
Ms. A. Simpson	Development Co-ordinator The Old Mill Burnside Portsoy AB45 2QN	01261 842951		Portsoy@lineone.net	www.sixvillages.org.uk
Mr. R. Kingston	School of Geography University of Leeds England LS2 9JT	0113 2333342	0113 233 3308	Richard@geography.leeds.ac.uk	www.ccg.leeds.ac.uk/vdmisp/

Mr. G. Wilcock	Dept of Economic Development and Planning Moray Council Council Office High Street Elgin Moray IV30 1BX	01343 563484	01342 563483	geoff.wilcock@edp.moray.gov.uk	
Anne Quilter Jacq Whightman	Genesis Client Team Lower Goal Yard The Courts Carlisle CA3 8NA	01228 606552/3	01228 606551	cumb.genesis@dail.pipex.com	
Ms. R. Hennigan	SCVO 18/19 Claremont Crescent Edinburgh BH7 4QO	0131 556 3882	0131 556 0279		
Ms. A. MacKay	SCVO Inverness Ardross Terrace Inverness	01463 235633			
Mr. D. Gibson	Gairloch & District Development Ass. 13 Strath Gairloch Wester Ross IV21 2BX			louisegibson@cali.co.uk	
Mr. J. Brown	Information Systems Highland Council Glenurquhart Road Inverness	01463 702706		john.brown@highland.gov.uk	
Mr. D. MacAulay	Joiners Flat Applecross House Applecross Ross-shire IV54 8NA	01520 744 428 / 01520 744 432		diarmid@macaulay.u-net.com	
Jon Shepherd	Planning Services, Highland Council, Glenurquhart Road,			Jon.shepherd@highland.gov.uk	

	Inverness.				
Ivar Petter Grotte	Vestlandsforsking Fossetunnet3, Boks 142, 5801 Sogndal, Norway	00 47 5767 61 50		Ivar-Petter.Grotte@vf.hisf.no	
Anders Andersssen	County Governors Office Fylkesmannen i Sogn og Fjordane P.O. Box 37, N-5840 Hermansverk, Norway	00 47 65 51 41		Anders.anderssen@fm-sf.sri.telemax.no	
Jostein Fondenes (overall Project Co-ordinator)	Fylkesmannen i Sogn og Fjordane P.O. Box 37, N-5840 Hermansverk, Norway County Governors Office, Sogn og Fjordane	00 47 57 65 51 03		Jostein.Fondenes@fm-sf.sri.telemax.no	

2. Useful web sites

Name of organisation	Information on site	Web address(URL)
Community related sites		
Craigmillar Community Information Service		www.ccis.org.uk also www.teleport.org.uk
		www.partnerships.org.uk
		www.partnerships.org.uk/internet/index.htm
		www.benton.org
The Community Technology Centers' Network	A network of more than 300 community technology centers where people get access to computers and computer-related technology, such as the Internet.	www.ctcnet.org
The Community Technology Centers' Network	Information on evaluation of projects	www.ctcnet.org/biblio4.htm
Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations		http://www.scvo.org.uk
Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations	Parliamentary Information and Advisory Service	http://www.scvo.org.uk/pias -
Community Development Foundation		www.cdf.org.uk
Community Development Society		www.comm-dev.org
Scottish Community Development Centre		www.scdc.org.uk
Communities -On-Line		www.communities.org.uk
West Yorkshire Community Work Training Groups	Useful training material for working with local communities	www.community-work-training.org.uk
Duthchas	Community project	www.duthchas.org.uk
Moray Firth Partnership	Community project	www.morayfirth-partnership.org
Hi Point Ltd	Highland communities portal site, developing local businesses and information	www.hipoint.org
Government sites		
Tagish's Directory of UK Local Government Sites	Links to all the local authorities that have web sites	www.tagish.co.uk/tagish/links/localgov.htm
Cabinet Office	Access to recent White and Green papers and Government policy	www.open.gov.uk
Scottish Parliament web site	Information from the new Parliament and links to all MSP	www.scottish.parliament.uk
Related sites		
TITAN	Portal site for the Highlands	www.hi-ways.org
TITAN	Norway	www.map.vestforski.no

Sites on GIS		
Association for Geographic Information	The Association for Geographic Information represents all interests that make up the UK geographic information community. Members are drawn from every sector of government, business and commerce and include both suppliers and users.	www.agi.org.uk
Internet mapping	Useful site to show how maps can be used to show information on areas	http://maps.esri.com
Government Technology	A USA site that shows the use of GIS in several different towns and cities	www.govtech.net
Pittsburgh Properties Online	A web application that allows access to useful information on any commercial or industrial piece of land. Though just about Pittsburgh does show how you can use GIS to go down to small areas	http://209.21.13.32/pittsburg/properties.html
HSDI - Human Scale |Development Initiative	HSDI is a third Sector non-profit organisation involved in training, researching and networking form community self-reliance.	

Appendix 2

Attendees at the seminar

Attendees
NB: a '•' means Presenter

	Ellis Bolton	Caithness Community Website
	Tony Boyle	ReBoot (Moray Computer Recycling)
	Keith Bray	Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar
	James Brennan	Ardersier & Petty Environmental Society
	Joe Brinklow	Shopmobility
	Jenny Brogden	Lambda Research & Consultancy Ltd
•	John Brown	The Highland Council
	David Bryan	Moray College
	Marie Buchan	Community Agent Buckie
	Allan Cameron	Inverness Courier
	Joan Campbell	Dùthchas Project
	Marie Campbell	Uist Council of Voluntary Organisations
	Polly Chapman	The Highland Council
	Wilma Chestnut	Dùthchas Project
	George Clark	Caledonia Centre for Source Dev.
	Christine Cowie	Thurso College
	Robert Croucher	Portnockie Community Council
	Calum Davidson	Business Information Source
	Colin Downie	Merkinch Enterprise
	Alan Fay	Scottish Natural Heritage
	Bill Fernie	Caithness Community Website
	Alison Forest	Dornoch Library
	Karen Fraser	Scottish Museums Council
•	Douglas Gibson	Gairloch & District Development Association
	Sine Gillespie	Dùthchas Project
	Joanna Gilliatt	Lambda Research & Consultancy Ltd
	Meg Gillies	Columba 1400
	Iain Grant	Cromarty Firth Liaison Group
	Jasmine Grant	Thurso College
	Mike Grantham	Crofters Commission
	Paula Gray	Crofters Commission
	Kay Griffin	Community Agent Fochabers
	Paul Griffiths	Scottish Environment Protection Agency
	Vanessa Halhead	Dùthchas Project
	Rachel Harding-Hill	Moray Firth Partnership
•	Rowena Hennigan	SCVO
	Colin Hickman	Lossiemouth Business Association
	Martin Hind	The Highland Council
	Jim Johnston	Dùthchas Project
	Elspeth Kennedy	Forest Enterprise
•	Richard Kingston	University of Leeds
	Aaron Lawton	Aaron Lawton Associates
	Andy Leggatt	
	Robert Lockwood	Caithness Community Website
•	Diarmid MacAulay	Assynt Crofters
	Caitriona MacCuish	Dùthchas Project
•	Andy MacDonald	Craigmillar Community Information Project
	Angus Macfadyen	Dùthchas Project
•	Alison MacKay	SCVO Inverness
	Fraser Macpherson	The Highland Council
	Cameron MacRae	Northern Constabulary
	George McIntyre	The Moray Council
	Cath Millar	Burghead, Cummingston & Roseisle Community Council
	Ken Millar	Burghead, Cummingston & Roseisle Community Council

	Alaistar Nicholson	IT Consultant
	Grahame Paterson	Columba 1400
	John Picken	Community Education
	Frances Powell	MVSO
•	Anne Quilter	Genesis Client Team
	Uisdean Robertson	Dùthchas Project
	Nancy Rosie	JET2000/Caithness Community Website
	Stuart Scott	Buckie Chamber of Commerce
	David Shepherd	Kirkhill & Bunchrew 2020 Committee
•	Jon Shepherd	The Highland Council
•	Alison Simpson	Portsoy & District Ltd
	Gillian Simpson	Moray Firth Partnership
	Franziska Smith	Moray, Badenoch & Strathspey Enterprise
	Tom Snowling	The Moray Counil
	Alex Stewart	North of Scotland Water Authority
	Meg Telfer	Dùthchas Project
	Rene Ter Schiphorst	Ter Schiphorst Environmental Consultancy
	Peter Tilbrook	Ecological Consultant
	Denis Toner	Balloch Trust Enterprise Ltd
	Paul Trowski	Graduate Science Student
	Allan Tubb	Inner Firths Environmental Forum
•	Geoff Walker	Newcastle NewNet Ltd
	Lorna Walker	Dùthchas Project
•	Jacqueline Whiteman	Genesis Client Team
•	Geoff Wilcock	The Moray Council
	Sinclair Young	The Portsoy Project

Appendix 3

Evaluation

Evaluation report Analysis

1. Completed Forms

Completed evaluation forms were received from 31 of the participants in the seminar.

2. Quantitative Responses

As Table 1. shows, the majority of participants completed those parts of the questionnaire that simply involved circling numbers. The averages shown are averages of the responses given.

Very few of respondents circled 1 (poor) or 2 for any of these questions, though the two questions about the presentations each received three scores of 1.

Table 1 – Quantitative Responses

Invitations & Venue		**Presentations**		**Demos**	**Workshop**	**Session 1**
4.0	4.1	3.7	3.7	3.8	3.7	3.6
N=31	N=31	N=29	N=28	N=27	N=30	N=29

The average scores show that the level of satisfaction with all aspects of the seminar washigh, the average in each case being above 3½.

The venue, and invitation process score most highly – with average scores of 4.1 and 4.0 respectively, and each scoring 11 5s (excellent).

The next highest score, at 3.8, goes to the relevance of the demonstrations.

The level of satisfaction with the range and relevance of the presentations, and with the range of workshops is just slightly lower, at 3.7 each. However, it is notable that while 7 participantsscored both the range and relevance of the presentations as 5 (excellent), only 2 scored the range of workshops as 5.

The lowest average score goes to the question asking if the first workshop was relevant, which scored 3.6.

Overall, therefore, the average scores given to all these questions are extremely high, indicating a very positive attitude to the seminar.

3. Invitations and Venue

12 participants took the opportunity to comment about this aspect of the seminar.

7 of these made comments about the venue itself:

- Venue served very well
- Good access, poor cycle parking
- Venue on the whole satisfactory apart from poor provision of morning coffee – notenough cups, not enough coffee
- Lunch etc excellent
- Venue arrangements a shade bothersome – parking, accommodation, loosand facilities(eg outside phone connections far away) could have been better.
- Good venue plenty of space, some of the seating obscured visibility and speakers voice.
- Over use of room for demos not a good idea. A bit on the warm side. Could have done with more soft drinks, water.

There were three comments on the difficulty of choosing workshops and/or demonstrations:

- Choosing an appropriate demonstration or workshop was difficult from the limited information available in the original publicity.
- I found the workshop-choosing process slightly bewildering, but advice excellent
- Would have welcomed some more details of content/personal potential value of each demonstration to assist me in my choices

There were two overall comments about the day:

- A long day, but smoothly processed – didn't get bored at all
- Well informed by local Duthchas co-ordinators

4. Presentations

13 participants took the opportunity to comment about this aspect of the seminar. Some of these made more than one comment.

One comment was just very positive:

- Very little room for improvement

Two comments suggest that some participants had difficulty hearing the presentations:

- Some speakers had poor voice control
- Provision of a microphone would have been beneficial.

. Three comments related to the range of presentations:

- Another community based (and small scale) project like the Portsoy one would have been useful.
- Difficult to comment as I'm not familiar with the range available but I expected more diversity and depth – probably means that other initiatives are not as many or as advanced as a I thought.
- Just enough but a lot of overlap of key concepts.

Two comments were about the assumptions made about IT knowledge in the presentations

- Some poor quality with assumptions on IT knowledge in excess of my knowledge
- Several of the presentations assumed more IT knowledge and understanding of jargon than I have!

One comment made the general point that some presentations didn't get to the point.

A number of participants made comments about individual presentations. Most of these were very positive – with the presentations from Cumbria, Leeds, Portsoy and Newcastle being particularly commended by two or more participants. The GIS presentation from Leeds gained the highest number of positive comments.

- The Newcastle and Leeds presentations were particularly good.
- Best value were presentations 3 (Portsoy), 2 (NewNet), 4 (Leeds)
- Cumbria, Leeds, Portsoy first class.

5. Demonstrations

Did they show you anything new? - Twenty participants took the opportunity to respond to this question and of these four responded "No" or "not really", and another "a little", while just one responded "yes, all". Of the remaining responses, 3 related to projects themselves, and a further two to ideas:

- Both projects were new to me
- NewNet certainly
- HiPoint
- Yes – new ideas shared [HiPoint and Craigmillar]
- How to get going [Genesis and Moray]

The remaining responses related to different aspects of technology:

- The variety of uses of the technology
- Diversity of web site technology
- Videoconference great idea!!
- GIS
- GIS
- Range of uses of GIS
- Touch screen technology
- 1st close contact with touch screens
- Some free/shareware

Did they help you understand the technology?

Twenty-two participants took the opportunity to respond to this question and of these 6 answered "no", "not really", or "not much" – though one of these added "but they gave ideas of what might be possible". Another 3 comments were:

- Nothing new
- Already had a good understanding
- Would have needed more time [videophone]

The remaining 13 responses were positive, most of them simply stating "yes". Responses also included:

- Yes, by demonstration
- yes, video link was great!
- Video link was effective
- GIS
- Virtual GIS
- GWs clarity of explanation taught us a lot

Comments

Ten participants took the opportunity to make general comments about the demonstrations.

Two comments related to the format of the demonstrations and/or the way they were presented:

- demonstrations in one small room didn't work too well (although good as it was free).
- A pity one could only dip into two.
- Demonstration could have been usefully preceded by an introduction to the background/ development of the project [HiPoint]

Three comments related to difficulties with technology:

- Second session I attended was unable to do the demonstration
- Unfortunate choice - Craigmillar didn't run
- Demonstrations of A became very muddled because of confusion over technical issues

Workshop 1

Fifteen participants took the opportunity to provide comments about the workshops, some of them providing more than one comment.

Two simple, positive comments were made:

- Well facilitated [Craigmillar]
- Good range of examples [Titan]

Two specific comments were made about GIS:

- GIS knowledge improved [Assynt Crofters]
- It makes me realise the present use of GIS and the way development can be used. Also that it right now appears to touch a relative small public [GIS Leeds]

Four of the comments related to the time available for the workshop:

- Too short
- Again – could have done with more time but very interesting [Leeds GIS]
- Session was truncated (lack of time) so didn't really get an opportunity to see the final outcome of our group work [Titan]
- As usual with seminars raised more issues than it solved problems. We needed more time for group discussion [HiPoint]

Opinion about the value of the discussion varied:

- Yes, but I don't think we identified much useful discussion though [Craigmillar]
- Rather a statement of past problems – though some useful tips on pitfalls [Assynt Crofters]
- Improved greatly when group discussions got under way.
- Good ideas come out of discussion

Three comments relate to the format of the Workshop, drawing attention to the overlap between the workshops and the demonstrations:

- Sadly, it just re-iterated the demonstration session
- Found the introduction unnecessary and unhelpful [HiPoint]
- Very useful – much more so than related demonstration [HiPoint]

7. Workshop 2

Is there a role for MFP/Duthchas in helping communities access info through IT?

Twenty-nine of the participants took the opportunity to respond to this question, with 18 of them giving a simple "yes" answer, plus one "definitely", and 9 more either answering "yes", or implying yes, but with some explanation, as follows:

- Yes, probably in partnership with others rather than as stand alone organisations
- Yes, but it must include securing funding
- Yes, but some way to go yet – 2 way communications important
- Yes but not to the exclusion of other means
- Yes (MFP) through guidelines etc
- Yes – a sharing of information needs/offer

- All forms of communication should be used
- Put information on web site, publicise address widely
- MFP web site should be GIS based – community networking can follow

With a: - Probably – practically difficult.

8. Are you willing to be involved in developing the way forward?

Twenty-four of the participants took the opportunity to respond to this question, with 15 of them giving a simple "yes" answer, plus one "surely", and 4 more either answering "yes" or implying yes, but with some explanation, as follows:

- Yes (CFLG) save duplication between two strategies
- Yes, if time available!
- If I can be useful
- At a price

The remaining responses imply "no", with lack of time and lack of IT skills being the reasons given:

- Sadly no time
- Cannot see a way at present
- Don't have the relevant IT skills
- I know what I'd like to see but don't have the knowledge or expertise to contribute much.

9. Who else do you think should be involved?

Fifteen participants took the opportunity to respond to this question, providing the following answers:

- More of the community
- As many local groups/individuals as possible
- Member organisations and communities starting point
- Anyone who has an interest in the Moray Firth
- Local groups – eg Highland Geological Society
- Younger people, schools
- Through the medium of community councils everyone should be involved
- Community Councils (the official voice of the people)?
- Information holders
- Already have links with our Telematics Unit
- On today's showing – Cumbria and Com.Com. SCVO
- The CVS network
- H.E.N.
- Local radio shows off the technology potential
- Dealt with in last workshop

10. Further Comments on any Aspect of the Day

Fourteen participants took the opportunity to add further comments and a number of comments were made about the organisation of the day, and the participants. Some of these are positive:

- Very well supervised by team – nobody got lost
- Very well done – relevant and informative as ever!
- Worthwhile bring group together to share experiences.
- Good mix of attendees – "techy" and "non-techy"

Some are mixed:

- Well run – a lot will depend upon what paperwork is passed and how soon, after the seminar. Too much use of "short forms" of details not known to those unfamiliar with this jargon. [n.b. this comment belongs with similar ones in response to earlier questions]
- An interesting and useful day and although I didn't quite know what to expect I was hoping for more.
- Found the morning more interesting than the afternoon

Some are more negative, making suggestions for improvement, or raising questions:

- This workshop was hijacked by people who did not understand MFP's role or history, i.e. too diverse group to make constructive comment

- Was the day aimed at community involvement in general networking or developing an information system based on the Moray Firth for the community?
- Too much information giving. Each speaker should have been 7 minutes max. [n.b this comment relates to the section re presentations]. Also a demonstration market would have been better, with an opportunity to visit more demonstrations. [n.b this comment relates to section re demonstrations]

Two further comments were addressed at the way forward:

- Clarify the purpose – good intentions are not enough. Make a business plan – targets and indicators of achievement.
- Internet the way forward

The final two comments really belong to the first question – re venue:

- Small point but the afternoon rooms all lacked enough seats for the size of group – a whole afternoon standing was tiring!
- The food suitable for vegetarians was mixed with the non veg food

EVALUATION FORM

Thank you for taking part in the seminar. We would like to have your comments on how useful you found the day and whether it fulfilled your expectations. Please could you take a few minutes to fill in this form and hand it in before you leave? If you don't manage this please fax it back to 01381 621722. - ASAP

Please rate by circling 1 poor - 5 excellent

Invitations & venue

The invitation process 1 2 3 4 5

Venue 1 2 3 4 5

Comments:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Presentations

Was the range of presentations right 1 2 3 4 5

How relevant were the presentations 1 2 3 4 5

Comments:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Demonstrations

How relevant were the demonstrations 1 2 3 4 5

Did they show you anything new (please state)_____

Did they help you understand the technology (please state) _____

Comments:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Pto/

Workshops 1: Identifying Good Practice

Was the range of workshops right	1	2	3	4	5
Was your workshop relevant	1	2	3	4	5

Comments:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Workshops 2: The Way Forward

Do you feel there is a role for Duthchas/Moray Firth Partnership in helping communities to access information through Information Technology?

_____

Are you willing to be involved in developing the way forward?

_____

Who else do you think should be involved?

_____

Please feel free to add any further comments on any aspect of the day:

_____

_____

_____

_____

YOUR DETAILS (you may leave this section blank if you wish)

Name: _____ Representing: _____

Address:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Tel: _____ Fax: _____ E-mail: _____

THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THIS EVALUATION FORM
PLEASE HAND IT IN BEFORE YOU LEAVE.