



Annual Report

May 2011

Introduction

NI Maps (formerly InfoMapper) provides teachers and pupils in Northern Ireland Primary, Post-Primary and Special schools, and all Education Support Officers and student teachers, and all stakeholders in the C2k project with online access to digital mapping from Land and Property Services, previously Ordnance Survey Northern Ireland. There is also access to a range of maps from other providers and it is anticipated that these will be added to over time. *NI Maps* also contains a wealth of curriculum-relevant resources such as photographs, videos, notes, weblinks and playlists that support the integrated use of ICT and mapping across the curriculum in schools. A key provision enables users to personalise mapping by adding their own educational resources.

The project was led by Dr. Stephen Roulston, C2k Curriculum Consultant. Following consultation with the providers, Web based, *NI Maps* was released in March 2010. All schools were sent a promotional poster and training booklets. Online support was provided in the LearningNI Staff Library and within the *NI Maps* site itself. Awareness raising days were given to curriculum advisers, university colleges and a LearningNI Day for the education stakeholder community.

Statistical Report

All statistical data can be found in Appendix 1

The initial release month showed great interest with 569 schools and 1,489 users logging on. There was a gradual decrease each month with June having 260 schools and 579 users. This was probably due to Post-Primary exams and Primary outings and sports' days.

In the new academic year, September 2010 showed a use by 307 schools and 1,016 users – possibly due to In-Service Training. October and November were fairly even – 277/281 schools and 727/726 users. As expected, December was low – 162 schools and 448 users. January and February reflected equal use by the number of schools – 239/237 but an increase in users - 561 in January and 613 in February. Although not part of the formal statistical review, March has shown considerable growth on February – 277 schools and 835 users.

Overall there was a greater use by pupils than teachers, 6,307 compared to 5,327. Primary schools accessed it 1,826 times and Post-Primary schools 1,211 times. The actual number of activities undertaken when schools were logged on however showed 3,043 Primary activities and 4,621 Post-Primary activities. This probably reflects the “demonstrative” approach used in Primary schools with younger children.

Information is also captured on the use of *NI Maps* within the Post-Primary sector. Interestingly, out of the 12 month period, 10 months showed a greater use by practitioners classified as “Non Geography teachers.” This demonstrates that it is being used a cross-curricular resource.

Training and Awareness Raising

A variety of training was provided by C2k

- Primary Principals Days (86 schools)
- School-based In-Service Training (83 schools)
- SEELB ICT Co-ordinator Training Days (48 schools)
- CCEA ICT Accreditation Workshops (260 schools)
- St. Mary’s University College student workshops (20 students)
- RTU Summer School Training Day (16 teachers)
- Presentation made to NI Geographic Information Strategy Delivery Board

Technical Development

Some technical changes were made during the course of the year

- Web-Based advised that the use of a Google Chrome Frame Add-On significantly increased the download speed. This was researched and subsequently distributed to schools at the end of February.
- Some areas of Northern Ireland were missing on the OS 1:50k and these were corrected by Web Based

NI Maps Competition

A competition was organised in May 2010 to encourage schools to upload resources to *NI maps*. 19 schools entered with St. Olcan’s PS, Armoy and St. Columban’s College, Killeel adjudged winners. A prize awarding ceremony was held at the new CELIL centre at Stranmillis University College with both schools presenting their individual *NI Maps* resources and receiving a valuable short throw projector, provided by RM, as their prize. This was reported by 5 local papers. *See Appendix 2.*

It was also acclaimed in the NI Geographic Information website

http://www.gistrategyni.gov.uk/index/news/ni_maps_competition_prize_winners.htm

and the C2k corporate network

<http://www.c2kni.org.uk/news/NIMapsComp.html>

Future Developments

- RTU Summer School Training – 23 Aug 2011
- GIS module to be included in Year 2 of St. Mary's University College B.Ed (Geog)
- Creation of 3 “fly through” resources
- Inclusion of Geological maps and Digital Elevation mapping of NI
- “Put your school on the map” project launched through Learning NI Newsdesk (May 2011)
- Creation of *NI Maps* Strategy Group
- CCEA GCSE module on GIS (2013)
- CCEA UICT Task

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12 May 2011