



Newsletter

FEBRUARY/MARCH 2019

Welcome

THIS month we interview Dr Mark Miller, a senior research fellow at the University of Edinburgh's Queen's Medical Research Institute. Dr Miller talks to us about his work in testing the effects of pollutants from diesel vehicle emissions on people, and in particular the use of gold nano-particles in experiments which see participants in the studies inhale miniscule fragments of the metal (simulating the inhaling of particle matter). They are then tested to see how far they have reached into the blood system as the researchers evaluate its impact on the cardiovascular system.

EPS also attended Brownfield Land Scotland 2019 in Edinburgh. It featured a range of excellent speakers subjects on as diverse as the Planning Bill on asbestos, underground gases and the Gorebridge incident to upcoming landfill legislation.

We also have a brief report on Glasgow City Council's successful stakeholder engagement event, aimed primarily at businesses and the road haulage sector as its plans to roll-out the Low Emission Zone continue.

The CAFS Review is well under way now, and anyone involved in the review improving our air quality or encouraging people into active travel should come along to our latest event 'Air Quality, Health and the mechanisms needed to help heal Scotland's environment. Delegate and exhibitor places are still available for the event at the CosLA Conference Centre next to Haymarket station in Edinburgh on Monday March 18th. See the story below.

“The difference between someone who has been exposed to diesel exhaust fumes and someone who has not been is like the difference between a chronic smoker and a healthy non-smoker”

Dr Mark Miller, the University of Edinburgh

SCIENTISTS have been grappling with how to pinpoint the damage caused by ultra-fine particulates to the human body and cardiovascular system for years.



Although the study of air pollution is still evolving, experts are keen to prove as accurately as possible the effects of these pollutants – which to the human eye are smaller than a grain of salt are having on the human body's cardiovascular system. Not all research questions can be answered by studying people in their natural surroundings, and investigations into the health effects of air pollutants has been greatly aided by carrying out controlled exposures to specific pollutants in volunteers

One of the biggest challenges for scientists is to come up with participants willing to undergo such tests.

Dr Mark Miller, left, of the Queen's Medical Research Institute at the University of Edinburgh, is part of an ambitious study which used harmless

gold particles to find out more about effects of people breathing in ultra-fine particles with some startling results. Read the full interview [here](#)

“What happens to the excess waste after the new landfill ban on BMW comes into effect in 2021?”

Brownfield Land Scotland 2019 report

THE Brownfield Land Scotland 2019 event in Edinburgh heard from a variety of speakers on a range of land and waste issues.

They included lawyer Laura Tainsh who addressed concerns raised by the proposed ban on all Biodegradable Municipal Waste (BMW) going to landfill from January 1st 2021. Laura, right, a partner in an Edinburgh law firm, said it was ‘remarkable’ how few people were aware of the details of the ban included in the Waste (Scotland) Regulations 2012.

She indicated that, in her view, there had been a lack of “any detailed discussion” about how the legislation would be complied with until the start of 2018. Guidance on the changes were only published by SEPA in April last year. Laura said: “The Scottish Government and SEPA admit themselves that they are in the evidence gathering process, which two years out (from the introduction of the law) is a little bit concerning.” Laura’s presentation and a full report from the event can be found [here](#)



EPS AIR QUALITY AND ACTIVE TRAVEL EVENT

MONDAY MARCH 18th - EDINBURGH

THE CAFS Review being led by Professor Campbell Gemmell is now well under way – so this seems to be a good time to take stock of some of the efforts being made to improve air quality, active travel and the health and economic benefits arising from cycling, walking and other activities.



EPS still has delegate places available for our ‘Air Quality, Health and the mechanisms needed to help heal Scotland’s environment’ event.

It is being held at the CoSLA Conference Centre, just two minutes’ walk from Haymarket railway station and tram stop.

The conference on Monday March 18th is a great way to start the working week with a keynote presentation from Dr Andrew Fraser, the Director of Public Health Science at Health Scotland. He will be talking about the wider health impacts of active travel.

Other speakers include Dr Stephen Thomson, Head of Air Quality at Transport Scotland’s roads department who will be speaking about the plans for Low Emission Zones. We have Ruth Mustard, Principal Transport Planner at the consultancy SWECO and Marsha Peasley, a Senior Air Quality Consultant at Ricardo who will discuss other emission sources and possible measures that could be put in place to deal with them. Discussion

and debate will be stimulated during three break-out sessions covering all the issues in the presentations. For details of how to book or if you are an exhibitor wishing to reserve a space, email admin@ep-scotland.org.uk or phone 0141 333 6655. For the programme click [here](#).

ARE YOU 18 OR OVER? THEN APPLY TO JOIN THE EPS BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Scottish schools' climate change protests have given youth a voice, with even First Minister Nicola Sturgeon describing their efforts as a 'cause for optimism.'

Now Environmental Protection Scotland is offering the unique opportunity for a young person to join our Board of Trustees.

We are looking for someone aged 18 or over to put themselves forward to work with our trustees on improving Scotland's environment. They must have a keen interest in air quality, noise, land issues or other emerging issues which could include the likes of climate change, fracking or waste management.



Secondly, the successful candidate must have a passion and drive to improve our environment in Scotland and a willingness to work closely with other members of the board and our full-time staff to raise awareness of EPS's work.

They could already be studying environmental health or another course at college or university, or wish to pursue a career in that field. Or, alternatively, the successful candidate could be working in an entirely different sector, but has a good understanding of the current issues facing Scotland and wants to expand that knowledge. In short,

applications are invited from all backgrounds.

But we are looking for someone with a willingness to look at both sides of the argument on policy and be fair, impartial and work hard towards supporting our aims of raising awareness of environmental issues.

The voluntary post would require attendance at our quarterly board meetings in Glasgow, the annual AGM, and they may also be asked to get involved in some of our successful external events.

Nigel Kerr, Chairman of the EPS Board of Trustees, said: "This is an ideal opportunity for a young person to make an impact in helping to shape the future of the environment in Scotland, with a charity which is achieving an ever higher profile."

"We decided to award a place on the EPS board because the contribution so many of them are currently making to the environmental debate. The passion young people display across wide range of issues – as we have seen in recent weeks – from air quality to climate changes, is making policy-makers and politicians take note of their views.

"We believe these carefully considered arguments would be an asset to Environmental Protection Scotland and we look forward to receiving applications for a youth board member."

Take a look at our website to see if your values align to ours and then email your application to admin@ep-scotland.org.uk and explain in 150 words or less the biggest challenges Scotland's environment currently faces and how EPS should tackle them.



CLEAN AIR DAY – THURSDAY JUNE 20th 2019

EPS launched Clean Air Day 2019 at the Scottish Air Quality Database annual seminar in Edinburgh on February 13th.

CAD this year takes place on Thursday June 20th, with the main aims to improve air quality by encouraging people to cut air pollution through behaviour change.

This could involve ditching the car for short or longer journeys, such as the school run, going to the shops or work and replacing it with healthier, less polluting alternatives such as catching the train, bus, Subway, tram or cycling/walking instead.

Behaviour change could also take the form of raising awareness of the dangers to public health from idling vehicle engines when they are stationary and EPS are keen to engage people and organisations interested in offering alternative, less polluting forms of vehicle transport such as electric or hydrogen cars.

There will also be opportunities to promote valuable public information schemes around air quality, such as the 'Know & Respond' initiative, LEZ's and low or zero emission buses.

There's been a good response from local authorities and health officials, who are keen to get started early in devising their plans to celebrate Clean Air Day 2019, and promote their work to improve air quality and raise public awareness of how they contribute to making Scotland's air quality the best in Europe.

A key part of last year's campaign involved schools and we are looking for local authorities to help us reach out to as many schools across the country, in towns, rural areas and major cities.

The toolkits for this year's event are currently being prepared and we hope to have more details on these soon.

The Clean Air Day countdown clock is already on the EPS website and anyone interested in getting involved should drop us an email at admin@ep-scotland.org.uk or phone 0141 333 6655.



GLASGOW CITY COUNCIL LEZ STAKEHOLDER EVENT

COUNCILLOR Anna Richardson has said that Glasgow's LEZ will not aim to raise revenue from motorists after it becomes a fully-functioning low emission zone that applies to all vehicles from the end of 2022.

The convenor of the city's Carbon Reduction and Sustainability Committee told a stakeholder event at The Lighthouse on January 23rd that ideally no fines would need to be issued at all to motorists or freight drivers as she hoped their vehicles would be fully compliant by then. Councillor Richardson, pictured with Martin Reid, Scotland Policy Director of the Road



Haulage Association, added in a presentation to a group that included members of the road haulage industry that the city council considers fining drivers' to be a deterrent to discourage them from entering the city with the most polluting vehicles as opposed to a revenue generating policy.

Recent media reports have suggested that LEZ's will be used as additional funding for city councils which implement them. No penalty charge has yet been set for the full LEZ.

The Transport Bill currently before the Scottish Parliament is also expected to make a provision that ring fences any revenue raised to facilitate the achievement of the scheme's objectives (i.e: to encourage active travel).

Glasgow City Council's Chief Resilience Officer and Sustainable Glasgow Group Manager Duncan Booker, Sustainable Glasgow team leader Vincent McNally, Mr Reid and Colin Smith who works in the retro-fit sector for freight vehicles at the Energy Saving Trust also gave presentations at the event. The LEZ was initially introduced for a certain percentage of buses on December 31. The second phase will include all cars and freight vehicles from December 31st 2022.

UNEQUAL EXPOSURE: EEA CALLS FOR TARGETED INTERVENTIONS TO HELP REDUCE AIR, NOISE POLLUTION AND EXTREME WEATHER IMPACTS ON VULNERABLE GROUPS

THE European Environment Agency (EEA) shone the spotlight last month on the serious inequalities that exist among lower socio-economic groups as they are more likely to be affected adversely by air, noise pollution and severe temperature changes.

Commissioner Karmenu Vella, launching the report in Brussels on February 4, said the 120-page document was 'something of a wake-up call' as it provided a detailed assessment of a 'recurrent situation.'

He added: "It shows us how environmental damage is having a disproportionate effect on the vulnerable. Where incomes are low and unemployment rates are high, citizens suffer more from the effects of air pollution and noise, from floods and heatwaves." Read the full analysis [here](#)



Climate Change in Scotland: Meeting Emissions Reduction Targets

The speakers have been announced for the 'Climate Change in Scotland: Meeting Emissions Reduction Targets' conference on Wednesday April 24th in Edinburgh.

Dr Sara Grainger, Head of the Decarbonisation Delivery Unit at the Scottish Government, is to speak on the priorities and key challenges of the Climate Change (Scotland) Bill and other aspects of moving towards a low carbon society.

Other speakers include Dr Christian Calvillo, of the Centre for Energy Policy at the University of Strathclyde, Shane Donnellan of the charity Changeworks and the Royal Town Planning Institute's policy and practice officer Robbie Calvert. Holyrood Conferences are organising the event and further details and how to book can be found [here](#).

CONSULTATIONS - NAPCP

THE deadline is fast approaching for a consultation into the National Air Pollution Control Programme (NAPCP).

People and organisations have until March 14th to submit their views on the plans for the UK-wide document which sets out the proposed measures and technical analysis to show how 2020 and 2030 emission reduction commitments for five damaging air pollutants can be achieved.

These are nitrogen oxides, ammonia, non-methane volatile organic compounds, particulate matter and sulphur dioxide

The NAPCP must be published by April 1st, hence the short month-long timeframe for the consultation, in order for the Scottish Government to meet the requirements of the National Emissions Ceiling Directive and the transposing legislation of the National Emission Ceiling Regulations 2018.

Each UK administration has its own current and planned emission reduction commitments and this has been factored-in when preparing the document and conducting the analysis, with England's measures used in the NAPCP analysis specified in the English Clean Air Strategy (CAS), pictured right.



Devolved administrations such as Scotland have made clear their existing and planned policies for developing the NAPCP, with a number of these policies described in the CAS. A number of these policies have outcomes associated with the measures in England's clean air strategy document. DEFRA used these measures to support the preparation of this NAPCP, with the programme to be revised and republished in 2020. A digital version of the draft NAPCP is available here <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/air-quality-draft-national-air-pollution-control-programme>

Comments on the NAPCP can also be made via CitizenSpace website <https://consult.defra.gov.uk/environmental-quality/napcp-consultation/>

REGULATION OF FIREWORKS

Views are being sought on the use and regulation of fireworks in Scotland.

This may be of interest to the noise community as there are often concerns about the impact of loud bangs on communities, and in particular animals such as dogs, which often have to be kept inside.

The only difficulty is that much of the current fireworks legislation is reserved to Westminster. The Scottish Government is, therefore, looking for any gaps, issues or unintended consequences arising from the current regulatory framework. The consultation runs until May 13th 2019 and can be found here <https://consult.gov.scot/safer-communities/fireworks/>

CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTION PROGRAMME

There is a month to run until the Scottish Government consultation on plans for a new five-year Climate Change Adaption Programme for Scotland closes. The policy was contained in the 2018 Programme for Government. It aims to build on the current adaptation framework, and the 2017 Climate Change Risk Assessment as well as the advice of experts on the adaption sub-committee of the Committee on Climate Change. It closes on April 9th, with the final version of the document due to be launched in the autumn. Click on the link to take part <https://consult.gov.scot/energy-and-climate-change-directorate/adaptation-programme-2019-2024/>

EPS EXPERT ADVISORY GROUPS

SCOTTISH NOISE ADVISORY GROUP (SNAG)

THE group's first meeting with the new Chair, Steve Williamson from City of Edinburgh Council, took place on February 2nd with a very good attendance. Fife Council's Don Taylor was welcomed onto the group and discussion of the Scottish Government's fireworks consultation followed. Members spoke about concerns regarding private fireworks displays and the impact of the noise from some hotels/ corporate venues where local residents are sometimes not notified in advance, adding to the nuisance factor. A discussion also took place over the UK Government's plans to enshrine an EU Directive on aircraft noise from larger airports into UK law (although it is unclear at the time whether this would be achieved before Brexit). The Statutory Instrument relating to EU Directive 598/2014 aims to ensure the competent planning authority for ensuring the noise situation at airports with more than 50,000 aircraft movements per year is 'assessed on a regular basis.' Questions were raised about whether the local authority area in which the airports are situated is the 'competent authority' as defined for this purpose and, if this was the case, whether it would have skills and/or resources to monitor the noise levels effectively. The 50,000 minimum aircraft movements is only likely to affect Glasgow and Edinburgh airports, but it was pointed out at the meeting that the majority of those making noise complaints are from the West Dunbartonshire or Fife council areas, which are obviously outside of the Renfrewshire Council and City of Edinburgh planning authority areas in which the airports are situated.

The next meeting of the group is to take place at Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh, on Thursday May 2nd, from 10.30am-1pm. Lisa Lavia, Managing Director of the Noise Abatement Society/Project DeStress, is to give a presentation.

LAND QUALITY

SEVERAL members of the Land Quality Group, including Chair Roslyn McIntosh, and Vice-Chair Sarah Hamill attended the Brownfield Land Scotland event on February 6th. The group's next meeting is at the EPS offices on Tuesday March 26th from 10.30am-12.30pm.

AIR QUALITY

MEMBERS, led by the Chair Dr Stuart Sneddon, are currently in the final stages of organising their air quality and active travel conference on March 18th. The date of the next EAG meeting will be confirmed shortly.

IN THE PRESS AND ON TV

CLIMATE CHANGE PROTESTS

THOUSANDS took part in the schools' action on climate change protests in Edinburgh, Glasgow, the Highlands and other areas of the UK on February 15th. EPS gave interviews to Edinburgh Napier University, 'That's TV Edinburgh' and provided comments which were published online on The Herald and on The Scotsman's websites.

The protests aimed to encourage governments to go further in reducing temperature change following a warning by the UN Intergovernmental Committee on Climate Change last year that unless we keep global temperatures to rises to within the 1.5°C (the lower end of the Paris Agreement) then within 11 years we could see drastic changes to our environment, with flooding, droughts, extreme heat and poverty around the world.

The UK protests, which saw school children gather outside the Scottish Parliament, and in George Square, Glasgow, inspired by the campaigning of 16-year-old schoolgirl Greta Thunberg. Our responses in The Herald can be read by clicking [here](#). The Scotsman's coverage is [here](#).

'That's TV Glasgow' also featured our Policy and Communications Officer with an interview about efforts to improve air quality in Glasgow and other cities across Scotland following an environmental campaign group's release of a league table of Scotland's worst polluted streets. John Bynorth gave a balanced viewpoint about the work to reduce air pollution and reduce the number of local authority Air Quality Management Areas, whilst encouraging people into active travel.



See it here (requires Facebook account) www.facebook.com/ThatsTVScotlandCentral/videos/332962244220031/

CITY of EDINBURGH TRANSFORMATION PROJECT

THERE was widespread coverage in [The Scotsman](#), [The Herald](#), the [Edinburgh Evening News](#) and [The Times Scotland](#) (click the links to read their stories) to close off certain Edinburgh city centre streets to vehicle traffic during the day on the first Sunday of each month from May this year. Visual impressions show how the Cowgate, pictured below, Lothian Road near to the Usher Hall, and the High Street could potentially look if there were pedestrians, wheel-chair users, cyclists and on-street cafes on car-free streets. The city council aims to create a more European feel for Edinburgh by removing vehicles.



If follows on from a consultation launched by the City of Edinburgh Council last year which saw 50% of the 5,000 respondents approving of a more radical approach to transform the capital. Three-quarters of those who participated also supported moves to reduce traffic in the narrow streets.

Project Director Daisy Narayanan said they gave a flavour of "how amazing the city could be." Councillor Lesley Macinnes, Convener of the City's Transport and Environment Committee, said they were testing radical options aimed at making the city more inviting and to improve people's health. She warned: "No city can stay still." The city plans to introduce a Low Emission Zone in 2020.



Meanwhile, CEC has published an Air Quality Evidence Report, produced by SEPA as part of the CAFS which can be viewed on its website [here](#).

NEXT ISSUE – BREXIT?

This month promises to be a pivotal month for the future of environmental policy in the UK and Scotland, following Brexit – on March 29th.

With so much confusion about whether it will go ahead on that day, or whether the UK will seek an extension to the Article 50 EU withdrawal deadline, the Newsletter will aim to keep our members up to date on the impact this will have on policy.

We will report on the work of the West Lothian Vehicle Emissions Partnership and publish an article from the EPUK Archives on a severe pollution episode in Glasgow in the 1950s, which was held over due to lack of space this month.

We will also have a full round-up from our air quality and active travel event in Edinburgh and the latest news, views and details of consultations, as well as the work of our expert advisory groups.

The next Newsletter will be published at the end of March.

EPS is the continuation of an eminent line of charities going back to the days of the National Society for Clean Air and more recently Environmental Protection UK. Our objectives include the support and development of the work of Scotland's environmental regulators and scientists based on sound science, objectivity and best practice. We seek to work towards a cleaner, quieter, healthier sustainable Scotland.

WE HAVE MOVED

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