

Uncovering the Environment: The Use of Public Access to Environmental Information Survey for Members of the Public

Project Introduction

Project Information

Thank you for your interest in taking part in the “Uncovering the Environment: The Use of Public Access to Environmental Information” project.

The School of Social Sciences at the University of Dundee is conducting research on the right of access to environmental information. The project seeks to identify how individuals and non-governmental organisations utilise their right to obtain environmental information from Scottish public authorities and the impact of the right on the relationship between public authorities and the general public. The project also aims to explore how the right impacts on the behaviour of public authorities and whether it promotes scrutiny of, and participation in, environmental decision-making processes by members of the public.

By conducting this research, the project will provide insight into how public authorities can better guarantee the right to the benefit of the public and ease the burdens imposed on public authorities in guaranteeing the right. The project's findings will be reported in academic and policy publications and presented at conferences. In addition, the findings will be disseminated in the public domain through a free summary of the research findings prepared by the University of Dundee and the publication of a non-specialist book.

The Principal Investigator of the research project is Professor Colin Reid, the Co-Investigator is Dr Jonathan Mendel and the research assistant for the project is Dr Sean Whittaker. Further information about the project and the research team can be found on our website: <https://sites.dundee.ac.uk/envinfo/>.

Participant Information

We are seeking individuals who are 18 years or older and who have experience in accessing environmental information from public authorities, either from looking for environmental information proactively made available by public authorities or from submitting a request for environmental information to public authorities, to participate in the project. If you are under 18 years old, please do not participate in this survey, although you can email the research team at s.x.whittaker@dundee.ac.uk to discuss how you can participate in the project.

It is important to highlight that it can be difficult to identify whether you have accessed environmental information that has been made proactively available or not. This is because the release of information before it is requested has become so commonplace that we often do not notice it until it is highlighted.

Measures such as public authorities publishing environmental information on their website, posting leaflets on community notice boards and updating public registers provide examples of how public authorities proactively make environmental information available. These measures can also include posts made on social media such as Facebook or Twitter. If you have encountered environmental information made available through these or similar dissemination methods, you will, if you so wish, be able to participate in the survey and the research project.

If you are interested in participating in the survey, please take a moment to read through the information on the next page to make sure that you are fully informed on the format of the survey and your rights as a participant.

Survey Information

As part of the research project, the research team is carrying out an online survey of those accessing environmental information to identify who utilises the right of access to environmental information and how the information being accessed is used. The findings from this survey, alongside the parallel survey open to public authorities, will provide insight into how the right is working in practice and feed into the wider research project.

Participation in this survey is voluntary, and the answers provided will be anonymised from the point of collection. You may withdraw from participating in the survey and the project at any time.

As part of the project, we would also like to interview some participants to explore in more depth their experiences in accessing environmental information from Scottish public authorities. In order to separate your personal contact details and your answers to this survey we will provide a link that you may follow if you are interested in being contacted for interview at the end of the survey.

You do not need to provide your name or contact details in order to complete this survey.

All data gathered by the research team will be securely stored. The anonymised data will ultimately be archived with the UK Data Service.

Survey Format

The survey should take around 15-20 minutes and consists of a mix of multiple choice questions and free text box questions. The questions you are asked to answer may change depending on your answers to previous questions. You are free to not answer questions if you wish, although we need an answer to a few questions in order to tailor the survey to your experiences

On each page you may click "Next" to continue to the next page or close the survey to exit. Exiting the survey will delete all responses already given and all other details of your participation.

Consent

If you no longer wish to continue with this survey at any point, please close the survey. No details or responses will be retained.

Click "Next" to go to the first set of survey questions. By clicking "Next" you confirm that you:

- Have read and understood the participant information
- Consent to take part in this survey and understand that this consent can be withdrawn at any time
- Understand that once you click "Finish", your answers will be submitted to the research team.

Environmental Information Proactively Made Available by a Public Authority

Under the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004, public authorities have a responsibility to proactively make environmental information available rather than waiting for the information to be requested. In this section of the survey, we are interested in your experience with how public authorities fulfilled their responsibility to proactively make environmental information available.

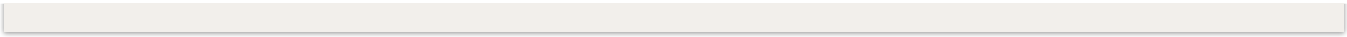
The responsibility to proactively make environmental information available has two key elements. The first of these is that the responsibility relates to "environmental information". "Environmental information" covers a broad range of topics such as the environment itself (including air, water, earth, and the habitats of animals and plants), other things that affect the environment (such as emissions, radiation, noise and other forms of pollution) and policies, plans, measures, reports and laws on the environment.

The second element is the measures used by public authorities to proactively make environmental information available. Measures such as publishing environmental information on a website, posting leaflets on a community notice board and updating public registers are some examples of how public authorities proactively make environmental information available. This is not an exhaustive list of examples, and it is possible that you have encountered environmental information that has been proactively made available through different measures.

If you have had multiple experiences in accessing environmental information that has been proactively made available by public authorities, please answer the survey's questions in relation to your most recent experience. If you wish to discuss any other experiences you have had in accessing environmental information proactively made available by public authorities, please email the research team at s.x.whittaker@dundee.ac.uk.

1. Have you tried to find environmental information under the assumption that it had been proactively made available by a Scottish public authority? * *Required*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No



Environmental Information Proactively Made Available by a Public Authority

2. What public authority were you seeking the environmental information from?

3. What environmental information were you looking for?

3.a. Why did you want this information?

4. To what extent did you know that the public authority had already made the environmental information you were looking for available to the general public?

- ☐ I knew that the public authority had made the environmental information available
- ☐ I was not certain, but I was confident that the public authority had made the environmental information available
- ☐ I did not know whether the public authority had made the environmental information available
- ☐ I was certain they had not made the environmental information available, but wanted to confirm my suspicions
- ☐ Other

4.a. If you selected Other, please specify:

5. Before looking for the environmental information, did you consider submitting a request for the public authority to directly disclose the information to you?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Environmental Information Proactively Made Available by a Public Authority

6. Where were you looking for the environmental information?

- ☐ Online reports
- ☐ Online public registers
- ☐ Public registers located at a public authority's office
- ☐ Datasets
- ☐ Community noticeboard (e.g. at the local post office or library)
- ☐ Announcements on public authority's website
- ☐ Newspapers (online or printed)
- ☐ The public authority's social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter)
- ☐ Other

6.a. If you selected Other, please specify:

7. Did you need assistance in looking for the environmental information?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

7.a. Did you ask the public authority for assistance?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

7.b. Did you get the assistance you asked for?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

7.b.i. How useful did you find this assistance in locating the environmental information you were looking for?

Please don't select more than 1 answer(s) per row.

Please select at least 1 answer(s).

	Extremely Useful	Very Useful	Somewhat Useful	Not So Useful	Not At All Useful
The assistance was...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. Did you manage to find the environmental information that you were looking for? *
Required

- ☐ I was able to find all of the environmental information I was looking for in addition to further information I had not initially sought
- ☐ I was able to find all of the environmental information I was looking for
- ☐ I was able to find some of the environmental information I was looking for
- ☐ I could not find any of the environmental information I was looking for

Environmental Information Proactively Made Available by a Public Authority

9. How far do you agree with the following statements?

Please don't select more than 1 answer(s) per row.

Please select at least 5 answer(s).

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
The environmental information was easy to locate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The environmental information was easy to understand	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The environmental information was of great benefit in helping me achieve my goals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The public authority made an appropriate amount of information available (e.g. the public authority did not make too little or excessive amounts of information available)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The environmental information was of high quality (e.g. it was up to date)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

10. Were you given access to background information about the information proactively made available by the public authority (such as how the information was gathered, the processes used to analyse the information)?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Environmental Information Proactively Made Available by a Public Authority

11. What prevented you from accessing the environmental information that you were looking for?

- ☐ The environmental information was not available
- ☐ The environmental information was not accessible
- ☐ The environmental information was too expensive to access
- ☐ Other

11.a. If you selected Other, please specify:

11.b. Why was the environmental information inaccessible? (select all that apply)

- ☐ The environmental information was physically stored in a location I could not get to
- ☐ The environmental information was not held in a format that my electronic device could open
- ☐ The environmental information was not stored or made available in a way that I could access with my disability
- ☐ I did not know how to access the environmental information that was made available
- ☐ Other

11.b.i. If you selected Other, please specify:

12. Did you bring this issue to the attention of the public authority?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

12.a. What was the public authority's response?

12.b. How satisfactory was the public authority's response?

Please don't select more than 1 answer(s) per row.

Please select at least 1 answer(s).

	Very satisfactory	Satisfactory	Neither satisfactory nor unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Very Unsatisfactory
The public authority's response was...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

13. Following this inability to access the environmental information, did you submit a request to the public authority directly?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No, the public authority provided the environmental information when I raised the issue with them

- ☐ No, I got the environmental information via other means
- ☐ No, I gave up attempting to access the environmental information
- ☐ Other

13.a. If you selected Other, please specify:

Environmental Information Proactively Made Available by a Public Authority

14. Did you complain to the public authority about how they fulfilled their responsibility to proactively make environmental information available?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

14.a. Why did you not complain to the public authority?

- ☐ I felt that the public authority had met their responsibility to proactively make environmental information available
- ☐ The environmental information I requested had become out of date
- ☐ I felt that complaining would be too time consuming
- ☐ I was worried about potentially damaging the relationship between myself and the public authority
- ☐ I was able to access the environmental information via other means
- ☐ Other

14.a.i. If you selected Other, please specify:

Environmental Information Proactively Made Available by a Public Authority

15. What made you decide to raise your complaint to the public authority?

16. What was the basis for your complaint to the public authority about how they fulfilled their responsibility to proactively make environmental information available?

- ☐ The public authority said that they did not possess the environmental information I wanted
- ☐ The public authority did not proactively make the environmental information available
- ☐ There were issues with how the public authority stored the environmental information online
- ☐ There were issues with how the public authority made the environmental information available online
- ☐ There were issues with how the public authority stored physical copies of the environmental information
- ☐ There were issues with how the public authority made physical copies of the environmental information available
- ☐ There was a lack of support or guidance from the public authority
- ☐ The environmental information was not provided free of charge
- ☐ Other

16.a. If you selected Other, please specify:

17. After you raised your complaint, did the public authority supply you with the environmental information you were looking for?

- ☐ Yes, it supplied me with more environmental information than I was originally looking for
- ☐ Yes, it supplied me with the environmental information I was looking for
- ☐ Yes, it partially supplied me with the environmental information I was looking for
- ☐ No, it did not supply me with the environmental information I was looking for

18. Did the public authority change their strategy for proactively making environmental information available after you raised your complaint?

- ☐ Yes, they did change their strategy for proactively making environmental information available
- ☐ No, they did not change their strategy for proactively making environmental information available
- ☐ I do not know whether they changed their strategy for proactively making environmental information available

19. How far do you agree with the following statement?

Please don't select more than 1 answer(s) per row.

Please select at least 1 answer(s).

	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
After I raised my complaint to the public authority, I was able to meet the goals I set out to achieve when I initially sought access to the environmental information.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Submitting Requests for Environmental Information

Under the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004, public authorities have a responsibility to disclose environmental information when such information is requested by an individual or non-governmental organisation. "Environmental information" covers a broad range of topics such as the environment itself (including air, water, earth, and the habitats of animals and plants), other things that affect the environment (such as emissions, radiation, noise and other forms of pollution) and policies, measures, reports, plans and laws on the environment.

This responsibility to disclose environmental information on request is subject to various procedural obligations (such as the obligation to respond to a request within 20 days). However, public authorities are entitled to refuse to disclose the requested environmental information if it falls within one of the various exceptions contained within the Regulations.

In this section of the survey we are interested in your experience with how public authorities fulfil their responsibility to respond to requests for environmental information. If you have had multiple experiences in submitting requests for environmental information, please answer the survey's questions in relation to your most recent experience. If you wish to discuss any other experiences you have had in submitting requests for environmental information, please email the research team at s.x.whittaker@dundee.ac.uk.

20. Have you submitted a request for environmental information to any Scottish public authority? * *Required*

☐ Yes

☐ No

Submitting Requests for Environmental Information

21. What public authority did you submit your request to?

22. What environmental information did you request access to?

22.a. Why did you want this information?

23. Did you need assistance in submitting your request for environmental information?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

23.a. Did you ask the public authority for assistance?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

23.b. Did you get the assistance you required?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

23.b.i. How useful did you find this assistance in submitting your request for environmental information?

Please don't select more than 1 answer(s) per row.

Please select at least 1 answer(s).

	Extremely Useful	Very Useful	Somewhat Useful	Not So Useful	Not At All Useful
The assistance was...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

24. Did you submit your request for environmental information as the first method of trying to access the information you were looking for from the public authority?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

25. Did the public authority disclose the environmental information in response to your request? * *Required*

- ☐ The environmental information was disclosed, and I was supplied with more information that went beyond my request
- ☐ The environmental information was disclosed
- ☐ The environmental information was partially disclosed
- ☐ The public authority was willing to disclose the environmental information, but it was too expensive
- ☐ The environmental information was not disclosed

Submitting Requests for Environmental Information

Under the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004, public authorities have a responsibility to disclose environmental information when such information is requested by a member of the public. "Environmental information" covers a broad range of topics such as the environment itself (including air, water, earth, and the habitats of animals and plants), other things that affect the environment (such as emissions, radiation, noise and other forms of pollution) and policies, measures, reports, plans and laws on the environment.

This responsibility to disclose environmental information on request is subject to various procedural obligations (such as the obligation to respond to a request within 20 days). However, public authorities are entitled to refuse to disclose the requested environmental information if it falls within one of the various exceptions contained within the Regulations.

In this section of the survey we are interested in your experience with how public authorities fulfil their responsibility to respond to requests for environmental information. If you have had multiple experiences in submitting requests for environmental information, please answer the survey's questions in relation to your most recent experience. If you wish to discuss any other experiences you have had in submitting requests for environmental information, please email the research team at s.x.whittaker@dundee.ac.uk.

26. Have you submitted a request for environmental information to any Scottish public authority? * *Required*

☐ Yes

☐ No

Submitting Requests for Environmental Information

27. Did you need assistance in submitting your request for environmental information?

☐ Yes

☐ No

27.a. Did you ask the public authority for assistance?

☐ Yes

☐ No

27.b. Did you get the assistance you required?

☐ Yes

☐ No

27.b.i. How useful did you find this assistance in submitting your request for environmental information?

Please don't select more than 1 answer(s) per row.

Please select at least 1 answer(s).

	Extremely Useful	Very Useful	Somewhat Useful	Not So Useful	Not At All Useful
The assistance was...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

28. Did you submit your request for environmental information as the first method of trying to get access to the information you were looking for from the public authority?

☐ Yes

☐ No

29. Did the public authority disclose the environmental information in response to your request? * *Required*

- ☐ The environmental information was disclosed, and I was supplied with more information that went beyond my request
- ☐ The environmental information was disclosed
- ☐ The environmental information was partially disclosed
- ☐ The public authority was willing to disclose the environmental information, but it was too expensive
- ☐ The environmental information was not disclosed

Submitting Requests for Environmental Information

30. How long did the public authority take to disclose the requested environmental information?

30.a. Did you feel that the public authority disclosed the environmental information in sufficient time?

- ☐ Yes, I feel that the public authority disclosed the environmental information as quickly as it could
- ☐ Yes, I feel that the public authority disclosed the environmental information within a reasonable timeframe
- ☐ No, I felt that the public authority took too long to disclose the environmental information

31. How did you use the disclosed environmental information?

32. Were you charged a fee by the public authority for the environmental information?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

32.a. How much were you charged by the public authority?

Please enter a decimal number, for example: 9.63.

32.b. Was the fee waived by the public authority?

☐ Yes

☐ No

32.c. How far do you agree with the following statement?

Please don't select more than 1 answer(s) per row.

Please select at least 1 answer(s).

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I believe the amount charged by the public authority was reasonable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

33. Were you given access to background information about the information disclosed by the public authority (such as how the information was gathered, the processes used to analyse the information)?

☐ Yes

☐ No

34. How far do you agree with the following statements?

Please don't select more than 1 answer(s) per row.

Please select at least 4 answer(s).

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The public authority disclosed an appropriate amount of information (e.g. the public authority did not disclose too little or excessive amounts of information)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The environmental information was of high quality (e.g. it was up to date)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The environmental information was of great benefit in helping me achieve my intended goals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I was satisfied with how the public authority processed my request	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

35. Has the public authority altered their behaviour or any decisions they had previously taken as a result of your request for environmental information?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't know

35.a. Could you please provide a summary of this change?

Submitting Requests for Environmental Information

36. How much were you charged by the public authority? *Optional*

Please enter a decimal number, for example: 9.63.

36.a. Were you offered a fee waiver by the public authority? *Optional*

☐ Yes

☐ No

36.b. Do you feel that the amount the public authority charged for the disclosure of the environmental information was fair?

Please don't select more than 1 answer(s) per row.

Please select at least 1 answer(s).

	Fair	Somewhat fair	Neither fair nor unfair	Somewhat unfair	Unfair
I believe the amount charged was...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Submitting Requests for Environmental Information

Under the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004, public authorities can refuse to disclose environmental information if it comes under one of the listed exceptions. The answers to the following question are the possible exceptions that public authorities are allowed to invoke in order to refuse disclosing the requested environmental information.

More than one exception can be invoked in relation to a single request. In the question below, please check all the exceptions that apply.

37. What reason(s) did the public authority give to justify its refusal to disclose the environmental information you requested?

- ☐ The public authority did not hold the environmental information
- ☐ My request was considered manifestly unreasonable
- ☐ My request was too general
- ☐ The environmental information I requested was in the course of being completed
- ☐ The environmental information was contained within unfinished documents or incomplete data
- ☐ The environmental information I requested concerned internal communications
- ☐ Disclosure would impact international relations, defence, national security or public safety
- ☐ The environmental information I requested related to a live case in court
- ☐ Disclosing the requested environmental information would impact the public authority's ability to conduct disciplinary or criminal inquiries
- ☐ The environmental information was withheld to protect intellectual property rights
- ☐ Disclosure would impact the confidentiality of the public authority's proceedings
- ☐ The environmental information I requested was commercial or industrial information that was confidential
- ☐ The environmental information was withheld to protect the interests of the person who supplied the information
- ☐ The environmental information was withheld to protect the environment to which the information was related to

- ☐ The environmental information was withheld to protect the privacy of the person it related to
- ☐ Other

37.a. If you selected Other, please specify:

37.b. How far do you agree with the following statement? *Optional*

Please don't select more than 1 answer(s) per row.

Please select at least 1 answer(s).

	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The public authority's reason(s) for refusing to disclose the requested environmental information was reasonable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

38. How long after you submitted your request for environmental information did the public authority inform you of their refusal to disclose the environmental information?

38.a. Did you feel that the public authority informed you of their decision to not disclose the environmental information you requested in sufficient time?

- ☐ Yes, I feel that the public authority informed me of their decision as quickly as it could
- ☐ Yes, I feel that the public authority informed me of their decision within a reasonable timeframe
- ☐ No, I felt that the public authority took too long to inform me of their decision

39. After the public authority refused to disclose the environmental information you requested, did you try to obtain the environmental information via other means?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

39.a. What other means did you try, and were you successful in getting access to the environmental information?

Submitting Requests for Environmental Information

40. How long did the public authority take to partially disclose the requested environmental information?

40.a. Did you feel that the public authority disclosed the environmental information that it chose to disclose in response to your request in sufficient time?

- ☐ Yes, I feel that the public authority disclosed the environmental information as quickly as it could
- ☐ Yes, I feel that the public authority disclosed the environmental information within a reasonable timeframe
- ☐ No, I felt that the public authority took too long to disclose the environmental information

41. How did you use the disclosed environmental information?

42. Were you charged a fee by the public authority for the environmental information that it did disclose?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

42.a. How much were you charged by the public authority?

Please enter a decimal number, for example: 9.63.

42.b. Was the fee waived by the public authority?

☐ Yes

☐ No

42.c. How far do you agree with the following statement?

Please don't select more than 1 answer(s) per row.

Please select at least 1 answer(s).

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I believe the amount charged by the public authority was reasonable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

43. Were you given access to background information about the information disclosed by the public authority (such as how the information was gathered, the processes used to analyse the information)?

☐ Yes

☐ No

44. How far do you agree with the following statements?

Please don't select more than 1 answer(s) per row.

Please select at least 4 answer(s).

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The public authority disclosed an appropriate amount of information (e.g. the public authority did not disclose too little or excessive amounts of information)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The environmental information was of high quality (e.g. it was up to date)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The environmental information was of great benefit in helping me achieve my intended goals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I was satisfied with how the public authority processed my request	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

45. Has the public authority altered their behaviour or any decisions they had previously taken as a result of your request for environmental information?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't know

45.a. Could you please provide a summary of this change?

Submitting Requests for Environmental Information

Under the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004, public authorities can refuse to disclose environmental information if it comes under one of the listed exceptions. The answers to the following question are the possible exceptions that public authorities are allowed to invoke in order to refuse disclosing the requested environmental information.

Please note that more than one exception can be invoked in relation to a single request. In the question below, please check all the exceptions that apply.

46. What reason(s) did the public authority give to justify its refusal to disclose part of the environmental information you requested?

- ☐ The public authority did not hold the environmental information
- ☐ My request was considered manifestly unreasonable
- ☐ My request was too general
- ☐ The environmental information I requested was in the course of being completed
- ☐ The environmental information was contained within unfinished documents or incomplete data
- ☐ The environmental information I requested concerned internal communications
- ☐ Disclosure would impact international relations, defence, national security or public safety
- ☐ The environmental information I requested related to a live case in court
- ☐ Disclosing the requested environmental information would impact the public authority's ability to conduct disciplinary or criminal inquiries
- ☐ The environmental information was withheld to protect intellectual property rights
- ☐ Disclosure would impact the confidentiality of the public authority's proceedings
- ☐ The environmental information I requested was commercial or industrial information that was confidential
- ☐ The environmental information was withheld to protect the interests of the person who supplied the information
- ☐ The environmental information was withheld to protect the environment to which the information was related to

- ☐ The environmental information was withheld to protect the privacy of the person it related to
- ☐ Other

46.a. If you selected Other, please specify:

46.b. How far do you agree with the following statement?

Please don't select more than 1 answer(s) per row.

Please select at least 1 answer(s).

	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The public authority's reason(s) for refusing to disclose the requested environmental information was reasonable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

47. After the public authority refused to disclose the environmental information you requested, did you try to obtain the environmental information via other means?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

47.a. What other means did you try, and were you successful in getting access to the environmental information?

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Submitting Requests for Environmental Information

48. Did you challenge the public authority's decision or the method by which it processed your request? * *Required*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

48.a. Why did you not challenge the public authority? *Optional*

- ☐ I felt the public authority fully met their responsibility in responding to requests for environmental information
- ☐ The environmental information I requested had become out of date
- ☐ I felt that challenging the public authority would be too time consuming
- ☐ I was worried about potentially damaging the relationship between myself and the public authority
- ☐ I had managed to access to the environmental information via other means
- ☐ Other

48.a.i. If you selected Other, please specify:

Submitting Requests for Environmental Information

49. What made you decide to challenge how the public authority dealt with your request for environmental information?

50. On what basis did you seek to challenge how the public authority dealt with your request for environmental information?

- ☐ The public authority did not disclose the environmental information I requested
- ☐ The public authority did not hold the environmental information that I requested access to
- ☐ The public authority did not disclose the environmental information in the format I requested
- ☐ The public authority charged too much for the disclosure of the environmental information
- ☐ The public authority did not respond to my request within 20 working days
- ☐ The public authority did not respond to my request
- ☐ The public authority did not provide me with any assistance in formulating and submitting my request
- ☐ Other

50.a. If you selected Other, please specify:

51. Did you make representations to the public authority through their internal review procedures?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

51.a. Did the public authority disclose the requested environmental information at the end of the internal review process?

- ☐ It disclosed more environmental information than I originally requested
- ☐ It fully disclosed the environmental information I requested
- ☐ It partially disclosed the environmental information I requested
- ☐ It did not disclose the environmental information I requested
- ☐ I challenged the public authority on other grounds (e.g. they charged too much for the information)

51.b. Did you apply to have the decision of the public authority reviewed by the Scottish Information Commissioner?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

51.b.i. Were you aware that you could escalate your challenge of the public authority's decision or treatment of your request beyond an internal review by the public authority?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

52. How far do you agree with the following statement?

Please don't select more than 1 answer(s) per row.

Please select at least 1 answer(s).

	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
At the end of this process, I was able to meet the goals I set out to achieve when I requested access to the environmental information.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Personal Information

In this section of the survey we are interested in collecting some information about you. We are interested in this data because it will enable us to identify whether particular groups have different experiences in accessing environmental information from public authorities.

While we are interested in this personal data, we are not interested in connecting this data to you as an individual. You do not need to give your name or contact details to complete the survey.

53. In what capacity did you seek access to environmental information from Scottish public authorities?

53.a. If you selected Other, please specify:

53.b. If you sought access to environmental information on behalf of an interest group or an non-governmental organisation, whether they have an environmental focus or not, could you please provide the name of the group/organisation in the box below. If you do not wish to provide the name of the group, please leave the box blank.

53.b.i. Are you happy for us to connect the organisation that you represent with your answers to the survey when we publish the project's findings?

☐ Yes

☐ No

54. What is your age?

55. What is your ethnic group?

56. What is your home postcode?

57. Which one of the following best describes your gender? If you wish to self-define, please select "In another way".

☐ Male

☐ Female

☐ In another way

☐ Prefer not to say

57.a. Please self-define your gender in the box below:

58. Do you consider yourself to be a trans person? Trans is an umbrella term to describe people whose gender is not the same as the sex they were assigned at birth.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I prefer not to say

59. Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation? If you wish to self-define, please select "Other".

- ☐ Heterosexual/straight
- ☐ Bi/bisexual
- ☐ Gay/lesbian
- ☐ Prefer not to say
- ☐ Other

59.a. Please self-define your sexual orientation in the box below:

60. Do you consider yourself to be disabled under the Equality Act 2010? The Equality Act 2010 defines a person as disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment and

the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to perform normal day-to-day activities.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I would prefer not to say

If you click “Finish”, the information that you have provided during the survey will be forwarded to the research team. If you wish to withdraw all of your answers from the survey please exit from this webpage.

If you are interested in being contacted for interview as part of the project, please follow the link provided on the next page.

Survey Debrief

Thank you for taking our survey!

You can follow the progress of the project via the project website at <https://sites.dundee.ac.uk/envinfo/> or on Twitter at @ISSRDundee, @LawDundee, @Geog_UoD and @dtdchange.

Interviews and Contact Details

If you wish to sign up to be contacted for interview regarding your experience with utilising the right of access to environmental information, please follow this link:

https://dundee.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/uncovering_the_environment_interview

If you have any questions regarding the project or wish to get further involved with the project, please feel free to contact Sean Whittaker at s.x.whittaker@dundee.ac.uk.

Key for selection options

53 - In what capacity did you seek access to environmental information from Scottish public authorities?

- As a member of an environmental interest group or an non-governmental organisation with an environmental focus
- As a member of an interest group or non-governmental organisation
- In a professional capacity (e.g. lawyer or environmental consultant)
- As a journalist
- As an academic at an educational institution
- As a student at an educational institution
- As an employee of a public authority
- As an owner or employee of a commercial business
- As a member of a public representative body (e.g a Member of the Scottish Parliament or a Community Council Member)
- As a member of the general public
- Other

54 - What is your age?

- 18 - 24 years old

25 - 30 years old
31 - 34 years old
35 - 40 years old
41 - 44 years old
45 - 50 years old
51 - 54 years old
55 - 60 years old
61 - 64 years old
65 - 70 years old
71 - 74 years old
75 years old or older

55 - What is your ethnic group?

Scottish
British
Irish
Gypsy or Irish Traveler
Any other White background
White and Black Caribbean
White and Black African
White and Asian
Any other Mixed/Multiple ethnic background
Indian
Pakistani
Bangladeshi
Chinese
Any other Asian background
African
Caribbean
Any other Black/African/Caribbean background
Arab
Any other ethnic group
