

Introduction

The Wildlife Information Centre (TWIC) provides data to a wide variety of different customers. We recognise that these customers may have varied and diverse needs but have found that most of these needs can be met through our standard information request form.

These guidance notes are designed to help you understand the information request process and in particular to understand:

- What data we hold;
- Data formats available for our customers;
- Our charges and lead-times; and
- Our terms and conditions for information requests.

The above background information will help you to fill in our standard information request form so that you receive the information that you need.

Information Request Process

The information request process is summarised below.

- You complete page 1 of the form (If your requirements are not covered on the standard form, then please contact TWIC).
- You send the form and a map of the site to TWIC (by email).
- TWIC checks the form (if there are any questions about the data requested TWIC contacts you).
- Any changes to the form are made.
- TWIC fills in the *Charges and Deadlines* section of the form and returns it to you (by email, post or fax).
- You check the form and read the conditions on page two of the form.
- If you are happy with the form, you sign and date it, then return it to TWIC (preferably by email but if this is not possible then by post or fax is acceptable).
- TWIC processes the request within the agreed timescale and supplies you with the report data/reports you requested.

Data held by TWIC

Many groups and individuals have contributed to the dataset that TWIC hold. These contributors have the right to retain copyright on their data while TWIC retains copyright on its reports. We require you to acknowledge TWIC in all documents containing any part of the information we provide.

Taxon data

We collect taxon records from a wide variety of sources. These include formal surveys, work of expert naturalist, amateur records and the general public. As a result of the sources we use, coverage of species data varies considerably.

We verify the accuracy of these records with local experts and the grid references are checked. Once the above checks have been made, all taxon records are compiled into a single database. The precision of the grid references associated with the records varies depending on the purpose for which the data was collected. Some records have grid references precise to 10 km² while others to 10 m². The precision of the grid reference will affect how the data can be interpreted. Some of the taxon records we hold are of a sensitive nature (for example, the location of badger setts or bat roosts). As stated in the terms and conditions on page two of the standard information request form, access to sensitive data will only be allowed once the reason for the information request are known and confidentiality assurances have been agreed. Should your request include sensitive data, we will contact you to discuss whether or not the data can be released. We will not exclude records from your search without letting you know.

Notable Species

We hold a subset of records of notable/protected species. This can be searched to flag up records of particular importance. We use the Conservation Designations for UK Taxa, as defined by JNCC, to select records for our notable species layer. The links below direct you to the tables on the JNCC website that describe the designations used.

- Designations associated with International listings: <http://www.jncc.gov.uk/page-3424>
- Designations based on National Legislation: <http://www.jncc.gov.uk/page-3426>
- Designations associated with conservation status based lists: <http://www.jncc.gov.uk/page-3425>
- Species on the Scottish Biodiversity List.
- Species highlight by TWIC as *Very Local* in a Lothian context (local status is not currently available for the Borders)

We can also search for individual species or species in particular taxonomic groups.

Habitat Data

We hold the following habitat data:

- Ancient Woodland Inventory (AWI) boundaries and categories.
- Phase 1 habitat data for the whole of Edinburgh, the Lothians and Scottish Borders.
- Phase 1 target notes for the whole of Edinburgh and the Lothians.

Phase 1 habitat data is dated as follows: - Scottish Borders 2010 (produced by analysis of aerial photos), City of Edinburgh 2001/2, East Lothian 1997, Midlothian 1996 & West Lothian 1994.

Site Data

We hold boundary data on sites designated for their wildlife value under European, UK and Local legislation. These are:

- National and International designations: SPAs, SACs, and Ramsar sites; SSSIs, NNRs and LNRs
- Locally designated sites. These are Scottish Wildlife Trust Wildlife Sites, apart from in Edinburgh where in Rural West Edinburgh there are additional SINC sites and proposed Local Biodiversity Sites and in the City where a new Local Biodiversity Site system has been introduced. (New Local Biodiversity Site systems are currently being developed elsewhere and will become the standard local site designation in the region by 2013)

Data Formats

There are two formats we supply data in as standard: PDF reports and maps, and ArcGIS Shapefiles. If you would prefer data in other formats, please contact us to discuss your requirements.

Charges and Lead-times

Charges

We receive data from a variety of contributors, from large organisations to amateur naturalists. TWIC operate as an agent between these individuals and groups, who provided their records free of charge.

The information from TWIC is free; however we charge a reasonable cost to cover administration based on the time spent handling your request. We charge £110 for the first hour and £45 per half hour thereafter. We charge a £45 admin fee for information request that return no results.

Lead-times

Our standard lead-time for information requests is four days. This can vary dependant on our workload and your needs. The lead-time runs from receipt of an information request form that has been agreed with TWIC and signed by you.

Invoices

We invoice customers upon completion of the work. Please note that TWIC is registered for VAT and therefore you will be charged VAT on top of these figures.

Terms and Conditions

TWIC's standard terms and conditions are detailed on page two of our information request form. If you have any questions about our standard terms and conditions please contact the TWIC office.

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