

Welcome to Environmental Standards Scotland

We are a new organisation set up on 1 October 2021 to improve the quality of the environment that people enjoy and help Scotland achieve the highest environmental standards.

Who are we?

- Environmental Standards Scotland (ESS) is a public sector body, set up as a non-ministerial office, independent of Scottish Government, and accountable to the Scottish Parliament.
- We've been set up to ensure environmental laws and standards are adhered to in Scotland, replacing the European Union's scrutiny and enforcement role after Brexit.
- We're led by a Chair and Board, have a Chief Executive and specialised team, and a main office based in Edinburgh.
- Environmental Standards Scotland (ESS) was established in law by the UK Withdrawal from the European Union (Continuity) (Scotland) Act 2021.

What is our role and what do we cover?

- Our vision is that 'Scotland's communities benefit from a high quality environment, and are protected from harm through the consistent application of effective environmental laws, which are recognised internationally as setting high standards'.
- We cover a broad range of environmental law, including all aspects of environmental protection and harm, particularly in relation human beings and their enjoyment of the environment.
- Our role is to scrutinise, investigate and secure improvements in public authorities' compliance with environmental law, the effectiveness of environmental law, and the way it is being implemented and applied in Scotland.
- We cover all public authorities – including the Scottish Government and its agencies, as well organisations carrying out functions on behalf of public authorities.

How will we work?

- We will work collaboratively with a wide range of partners, including Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), community groups and Public Authorities to fulfil our functions and achieve our objectives.
- Anyone can bring an environmental issue to our attention by making a Representation to us;
- When we receive a Representation we will undertake a preliminary review and gather information to determine whether the matter is suitable for investigation by ESS. Where we decide not to investigate a matter we may still continue to monitor the issue and review the matter at a later date.
- We will also undertake our own monitoring, analysis and horizon scanning to identify areas with concerns around compliance, or with the effectiveness of environmental law, and to keep abreast of policy developments in the European Union.
- We will use Representations and our own horizon scanning to develop and maintain a forward programme of work, setting out the broad issues that we expect to investigate in the near future. We will publish this on our website so that interested parties are aware and can contribute by providing evidence, examples, or case studies.
- We will always engage with Public Authorities to try to resolve matters swiftly and informally at all stages of our processes.
- If it is not possible to resolve a matter by agreement in a reasonable timescale, we will use statutory powers to ensure the necessary remedial action is taken to resolve matter: These include:
 - Issuing a Compliance Notice
 - Issuing an Improvement Report
 - Referring an issue for Judicial Review
- We aim to be open and transparent and will publish reports about the issues we have investigated and the actions we have taken.

How can someone raise a concern with us?

- We can receive Representations from individuals, community groups, environmental organisations, businesses, land managers and Public Authorities who are concerned about compliance with environmental law in Scotland, or its effectiveness.
- Those wishing to make a representation to ESS can complete a simple form which can be found on our website. We will provide advice and support to anyone who needs help setting out their concerns to us.
- We are also able to receive and consider information, or evidence, about environmental issues of concern from people who aren't in a position, or ready, to make a formal representation.

Email: enquiries@environmentalstandards.scot

Website: [Home | Environmental Standards Scotland](#)