

Scotland's Environment Web Public Engagement

1. Background

- One of Scotland's Environment Web's key objectives is to help and support the public to understand, protect and improve Scotland's environment.
- We are developing Scotland's Environment Web tools and resources to interest people in the environment, help people measure and monitor it, enable people to discuss and debate the key issues for Scotland's environment and find out how and where people can take action to protect and improve it.
- A [public engagement evaluation strategy](#) sets out a series of research activities to inform and test Scotland's Environment Web's ambition of effective public engagement.



2. Key messages and opportunities

Information has been gathered to identify public interest in the environment. A number of key messages and opportunities have been drawn from this information to help focus Scotland's Environment Web's development.

- There is support for Scotland's Environment Web. The Scottish public would like to be able to find out more information about the environment and have indicated that they are quite or very likely to use Scotland's Environment Web to do so.
- Some topics are of more interest than others. There is public interest in finding out more information on, in particular, nature and wildlife, local green spaces, beaches and the sea. The issues of greatest concern are pollution, climate change and dog fouling. The most requested topic for environmental information requests to public agencies is water, with a focus on flooding.
- While the public are interested in national and global issues, they are more likely to engage with local issues and what is going on in their local spaces. There is a need to increase the understanding of the links between global issues and their impact at a local level and the potential impact of local action to contribute to tackling global issues.
- Young people are reported to be both less concerned about the environment whilst being among the most receptive to web-based information.



3. Identifying public interest in the environment



- Scotland's Environment Web is particularly interested in measuring the impact of behavioural change interventions. A report was commissioned that summarises theories of behavioural change and what implications they might have for the Scotland's Environment Web project. This was followed up with a workshop for project partners who identified priority behaviours that the project could try to influence.
- A number of research activities have taken place including a [Scottish omnibus survey](#) and [public focus groups](#)
- Scotland's Environment Web has worked with a group of young people from Stirling High School to gather insight and ideas as to how Scotland's Environment Web could help and support young people to enjoy, understand, protect and improve Scotland's environment. A [report](#) has been produced that describes phase 1 of this work and how the young people's ideas are being developed.
- A great deal of intelligence has been gathered through the research activities undertaken and there are a large number of potential directions, ideas and ways to proceed if Scotland's Environment Web is to effectively engage with the public. For more information on what Scotland's Environment Web public engagement work has been completed so far visit the [LIFE+ project page](#)

4. Proposals



Scotland's Environment Web recognises and values the high level of public interest and concern for Scotland's environment and are developing a number of ways to get the public more involved:

- We will develop the existing '[What's in my backyard?](#)' tool on the website to enable people to access information on their local area such as outdoor spaces or historical buildings, when environmental activities are happening and the state of their local environment.
- We will make links to tools and resources that help explain environmental issues, focusing on priority topics for Scotland's people. This will help explain the impact that national and international issues have on the local environment and the impact individual lifestyle change can have nationally and internationally.
- We will develop a package of resources on Scotland's Environment Web for young people, building on the insights and ideas produced by young people.
- We will develop the structure of the website to enhance the gateway approach, improving traffic between relevant websites and Scotland's Environment Web, developing an entry point to the website which is focussing on helping and encouraging getting enjoyment from the environment.

5. Contact us



If you are interested in finding out more about public engagement, the Scotland's Environment Web (LIFE+) project or have any comments on the website, please contact: seweb.administrator@sepa.org.uk

6. Supporting documents

Scotland's Environment [website](#)
www.environment.scotland.gov.uk

[Public engagement evaluation strategy](#)
www.environment.scotland.gov.uk

[Public monitoring report](#)
www.environment.scotland.gov.uk

[Scottish omnibus survey](#)
www.environment.scotland.gov.uk

[Theories of behavioural change report](#)
www.environment.scotland.gov.uk

[Public interest in the environment report](#)
www.environment.scotland.gov.uk

[Focus groups](#)
www.environment.scotland.gov.uk

[Stirling High School workshop](#)
www.environment.scotland.gov.uk

Scotland's Environment Web [core briefings](#)
www.environment.scotland.gov.uk