

SEPA hoping to inspire young people into STEM careers during British Science Week

✘ 16 March 2018

Inspiring young people to follow a career in science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) is vital to Scotland's environmental regulator.

- Scotland needs young people trained in STEM subjects to tackle the environmental challenges facing humanity now and in the future.
- SEPA highlights science staff during British Science Week.
- A world-class environment protection agency needs skilled staff inspired and trained in these disciplines.

As British Science Week reaches its end on Sunday (18 March) the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) is stressing the importance of STEM skills to ensure that Scotland is prepared to tackle the scale of environmental challenges facing humanity now and in the future.

SEPA is creating a world-class environment protection agency fit for the challenges of tomorrow, and as an organisation dependent on these skill sets, ensuring the future workforce is inspired and trained in these disciplines is essential.

Keen to make sure the wide-range of roles is understood, SEPA has been using social media to highlight just some of the over 400 scientists who work in different areas of the organisation. The intention is to help young people understand what options are open to them.

Recognising that we are over-using our planet's resources – SEPA is acutely aware that the only businesses, societies and nations which will thrive in the 21st Century are those which have developed ways to prosper within our environmental capacity. As environmental issues become more central to health, well-being and sustainable economic growth, environmental information will be more needed to make decisions that achieve all three objectives.

Each year, SEPA specialist teams take tens of thousands of samples from land, water and air and analyse these in the field and in our laboratories to help assess the quality of our environment and levels of compliance by licence holders.

SEPA's sampling figures for 2017 include:

- 27,475 samples collected by our National Monitoring Team, of which specialist sampling may involve mussel collection and identification of non-native species
- Field Chemistry collected 525 samples including particulate monitoring

around industrial sites.

- Marine Chemistry & Ecology collected 940 samples which could incorporate boat work and shore surveys of plants found at the coast
- Ecology collected 1650 samples, most of which will involve sampling of the river bed and identification of the animals from it

David Pirie, SEPA Executive Director – Evidence and Flooding, said:

It's an exciting time to be working in a scientific field, with huge global challenges that we need talented people to tackle. We need people who can help to build understanding of the world around us, and to seek out innovative solutions to move Scotland forward.

“Engaging young people helps them see the relevance of science and wider STEM subjects in their lives. Whether that's the day-to-day impacts or their future study and career opportunities. We're fortunate in SEPA to have a number of staff who are STEM Ambassadors through the STEMNET programme, giving young people the opportunity to meet people working in these key areas. It also lets our staff showcase the tangible links that STEM disciplines have to almost everything around us. Being able to see the relevance of STEM appears to be a key factor in young people's enjoyment of science lessons, particularly at secondary level, and it's certainly something we want to encourage.

“STEMNET is a great initiative and I am delighted to see so many SEPA staff members take up the role of ambassadors. We will continue to support this very important project and build on our capacity to deliver valuable scientific knowledge and expertise well into the future.

“Scientific evidence is essential to SEPA's work, and we need to ensure we have staff with the right skills. We have scientific staff working in a range of areas, including chemistry, ecology, flood risk, and hydrology. In addition there are staff with STEM backgrounds working across the organisation from data analysis, and policy to communications and senior management”.

Ivvet Modinou, Head of Engagement, British Science Association, said:

Everyone can get involved in science, and British Science Week is the perfect chance for people of all backgrounds, ages and interests to take part in ways that matter to them. Thousands of events happen across the country, but you can also participate from the comfort of your own home, with our fun-filled activity packs and initiatives such as The Plastic Tide – this year's citizen science partnership. We wish everyone a great Week and we hope it inspires a fascination and engagement with science for years to

come”.

Ends

[Form: Part RSR-B7: apply to keep radioactive material and accumulate and dispose of radioactive waste following its unintentional receipt](#)

Updated: We have updated application form and form guidance.

You must complete this form to apply to keep radioactive material and accumulate and dispose of radioactive waste following its unintentional receipt.

Refer to the guidance document for help with completing the form.

[News story: Nine beaches designated as bathing waters on the south coast](#)

Beach goers can take to the seas this summer at nine beaches newly designated as bathing waters on the south coast.

Eight beaches in Cornwall, including Booby’s Bay and South Fistral, and one in Bournemouth – Manor Steps received their designation today, bringing the total number of designated bathing waters across England to 423.

At designated bathing waters, the Environment Agency help protect the health of swimmers, surfers and other visitors, by testing the water for levels of bacteria and publishing the results online. Across England there are currently 270 bathing waters with “excellent” water quality.

Environment Minister Thérèse Coffey said:

This is great news for anyone who enjoys a trip to the seaside. Britain’s beaches are visited around 150 million times each year

and the water at these nine beaches, along with more than 400 bathing waters around England, will be tested by the Environment Agency to help protect the health of visitors.

I would encourage everyone to use the online 'Bathing Water Data Explorer' to check the water quality at designated bathing spots before heading out for a dip in the sea.

The eight beaches to be designated in Cornwall will take the number of designated beaches in the county to 89. The newly designated bathing waters in Cornwall are:

- South Fistral beach in Newquay
- Booby's Bay near Trevoze Head
- Mexico Towan, Upton Towan and Godrevy, all situated on a long stretch of dunes in St Ives Bay
- Northcott Mouth beach to the north of Bude
- Gwynver Beach which forms part Whitesand Bay
- Tregonhawke in Whitesand Bay

In Bournemouth, Manor Steps Beach, part of the 15 kilometre coastline of Poole Bay on the Dorset coast, has also been designated as a bathing water.

Beachgoers can find a list of designated bathing waters around the UK and their water quality ratings on the [Bathing Water Data Explorer](#).

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[Open consultation: Proposed catch limits for April 2018](#)

The Marine Management Organisation (MMO) sets monthly catch limits for quota species to ensure the UK stays within the overall limit set by the EU. These limits apply to all under 10 meter vessels and the over 10 meter vessels that are not in a co-operative (Producer Organisation).

Please contact the MMO if you have any comment to make about the suggested catch limits which will be put into force on 1 April 2018.

Comments to be received no later than 11pm on Sunday 25 March 2018.

Email FMTConsultations@marinemanagement.org.uk

Telephone 0208 0 269 097

The MMO will regularly consult industry on monthly or other catch limits and will, wherever possible, ensure that any representations are taken into

account when setting such limits. The MMO reserve the right to alter catch limits and / or close fisheries without prior notice or consultation in the event that such actions are necessary and expedient for the regulation of sea fishing.