



Environmental
Protection
Scotland



Newsletter

March/April 2019

WELCOME

UNDERSTANDING the complex relationship between environmental health and public health is crucial to ensuring behaviour change.

Professor George Morris, of Exeter University, brings a wealth of experience to the INHERIT 'Horizon 2020' project funded by the EU. Not only has he worked at the sharp end as an environmental health officer, but his conceptual models have been central to formulating effective policies around health, 'Place' equity health and well-being.

In this month's interview, Professor Morris gives members an in-depth understanding of the processes at play in strategic plans linking environmental health and public health in Scotland, the rest of the UK and across Europe.

EPS last month staged a successful conference looking at some of those policies, including active travel, Low Emission Zones and other emission sources in Edinburgh and we publish a comprehensive report here.

It was heartening to hear Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn put environmental legislation high on his agenda in a TV interview before his Brexit talks with Prime Minister Theresa May. EPS will continue to highlight the importance of ensuring legislation in this area remains robust, whatever the future holds for Britain's future relationship with the EU.

**“WE RECOGNISE THE UNSUSTAINABILITY OF WHAT WE ARE
DOING AS A SPECIES— THERE ARE CERTAIN PLANETARY
BOUNDARIES BEYOND WHICH WE CANNOT GO”**

**PROFESSOR GEORGE MORRIS OF EXETER UNIVERSITY'S 'INHERIT'
HORIZON 2020 PROJECT**

PROFESSOR George Morris, one of the country's leading environmental scientists is based at the University of Exeter's European Centre for Environment and Human Health. He began his career as a sanitary officer at Ayr County Council in 1971, before joining Cunningham District Council (now North Ayrshire Council) following local government reorganisation in 1975.



George subsequently worked as an academic at the universities of Strathclyde and Glasgow, before joining the NHS as a Consultant in Environmental Health. During his NHS career, he was seconded to the Scottish Government for a five year-period from 2004 where he was project adviser for 'Good Better Health for Scotland's Children' a new national policy initiative on the environment and health. The outcomes of this work have informed a variety of policy strands around these areas and, importantly, contributed to the introduction of the Scottish Place Standard to improve the environment in communities

Today, as Honorary Professor at Exeter University's world-class environment and health research centre he co-leads work on the INHERIT (Inter-sectoral Health and Environment Research for Innovation) 'Horizon 2020' project. It will conclude its work in December with a final report and a variety of other outputs. Read the full interview [here](#)

“WE ALL HAVE A ROLE TO PLAY – NOT ONLY ARE WE ALL EXPOSED TO AIR POLLUTION, BREATHE IT EVERY DAY – WE HAVE NO CHOICE IN THE MATTER”

**AIR QUALITY, HEALTH AND THE MECHANISMS NEEDED TO HELP HEAL SCOTLAND'S ENVIRONMENT
EPS CONFERENCE REPORT**



DR Stuart Sneddon, Chair of the EPS air quality expert advisory group, launched our air quality, health and active travel conference at the CosLA Conference Centre in Edinburgh on March 18th

The event, which attracted 40 delegates, saw keynote speakers from Health Scotland, Transport Scotland, Ricardo and Sweco in the morning. The afternoon session saw participants engage in three fascinating break-out sessions during which the barriers and benefits of Low Emission Zones, active travel and other emission sources of air pollutants were debated.

EPS's first event of 2019 had excellent comments which provided useful information for policy as people are encouraged to shift from cars to cycling, walking as well as the pressing need to deal with non-vehicle pollutants, such as those from agriculture, biomass and wood burning stoves.

In his introduction, Dr Sneddon said there was currently more interest in air quality than at any time during his 20 year career in the profession. "We all have a role to play. Not only are we all exposed to air pollution, we breathe it every day... we have no choice in the matter." Read the conference report [here](#)

NO IDLING: HOW ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICERS ARE TACKLING MOTORISTS WHO FAIL TO SWITCH OFF THEIR ENGINES

TV viewers may have seen an animation recently showing four men resembling The Beatles walking across a fume-filled zebra crossing in a shopping outlet car-park - a nod to the band's classic Abbey Road album.



The prime-time STV advert was screened in the central belt and east of Scotland with the message that people need to switch off their vehicle engines while they are stationary.

It is the latest eye-catching initiative by the East Central Scotland Vehicle Emissions Partnership (VEP), working with Global Media & Entertainment, to raise awareness of the impact that idling can have on air quality and public health. Read the full report [here](#)

BREAKING NEWS

EPS LAUNCHES CLEAN AIR DAY

Thursday June 20 2019 marks Clean Air Day - a red letter day for air quality!

That's when people and organisations will come together across Scotland for the annual event to raise awareness of the difference we can all make to the air we breathe.

Environmental Protection Scotland are delighted to once again co-ordinate Clean Air Day on behalf of the Scottish Government's Cleaner Air For Scotland (CAFS) strategy. The CAFS strategy aims to make Scotland's air quality the best in Europe.

Clean Air Day 2019 will showcase simple, but effective steps we can all take to reduce pollution and recognise the health benefits of smarter travel choices.

Road transport sources contributes to around a third of NO_x emissions in Scotland and one of the aims will be to encourage people to leave the car at home. Bus firms will also be able to showcase their low emission fleets – especially with Scotland's first Low Emission Zone now up and running in Glasgow.

We would like people to consider swapping the car for a train, bus, the Subway, tram or bicycle (or even a combination of these options!) for the daily commute. Why not work from home? Families could walk or cycle with the children or grandchildren to and from school.

Local authorities, other public sector organisations and private companies can raise awareness of active travel options and the grants available for cycle schemes and the travel routes available. Local GP surgeries could also organise a group walk and hospitals could reward staff and visitors with Clean Air Day merchandise if they pledge to cycle or walk.

Clean Air Day will also aim to encourage people travelling on foot or by bicycle to cut their exposure to air pollution by choosing quieter routes. It will also highlight how purchasing an electric vehicle or joining a car club cuts emissions.

Local authorities will also be encouraging motorists to switch off their vehicle engines while stationary. Aberdeenshire Council's Environmental Health officers in conjunction with colleagues from its Transportation and Sustainability and Climate Change teams are planning to make No Idling messages the focus of its Clean Air Day activities.

Council officers are set to visit a local school on June 20 to discuss with pupils and parents the impacts of idling.

EPS are preparing online toolkits for people and organisations to organise events, download pledge cards and promote the key messages. They will shortly be available on www.cleanairday.org.uk/pages/category/scotland

We will also be providing some Clean Air Day merchandise. Contact admin@ep-scotland.org.uk

“The Clyde area fog plague is the worst experience in the history of Glasgow since 1909” – Report of a severe pollution episode in the 1950s

GLASGOW suffered the worst pollution episodes since London's Great Smog of December 1952 during a three month period lasting from the end of November 1958 to early 1959.

The city was enveloped by a thick blanket of 'fog' making the Clyde virtually un navigable for shipping, closed down workplaces and brought roads to a standstill, blackened windows, cars and laundry.

Estimates suggest the smog incident cost Glasgow – the worst of several cities to be affected by the episode - at least £1 million a year with a total bill of more than £20 million.

London, Birmingham and Manchester -which ran out of supplies of face masks - also suffered the worst pollution episode since December 1952 with the incident being blamed on lack of enforcement of local coal and other industrial emission sources. Read a report by Lord Provost Sir Patrick Dollan on the incident [here](#)



Image courtesy of Glasgow City Council

FOLLOW US ON OUR NEW LinkedIn PAGE

EPS has joined LinkedIn to promote our work across the networking site.

We have started to publish stories and images to promote our work and reporting major policy developments around air quality, noise and land to LinkedIn's millions of members.

To visit our page click www.linkedin.com/company/environmental-protection-scotland/about/?viewAsMember=true

Meanwhile, EPS's Twitter account @EPScotland has now passed 1,000 followers. Thank you for supporting us and congratulations to External Communications and Media Officer Elina Dagdeleni for this achievement!

EU BOOK COMPETITION

SADLY the office of the European Commission in Scotland is closing down as Brexit looms.

It has been in Edinburgh since 1975 as a bridge between the people, politicians, businesses and organisations of Scotland and the departments and personnel of the EU institution based in Brussels



However, there is a silver lining. The staff have offered two beautiful EU 'Urban Water Atlas for Europe' as a prize for EPS members. The book has stunning images, and contains facts about the water quality and sources in individual cities across Europe.

Press & communications officers Kulli Nurk, pictured right, from Estonia, who has lived in Scotland since 2004, and Veronica Mihai, from Romania, who is due to be transferred to the EU's offices in Stockholm, have set the following two questions.

WHEN IS 'EU GREEN WEEK?'

WHAT IS THE NAME OF THE EU PROGRAMME THAT PROTECTS THE ENVIRONMENT AND FIGHTS AGAINST CLIMATE CHANGE?

Please email your answers to admin@ep-scotland.org.uk marking in the subject header 'EU BOOK COMPETITION' by Good Friday, April 25th. The prize winners will be picked at random from the correct answers.



EPS MEMBERSHIP CONFERENCE DISCOUNT

EPS members can take advantage of a 25% discount for the Climate Change in Scotland: Meeting Emissions Reduction

Targets, which is to be held in Edinburgh on Wednesday, April 24th. Enter **EPS25**

The event, organised by Holyrood Communications, will examine Scotland's ambitions climate change targets to cut emissions by 90% by 2050.

There will be an opportunity to network and share best practice with a range of key stakeholders from organisations such as BP, Caledonia Housing Association, East Lothian and Falkirk councils, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde; ScottishPower and SEPA.

There is also the chance to discuss issues with policymakers including Gillian Martin MSP, Convener of the Scottish Parliament's Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee and Dr Sara Grainger, Head of the Scottish Government's Decarbonisation Delivery Unit.

To book visit www.holyrood.com/event/climate-change-scotland-meeting-emissions-reduction-targets

CONSULTATIONS

REGULATION OF FIREWORKS

The consultation on the use and regulation of fireworks in Scotland runs until May 13th.

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.

Current fireworks legislation is reserved to Westminster. However, the Scottish Government wishes to look at any gaps, issues or unintended consequences arising from the regulatory framework that could apply in Scotland. Click here <https://consult.gov.scot/safer-communities/fireworks/>

CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTION PROGRAMME

The Scottish Government's consultation on plans for a new five-year Climate Change Adaption Programme for Scotland closes on April 9th. To participate click here <https://consult.gov.scot/energy-and-climate-change-directorate/adaptation-programme-2019-2024/>

IN THE PRESS AND ONLINE NEWS

The Herald led on its front page last month with extensive reports about land contamination (particularly Chromium VI) at the Clyde Gateway site. It followed earlier stories the newspaper published about the Polmadie Burn. The stories attracted the interest of The Ends Report environmental publication and EPS provided a balanced comment on the situation.



The new 'Glasgow Sloth' online University of Strathclyde student newspaper used a comment from EPS in student journalist Justin Bowie's story about Glasgow City Council's waste management strategy. Read it [here](#). EPS also took part in radio interviews twice with Edinburgh Napier University students; on plans for renewable roads using recycled plastics.

EFCA NEWSLETTER

The European Federation of Clean Air and Environmental Protection Associations has published its latest newsletter which can be found [here](#)

EXPERT ADVISORY GROUPS

LAND QUALITY

The meeting chaired by Roslyn McIntosh of Inverclyde Council again saw a good attendance and a well-received presentation by Felipe Esteban Sepulveda Olea of Glasgow University on soil remediation using fungi, who also took part in a Q&A afterwards. There was good discussion of potential events and David Rudland, Chair of the EPUK Land Group, contributed with some policy updates from England via email. It is hoped the updated Land Contamination document, which has been delayed due to Brexit and other legislative changes, will be published later in 2019. The next meeting is to be held on Tuesday June 25th at EPS.

NOISE

Lisa Lavia of the Noise Abatement Society is to speak at the SNAG meeting in Thursday May 2nd in Edinburgh.

AIR QUALITY

MEMBERS of the group contributed to the successful 'Air Quality, Health and the mechanisms needed to help heal Scotland's environment' (see separate report) and it is anticipated that the next meeting will be held shortly.

HEALTH PROTECTION SCOTLAND WEBSITE

HEALTH Protection Scotland's new website is already proving an invaluable resource for information about air quality.

HPS has put together a very clear website drop down menu and is easier to navigate to find out factual information about air quality in Scotland, source reports such as the World Health Organisation guidelines, the latest HPS briefings on air pollution and other issues of concern, such as toxins from combustion among others. The website can be found at www.hps.scot.nhs.uk

NEXT MONTH – INTERVIEW WITH MARTIN VALENTI

WE interview Martin Valenti, Strategic Director of the Scottish Land Commission about his efforts to put more of Scotland's land back into use, and transform vacant and derelict brownfield sites.

There will be a full report from the Climate Change in Scotland: Meeting Emissions Reduction Targets conference in Edinburgh and the latest developments on Brexit, and its impact on environmental legislation.

The April/May Newsletter will be emailed to members in the first week of May.

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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