

Environmental Health *Scotland*

The Journal of the Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland



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THE PRESIDENT'S VIEW



Lynn Crothers

Representing the Institute as President in 2024 has been a privilege and a real highlight of my Environmental Health career. Reflecting on the past year, what stands out for me is the Institute's strong partnerships and links with other professional networks, and the high regard in which the Institute is held.

In March, I attended ASH Scotland's 50th anniversary celebration at a Scottish Parliament reception followed by a learning day which focused on the Scottish Government's Tobacco and Vaping Framework including workshops on enforcement, legislation and regulations. My thanks to Sheila Duffy from Ash Scotland who continues to be a close colleague of the Institute.

Our Honorary Treasurer, Martin Henry, and I were delighted to represent the Institute as guests of the Environmental Health Association of Ireland at its Annual Forum in Tullamore in County Offaly. The Association was also celebrating its 75th Anniversary and pulled out all the stops to ensure the occasion was well marked. As well as experiencing Ireland's world-renowned hospitality, Martin and I enjoyed listening to an array of speakers at the event with a focus on the success of the smoking ban. I would like to extend my appreciation to the Association not only for the invite, but for the recognition of the importance of the relationship between our two organisations. Special thanks to Martin Fitzpatrick who came to assist myself and Martin when we found ourselves stuck in Dublin a day longer than planned.

Another organisation celebrating an anniversary this year is the Institute of Acoustics, established 50 years ago. This landmark was recognised at its 50th Anniversary Conference in Manchester in September. An invitation was kindly extended to REHIS to participate at the event. I was joined by Past President Louise Manson and REHIS member Clare Devlin. Louise and Clare delivered separate presentations on the challenges that local authorities face in regulating noise issues. Both represented the Institute with great professionalism. My thanks to Alistair Somerville, past president of REHIS and the Institute of Acoustics, for extending the invitation.

The Institute continues to build and maintain a strong partnership with the Society of Chief Environmental Health Officers in Scotland, which includes a joint initiative called the EHO Ambassadors network which is focused on attracting people into the profession. The response to this initiative was very positive, and the network is moving forward with its aims and objectives.

Tentative discussions continue with the CIEH on a range of subject areas particularly in relation to the equivalency of qualifications and the protected title Environmental Health Officer. Discussion has been positive and productive. The membership will be updated on further progress.

At a national level, Chief Executive Jackie McCabe promotes the work of the Institute at the Environmental Health Policy Group which is chaired by the Scottish Government.

At an International level, the Institute continues to fully participate in both the International Federation of Environmental Health and the European Federation of Environmental Health. The Institute's past presidents Louise Manson and David Duffy do a great job in representing the Institute at these meetings even though they may be during the night. Louise has recently become secretary of the European Federation and hosted European delegates at the REHIS offices in June which included some good old Scottish hospitality at a ceilidh night in Edinburgh while Germany slotted five goals past Angus Gunn. My thanks to Louise and David for their determined efforts in the participation of these networks.

There were two particular highlights of my presidential year. The first was the Annual Forum held at Queen Margaret University in East Lothian. The theme of Resilience touched on a number of areas which impact on the profession such as climate change, responding to emergencies and of course, the resilience of the profession. I was particularly pleased to present the awards for Honorary Vice President to Professor George Morris and Dr Carole McRae who have contributed immensely to the protection of public health. I was also privileged to present Dr Ruth Robertson with the Meritorious Endeavours in Environmental Health Award which recognises Ruth's exceptional career in Public Health protection and support of the Environmental Health profession. I was also pleased to confer a Fellowship on behalf of the Institute to Lisa McCann in recognition of her service to the Institute, particularly through the very challenging times of COVID.

The second highlight was the awards ceremony held in Edinburgh in May. The event was well attended with most of the awardees in attendance with family and friends to celebrate their success. Fifteen students gained the REHIS Diploma in Environmental Health, six students gained the SFSORB Higher Certificate in Food Law and one student gained both the SFSORB Higher Certificate in Food Standards and Official Controls. There were a number of Highfield awards for those who had performed exceptionally well in their REHIS training. Well done to all of those who gained their qualifications. Our thanks go to Dan McDade and Highfield for their generous sponsorship of the event.

These are just a few of my highlights and insights into the work of the Institute over the course of a year but it would be remiss of me not to acknowledge some of the challenges the Institute has faced over the past 12 months.

Like a number of organisations, the Institute has been dealing with budgetary challenges. Our Honorary Treasurer Martin Henry will provide more detail in relation to this but we are essentially seeing the results of a downturn in the economy which is reflected in

reduced uptake of the community training qualifications as businesses look to save money. An ongoing decline in membership is resulting in decreasing income and increasing costs, particularly those associated with running the exams, leading to pressures on the budget. I want to provide an assurance to members that the Chief Executive, Honorary Treasurer and Council members have been actively managing the budget challenges over the course of this year, including the formation of a finance sub-group to keep monitoring the budget position on a regular basis.

As I mentioned, membership numbers are giving cause for concern and I would like to acknowledge the work of Alan Morrison and the working group that he has chaired this year. They have looked in depth at this matter and developed a plan to promote membership of the Institute.

Earlier this year, Food Standards Scotland made the decision to no longer part-fund the Schools Initiative due to budgetary pressures. Scottish schools were benefitting from free packs to allow students to undertake qualifications such as the Elementary Food Hygiene qualification. The Chief Executive has raised the matter with Scottish Government ministers, and we look forward to meeting with them soon while sourcing other potential sponsors of the Initiative.

The Institute is concerned and extremely disappointed with the decision by the University of the West of Scotland to discontinue the BSc (Hons) course in Environmental Health with Professional Practice. This decision was taken by the university with minimal communication and consultation with the Institute. It is the Institute's view that the course significantly contributed to an increase in student numbers and also the number of students gaining the REHIS Diploma. The Institute has always maintained its position as the awarding body of the Environmental Health Diploma, and while we recognise the need to be flexible and adapt to a rapidly changing environment, the institute will not accept changes which would potentially impact negatively on the current high standard of the Diploma qualification. The Chief Executive has recently submitted a Letter of Concern to the university looking for clarity on the decision to withdraw the course and we await the response.

But with these challenges come opportunities, and there are number of upcoming opportunities which will drive the Institute forward.

The REHIS qualifications delivered through our training centres continue to expand and I would like to express my gratitude to Sandra Williamson and the team for all their hard work in co-ordinating the activities of the training centres and continually finding opportunities and ideas to develop and add to the growing list of qualifications for communities.

Abertay University has been working to develop an MSc in Environmental Health and it is anticipated that it will approach the Institute in the near future to gain accreditation.

The first students have qualified through the Alternative Pathways with a number of others making progress. My thanks to Jacqueline Cunningham and the team who play a pivotal role in assessing qualifications and advising potential candidates of the additional qualifications they can take to progress through the pathway.

We are undertaking a review of the Scheme of Practical Training to ensure it remains relevant to the needs of the profession, and I would encourage members to take the opportunity to become involved.

We are also undertaking a review of our Royal Charter, the document that determines how the Institute is constituted and governed. This review provides a once-in-a-generation opportunity to agree any changes and amendments to the charter which ensures the Institute remains relevant and sustainable.

I hope that provides a more positive slant to the work of the Institute and I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to everyone who contributes to this work: the REHIS staff, the council members, the members of the Northern and Southern Centres and our Training Centres.

I'd like to particularly thank our Chief Executive Jackie McCabe who has been an invaluable source of support throughout my Presidential year and who works tirelessly to keep all the checks and balances in place.

2025 marks 150 years of the profession from our early incarnation as the Royal Sanitary Association of Scotland to the incorporation of Royal Environmental Health Institute for Scotland. One hundred and fifty years is an impressive amount of time to be around and although some of the context may have changed, our core remit in the protection of public health remains largely the same. So although the future may feel uncertain, the requirement to protect the health, safety and wellbeing of people in our communities will not diminish. I'm confident the profession and the Institute will survive and thrive in the face of any challenge.

* * *

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH UPDATE AND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2024

The Environmental Health Update event followed by the Institute's Annual General Meeting was held as a hybrid event on Friday 22 November. The Institute welcomed many members online and in person to the event.

The morning began with REHIS President Lynn Crothers giving an update on the work of the Institute and details of the 150th anniversary celebrations in 2025. Dr Maria Rossi from Public Health Scotland (PHS) gave a look at the Population Health Framework for Scotland then Dr Margaret Douglas, also of PHS, presented an understanding of transport poverty. The first session concluded with Louise Manson, Past President, giving an interesting presentation on the Power Bi tool.

After the break, Chief Executive Jackie McCabe described the alternative route to becoming an EHO in Scotland, aimed at opening more doors to the profession while maintaining academic standards. Annie Lindsay of Tickety Boo Training gave an entertaining and fascinating presentation of their work in community training, life coaching and the newly launched joint award on group training techniques. The update concluded with Alan Morrison talking about the importance of membership to the Institute, and the action plan to retain and attract new members.



Alan Morrison, President 2024/25

The Institute's AGM was also very well attended where the outgoing President, Lynn Crothers, gave a report of her year as President (featured earlier in this Journal) and Martin Henry, Honorary Treasurer, gave the financial report. During the elections to Council, Alan Morrison was elected as President of the Institute for 2024/25. A full list of the Council is noted at the front of this Journal.

REHIS TECHNICAL WORKING GROUPS

by Jackie McCabe, Chief Executive

The objectives for which the Institute is established, contained in our Royal Charter, are for the benefit of the community to promote the advancement of Environmental Health by:

- stimulating general interest in and disseminating knowledge concerning Environmental Health;
- promoting education and training in matters relating to Environmental Health; and
- maintaining, by examination or otherwise, high standards of professional practice and conduct on the part of Environmental Health Officers in Scotland.

The Institute has well established Technical Working Groups, which focus on work in specific subject areas and disseminate knowledge in the field of Environmental Health. The Chair of each group is a member of the Institute and the work of that group is determined by the terms of reference and the membership of the group.

Appointed Council members provide a very useful direct link between the Working Groups and the Council and may be called upon to represent the Institute and to provide technical expertise on external working groups and committees. A brief report on the discussions and decisions taken is provided to the Chief Executive so that all Council members can be kept apprised of developments.

The Institute is extremely appreciative of all the members who give their time to the working groups. A special mention should go to the secretaries who carry out the minute-taking and meeting arrangements. The Institute's members can view the approved historical working group minutes at the members' section of the website.

Health and Safety Co-ordinating Group (HASCOG)

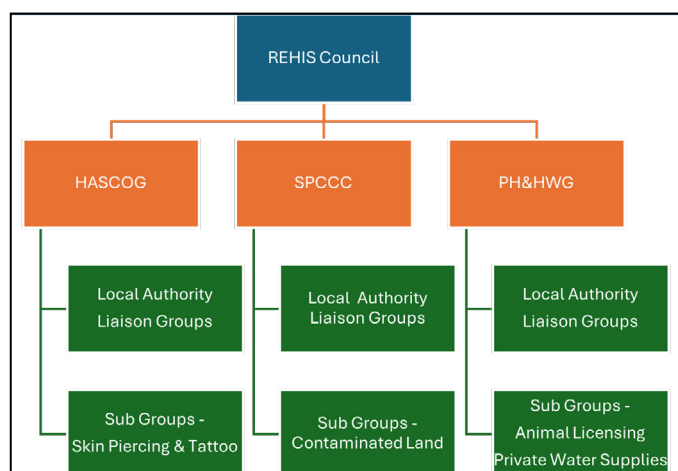
HASCOG meets at least four times per year and seeks to share best practice and communicate legislation and guidance change and updates to colleagues working in the field of occupational health and safety enforcement across Scotland. The group membership comprises, as a minimum, representatives from Local Authority health and safety liaison groups across Scotland and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). Additionally, the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS), Health Improvement Scotland and the Care Inspectorate and the Society of Chief Officers of Environmental Health in Scotland regularly have representatives attend the meetings.

Scottish Pollution Control Co-ordinating Committee (SPCCC)

SPCCC meets at least four times per year and seeks to share best practice and communicate legislation and guidance change and updates to colleagues working in the field of pollution control, including air quality, noise and contaminated land across Scotland. The group membership comprises, as a minimum, representatives from Local Authority pollution liaison groups across Scotland, Scottish Government, Public Health Scotland (PHS), Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA), Environmental Protection Scotland (EPS), the Institute of Acoustics (IOA) and again the Society of Chief Officers of Environmental Health in Scotland.

Public Health and Housing Working Group (PHHWG)

The PHHWG meets at least four times per year and seeks to share best practice and communicate legislation and guidance change and updates to colleagues working in the fields of environmental public health and housing, including all non-food environmental health subject areas not covered by HASCOG or SPCCC. The group membership comprises, as a minimum, representatives from all 32 Local Authority environmental health services in Scotland and routinely welcomes speakers to provide updates in public health and housing related matters.



NEW NOISE MAPS FOR SCOTLAND

Interested in finding out more about your local environmental noise? Would you know where to access maps that might help you to understand your local noise environment?

The Scottish Government recently published noise maps showing modelled noise levels across the whole of Scotland for 2021, showing areas where people are exposed to high levels of environmental noise. These maps can be found at <https://noise.environment.gov.scot>.

This is the fourth round of the strategic noise mapping process, and the first time that modelled noise levels for all of Scotland's road and rail routes have been developed. This provides Scotland with a unique opportunity to engage on noise assessment, including the impacts of peak noise.

The Environmental Noise (Scotland) Regulations 2006 requires, on a five-yearly cycle, the Scottish Government to produce strategic noise maps. The three main objectives are:

- to determine the noise exposure of the population through noise mapping;
- to make information available on environmental noise to the public; and
- to establish action plans based on the mapping results, to reduce levels where necessary, and preserve environmental noise quality where it is good.

Following the publication of the maps the Scottish Government hosted a key stakeholder knowledge exchange webinar, on 29 October 2024. This covered the Noise Mapping project; data sources, processes and calculations; model and calculation outputs; and the wider end uses. Slides from this webinar are available by contacting the Scottish Government.

The Noise Mapping Process

The strategic noise maps have been produced using the Common noise assessment methods in Europe (CNOSSOS-EU) calculation process. This new method of calculating noise levels was not available for the previous three rounds, and the results are therefore not comparable.

Advances in computing power, and the more detailed CNOSSOS methodology, have enabled the delivery of noise models with a much higher degree of accuracy than in previous rounds. Typical data used in developing

the noise model include a Digital Terrain Model (DTM), building information, traffic flow, road type, road surface type, and rail timetabling.

The noise model is a typical 3D source propagation model which utilises baseline data including contour lines, spot heights, bridges, barriers, buildings, ground cover, meteorological inputs, road and rail centrelines and the facades of buildings.

The model included the following key input data:

- 335 industry sites;
- 5,520 km railway centreline (of which 1,357 km was classified as a "major" railway); and
- 63,522 km road centreline (of which 2,932 km was classified as a "major" road).

To build the strategic noise model, and the related maps, the project team worked in close collaboration with the Scottish Government, Transport Scotland, ScotRail, Network Rail Scotland, Scottish Environment Protection Agency, AGS Airports Limited, Highland and Island Airports and Edinburgh Airport. This collaboration, and regular engagement, allowed the identification and delivery of the relevant data types and sources.

The noise maps do not provide ambient noise levels at any given location. Instead they provide model derived average noise exposure levels that are useful baselines to identify priority areas for investigation, opportunities for policy alignment, and support for future planning.

Noise Action Plans

The noise maps will support the preparation, consultation and delivery of the noise action plans for Agglomerations (Scottish Government and Local Authority), Transportation (Transport Scotland, and covering all road, rail, and transport policy) and airports (led by major airports).

The action plans in this round will consist of:

- a single Agglomeration Noise Action Plan covering all five agglomerations (urban areas with populations in excess of 100,000), Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh, Falkirk and Glasgow;
- a Transportation Noise Action Plan covering all roads, rail, and wider transport policy; and
- the major airports developing action plans based on the results of the noise mapping and their own additional mapping.

The draft Noise Action Plans are in development and will be available on the Scottish Government website.

Engagement

The wider application of the noise maps, including the development of more detailed corridor models, and the action plans, is being taken forward in collaboration with key stakeholders, and the development of steering groups. New channels of communication that encourage a learning environment are well under way.

To maximise the benefits from action to improve our noise environment we recognise that it is essential that we build on the linkages with other key government policies and strategies across transport, climate change, health, environment, planning, energy and land use.

We are interested in engaging more widely on the strategic noise maps, particularly how we can publicise these maps as a resource for Local Authorities, developers, planners, consultants and many other professions. Please get in touch with Phil Leeks phil.leeks@gov.scot if you are interested in finding out more.

* * *

MEMBERSHIP

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

REHIS exists to improve and protect public health in Scotland through education, training and qualifications in Environmental Health.

REHIS is the awarding body for the professional titles 'Environmental Health Officer' and 'Chartered Environmental Health Officer', and has members across the UK and further afield.

NEW MEMBERS ALWAYS WELCOME

www.rehis.com

REDUCING HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL HARMS CAUSED BY TOBACCO AND RELATED PRODUCTS IN SCOTLAND

by ASH Scotland

Time for progress in reducing health and environmental harms caused by tobacco and related products in Scotland

Before and after the COVID-19 pandemic, ASH Scotland voiced concerns about the rapid uptake of e-cigarettes by children and youths and, from 2022, we advocated for a ban on the cheap, brightly coloured, fruit flavoured disposable vapes widely sold by retailers across our communities.

Regulations banning the supply and sale of single-use vapes have now been approved by the Scottish Parliament using devolved powers under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and are expected to be implemented across each of the UK's four countries from 1 June 2025. This measure will benefit health and the environment by tackling youth uptake of vaping and reducing fires caused by damaged lithium batteries that can be devastating for bin lorries and waste processing plants.

On 5 November an expanded Tobacco and Vapes Bill was reintroduced to the UK Parliament, after a previous version did not pass ahead of the UK General Election. This legislation proposes a number of measures, including:

- A rising age of sale for tobacco applying to anyone aged 15 or younger in 2024 (i.e. born after 1 January 2009) intended to phase out the sale of tobacco at retail;
- Powers to extend the indoor smoking ban to include outdoor areas, with a focus on protecting children and those who are vulnerable (for example, schools, playgrounds and hospitals) and to extend restrictions in smoke-free spaces to include e-cigarettes;
- A ban on e-cigarette/vape advertising and sponsorship, plus powers to restrict the flavours, display and packaging of all types of vapes as well as other nicotine products;
- Introduction of new fixed on-the-spot fines for retailers breaching regulations.

Some measures will be delivered at UK level while others will be England-only and distinctly shaped by each of the devolved administrations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. A UK Government consultation on standardising packaging for all tobacco products is currently live, with a closing date of 28 January 2025, and there will be further consultations on the detail of the Bill's measures.

2025 will be a busy year as we examine evidence and respond to government consultations, while also exposing the tobacco industry's tactics in opposing and seeking to weaken regulations. ASH Scotland will continue to work with REHIS to develop our responses to the legislation, including advocating for enforcement activities to be planned and financially supported.

We are delighted to be joined by REHIS representatives in a short life working group, convened by ASH Scotland at the request of the Scottish Government, considering both the lessons learned from the implementation of smoke-free perimeters around NHS hospital buildings in September 2022, and looking to recommend options for extending smoke-free and SAFE spaces (smoke and aerosol free environments) to enhance public protection from health-harming tobacco and aerosol particulates produced by e-cigarettes as well as heated tobacco and nicotine products.

As 2024 ends, we can see both challenges and positive possibilities in the new year ahead. On the one hand, funding is tight and increasingly restricted; we are all being required to produce more with less budget and capacity. The post-Brexit legislative landscape in the UK and devolved parliaments is still not fully settled, and fears about business challenges to health measures under the Internal Markets Act appear to have cooled public health progress by the Scottish Government.

On the other hand, Scotland's formal commitment to enacting the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) – which includes the right for children to be heard and their right to health – and a year of advancing a range of work steered by the 10-year tobacco and vaping framework roadmap published by the Scottish Government in November 2023 gives reasons for optimism.

ASH Scotland's commitment to working to reduce the harms and inequalities caused by tobacco and related products has always been supported by REHIS and, looking forward, we continue to value the strong and productive partnership that delivers tangible progress towards protecting and improving the health of our people and planet, as we work towards achieving a tobacco-free generation in Scotland by 2034.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

by Jacqueline Cunningham, Director of Professional Development

The Director of Professional Development at the Institute has had a particularly busy season with staff changes, and new and developing areas of work.

The Institute is ever evolving and changing in line with the current professional and financial climate. It is now well recognised that, as the Institute has said for many years, we are facing a shortage of Environmental Health Officers (EHOs) and Food Safety Officers (FSOs) throughout the profession, so it has been a worthwhile exercise introducing the Alternative Route to an EHO and the Alternative Pathway to an FSO.

Alternative Route to EHO and Pathway to FSO

We have 68 applications on our system for EHOs going through the Alternative Route and we are pleased to report that the first candidate to go through the new procedure has now completed their outstanding training and learning and passed the REHIS Diploma in October. In addition to this, our first candidate to sit the Alternative Interview, which is open to individuals who meet the academic requirements and already have considerable experience in Environmental Health, was successful and obtained their Certificate of Equivalence in November. There are a number of other candidates who are planning to sit their professional exams in the Spring and Autumn exam diets.

The FSO pathway is also seeing candidates progress and obtain their Higher Certificate in Food Practice enabling them to work as an FSO.

Enquiries and a request for an initial application form can be made by emailing contact@rehis.com.

Autumn Professional Exams

The professional exams took place in the first week of October in Dunfermline and we were presented with a large group of potential FSOs and EHOs.

The event proved to be a success. We had 23 candidates in total, 13 EHO graduates and 10 FSOs. This resulted in a total of 10 new EHOs and 8 new FSOs. Congratulations to all involved and good luck with any forthcoming resits.

The next exams will be 18-20 March 2025. Details will be confirmed when we know the exact number of candidates.

Following the exams, all feedback from candidates, examiners and observers was taken on board and any improvements in the process will be implemented at the earliest opportunity. An online meeting with examiners

and observers following the exams was extremely useful. Thank you to all who contributed.

Professional Courses

The Environmental Health Update and AGM took place on Friday 22 November, with a full day of input from an engaged audience and insightful presentations. The topics included: an update from the outgoing President, Lynn Crothers, on the work of the Institute over the year; a look at the Population Health Framework for Scotland by Dr Maria Rossi from PHS; an understanding of transport poverty by Dr Margaret Douglas; a virtual tour of the use and benefits of Power Bi by Louise Manson; an insight into the Alternative Routes into the Environmental Health profession by Chief Executive Jackie McCabe; and an update on REHIS courses and Joint Award by Annie Lindsay from Tickety Boo Training.

The AGM followed with a vote of thanks to the outgoing President Lynn Crothers and a huge welcome to Alan Morrison, the new REHIS President.

Later in the month, the Environmental Public Health and Housing Update took place with a range of speakers covering many aspects on the topic. There was an insight into alcohol and health from Laura Mahon from Alcohol Focus Scotland; a probe into the effectiveness of the statutory nuisance procedure in the UK by Dr Tim Everett; Robin Mitchell from OLM Consulting discussed swimming pools, treatment and problems, in particular cryptosporidium; Dr Neil Cunningham then demonstrated a technique to predict and prevent outbreaks from foodborne pathogens; and finally Jim Wilson from the Scottish Government discussed responsible dog ownership and control.

Early next year, we are planning an event with an interesting combination. Investigative Interview Training with George Barnsley will take place in Stirling on 28/29/30 January 2025. George is teaming up with Applied Team Theatre who specialise in non-verbal communication. Learn more about the PRICE model of interviewing and how you can improve your communication, the importance of understanding both yourself and others in moments of high stress, and how to know your triggers and be self-aware. Booking forms will be online soon on the REHIS website.

Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

As it comes up to Christmas, in addition to thinking about all the Christmas tasks that lie ahead please remember your CPD.

The deadline is the end of January 2025 and I would urge you to use the website to enter your activities. This allows you to enter the details of any CPD activity as you undertake them and submit at the end of the year.

Some of you will be required to submit a Written Submission and details can be found on the website. <https://rehis.com/events-and-professional-development/what-is-cpd/>

Simply go to the members' section of the website, view members' content, click on My CPD, create a new activity and upload relevant information on the event such as the programme or attendance certificate. Then if required upload your Written Statement or a word document describing your Alternative Evidence.

If you have questions on your CPD submission, please contact REHIS, contact@rehis.com.

Draft Good Practice Guide for Noise Control at Open Air Concerts and Similar Events

A REHIS group along with the IOA, ANC and the CIEH have been reviewing the above document and it is now at its final stages before going out for consultation to a wider audience. It is hoped that we will be in a position to put the document to good use for the second part of 2025. Its aim is to assist the regulators, licensing, organisers and consultants at planning stages and for controlling noise exposure to receptors during these types of events.

A link to the consultation document will appear on the REHIS website.

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**REHIS WELCOMES THE
SUBMISSION OF ARTICLES FOR
PUBLICATION IN**

***ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH
SCOTLAND***

**REHIS WELCOMES
REPORTS OF INTERESTING COURT
CASES FOR
PUBLICATION IN**

***ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH
SCOTLAND***

THE ROYAL ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH INSTITUTE OF SCOTLAND SCHOOLS INITIATIVE

The REHIS Schools Initiative that helps to provide qualifications to 10,000 pupils every year, many in areas of high deprivation, is at risk after co-funding was withdrawn by Scotland's public sector food body.

The Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland is a long-established awarding body in Scotland. It has made its Elementary Food Hygiene course available to secondary schools since 1993 and the Elementary Food and Health course since 2015. More than 300 schools in all areas of Scotland are registered with the Institute, and have been delivering these REHIS qualifications, both of which are on the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) at level 5, to more than 10,000 pupils each year.

As well as providing pupils with nationally, industry-recognised qualifications, which will be of use to them and future employers, the initiative is supporting the local economy and food businesses who are able to recruit young adults with a recognised qualification to work in the food sector. The courses play an important role in helping schools in Scotland meet the SQA Curriculum for Excellence, Health and Wellbeing (Food and Health) experiences and outcomes.

Following a recent survey of schools about the initiative, 120 schools responded. Feedback from teachers overwhelmingly say the qualifications are important to their young people in terms of understanding healthy eating, food safety but also in terms of gaining a formal qualification that can lead to employment. In particular, the fully-funded initiative supports schools in areas of high deprivation to allow them to offer the qualifications.

One teacher said: *"In my case, I was working with young people who were not able to access mainstream education so were already disadvantaged in terms of academic achievement. REHIS qualifications give them real currency in the job market given how recognisable the qualification is, so helped them transition into a positive destination."*

REHIS has worked in partnership with Food Standards Scotland to co-fund the initiative since 2007, enabling over 200,000 young people to gain skills and knowledge in food safety and food and health. The Institute said that it and the schools appreciated Food Standards Scotland's past support of the hugely popular initiative.

REHIS continues to offer the qualifications to schools at a subsidised rate but it is recognised that some schools do not have the funds to purchase the resources, which is unfortunately widening the attainment gap and inequalities in education. Since the announcement of the funding arrangements earlier this year, only 46 secondary schools have been in a position to purchase qualification packs, compared to 180 secondary schools at the same time when the project was fully funded.

For it to operate on a fully funded basis, the Institute is seeking another co-funding partner to provide this service free of charge to the schools, particularly to those schools in areas of high deprivation.

If anyone wishes more information on the Schools Initiative, please contact the Chief Executive contact@rehis.com.

* * *

CONTACT REHIS Questions or Queries?

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EH3 8HX

Tel No: 0131 229 2968
Email: contact@rehis.com

Visit our website at www.rehis.com

Have you ever thought of writing an article?

The Institute welcomes contributions to its publications which include the Environmental Health Scotland journal. These publications aim to keep Scotland's environmental health community fully informed on current topics and issues and on the Institute's activities and initiatives.

These publications are for you, the environmental health community. We want to hear about interesting activities from those working in the public, private, third sectors and our approved training centres.

So, have you ever thought that the piece of work or project you are working on would make an interesting article for the REHIS journal but do not know how to get it published? Well, look no further: here's a quick guide on how to do it.

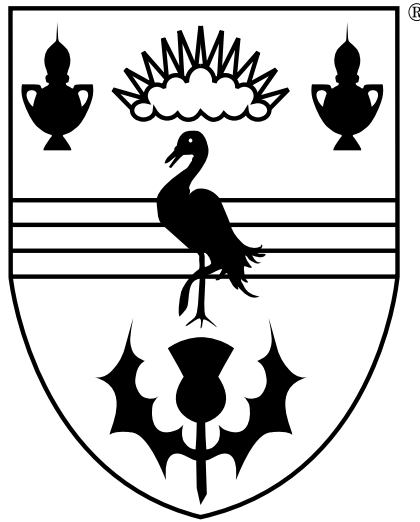
Journal Articles Guidelines:

- Use MS Word with size 12 Arial font
- Aim for a word count of around 700 words (can be more)
- Illustrations including photographs, tables and graphs should be of high resolution and sent in files separate from the text file.
- Submit for the attention of the Editor via email: journal@rehis.com

For investigations that result in court cases, the following template may be of additional assistance:

- Local Authority/Agency:
- Accused:
- Address of Premises:
- Legislation:
- Date of Offence(s):
- Brief Account of Case:
- Date Determined:
- Outcome:
- Penalty:
- Observations:

THE ROYAL ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH INSTITUTE OF SCOTLAND



The Institute was incorporated as a Company Limited by Guarantee on 16th February 1983, to give effect to the amalgamation of The Royal Sanitary Association of Scotland and The Scottish Institute of Environmental Health. The Institute was Incorporated by Royal Charter on 8th March 2001, following which the Company was wound up.

The Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland is a registered Scottish charity, Number SC009406.

The objects for which the Institute is established, contained in Article 3 of the Charter, are for the benefit of the community to promote the advancement of Environmental Health by:

- a. stimulating general interest in and disseminating knowledge concerning Environmental Health;
- b. promoting education and training in matters relating to Environmental Health; and
- c. maintaining, by examination or otherwise, high standards of professional practice and conduct on the part of Environmental Health Officers in Scotland.

The Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland is an independent and self-financing organisation. It neither seeks nor receives grant aid. The Institute's charitable activities are funded significantly by the subscriptions received from its members.

The Institute's affairs are managed by a Council which is elected by members. The Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland is a founding member of the International Federation of Environmental Health.

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