

Scottish Environment Week

5th–11th February 2007



News Release

Looking after your environment is good for your Health: Scottish Environment Week 2007

The well-being of Scottish citizens will be the primary concern of participants in 2007's Scottish Environment week that starts today in the Scottish Parliament. Investing in Scotland's environment is good for your health – will be the message of the week.

Events running from Tuesday 6th – Thursday 8th at Holyrood will look at ways in which our environment affects our everyday lives. Seminars on flooding – with a presentation from a victim of recent storms in the Perth area; on health – considering how green spaces in urban as well as rural areas improves our mental and physical well-being; and education – with children from local schools talking about their experience of outdoor education.

Professor Tim Lang, Chair of the Review of the Scottish Diet Action Plan, recommends we take a 'whole life approach' to diet, health and sustainable development at the cross party food group on Wednesday afternoon. Fittingly, the mid-week reception that follows the group meeting will feature a mouth-watering menu made from local, organic produce. The First Minister will address the audience of representatives from the business community, environment NGOs and community organisations.

Quotes from our sponsors

David Green (Convener, Cairngorms National Park Authority), said: "We are delighted to be involved in the Scottish Environment Week. It is encouraging to see so many organisations from different sectors come together to share good practice on what is clearly a very important issue.

"The Cairngorms National Park is undoubtedly one of Scotland's most beautiful areas and we are committed to ensuring that it becomes even more special over time. There is already a lot of good work going on in the Park, but we all need to work together and take a considered and careful approach to ensure we really look after this wonderful area. Events such as this can only help that happen."

The Cairngorms National Park have a photo display on 'What's special about Cairngorms National Park' on the first floor lobby of the Parliament during the week.

Julie Procter (Chief Officer, greenspace scotland) said:

"We're delighted to be one of Scottish Environment Week's sponsors this year. We are partnering The Woodland's Trust Scotland and Paths to Health to present an event on the vital links between greenspace and Scotland's health and well-being. We know that a lack of quality greenspace can have a negative impact on mental and physical health and that unequal access to greenspace may be a contributory factor to inequalities in health and life expectancy. Everyone living and working in urban Scotland should have easy access to quality greenspace that meets local needs and improves their quality of life."

John Graham (Chief Executive, Historic Scotland) said:

"We are committed to protecting and enhancing our historic buildings and monuments so that they are available for future generations to appreciate and enjoy. We provide expert knowledge, financial support and skills training for this purpose. As the custodian of 345 historic properties and sites Historic Scotland plays a crucial role in promoting and supporting sustainable tourism and has an outstanding record in the Green Tourism Business Scheme awards. We are committed to showcasing Scotland's unique history as faithfully and sensitively as possible to ensure that future generations of Scots and tourists continue to enjoy exceptional quality and an authentic experience."

Bill Dalrymple (Chief Executive, Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park Authority) said, " The National Park Authority is pleased to be associated with the efforts of Scottish Environment LINK in helping bring to the fore the basic fact that the future social economic well-being of Scotland's population is intrinsically linked with how we care for our environment. Where better to set a high standard than in Scotland's National Parks."

Kenny Steele (Programme Manager, Paths to Health) said: "Paths to Health is making a real difference to the health of the most inactive people in our communities through the promotion of walking. However, as well as promotion, it is essential that people have access to an attractive environment if we are to make long term changes to physical activity levels and health. Scottish Environment Week provides an excellent showcase to demonstrate the close links between quality environment and public health improvement in Scotland."

Monica Straughan (Head of Communications, Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA)) said:

“When we published SEPA’s 2006 State of Scotland’s Environment report a few months ago it was very clear that Scotland has an environment of which it can be justly proud. The quality of life this provides is a precious asset for Scotland but this, our economy and our health and wellbeing all face the threat of climate change. This is real, impacting on Scotland now and could be devastating but we can take action to tackle it, and gain economic and social benefits into the bargain. Scottish Environment Week brings together so many people and organisations that care about the environment. Tackling problems like climate change can’t be done by any one organisation alone, so this week is crucial in stimulating concerted action.”

Ian Jardine (Chief Executive, Scottish Natural Heritage) said: "Scottish Environment LINK are doing an excellent job in raising awareness of the importance of the environment to the economy and social well-being of the people of Scotland. This is very much a focus of our work at SNH as the natural heritage has a key role to play. I congratulate LINK for bringing this important message to the Scottish Parliament."

Professor Jan Bebbington (Vice Chair (Scotland), Sustainable Development Commission) said: “Environment Week is a great way to get Scotland’s politicians and the general public involved in a debate on what a future Sustainable Scotland would look like. Scotland faces some real challenges ahead in how we tackle climate change while removing longstanding inequalities and growing our economy, but the debates taking place in Environment Week also show that there are common sense solutions and gilt-edge opportunities to be had from thinking and acting in a more sustainable way.”

“If Scotland’s to secure a sustainable future it will need politicians, consumers and business alike to deal with climate change as a matter of urgency,” says Triodos Bank’s Scottish Manager, David Cousland. “Scottish Environment Week provides a welcome opportunity to highlight what’s possible, and encourage politicians and consumers alike to make a positive difference.”

Editors’ Notes

(1) **Scottish Environment Week** runs from the 5th – 11th February, mainly in the Scottish Parliament. Go to: http://www.scotlink.org/LINK_action/environment_week.php

PRESS ARE WELCOME: to obtain a media pass contact the Scottish Parliament media office: Tel: 0131 348 5000

(2) The sponsors of Scottish Environment Week 2007 are:

Cairngorms National Park Authority
Greenspace Scotland
Historic Scotland
Loch Lomond & Trossachs National Park

www.cairngorms.co.uk
www.greenspacescotland.org.uk
www.historic-scotland.gov.uk
www.lochlomond-trossachs.org

Paths to Health

www.pathsforall.org.uk/pathstohealth

SEPA

www.sepa.org.uk

Scottish Natural Heritage

www.snh.org.uk

Sustainable Development Commission

www.sd-commission.org.uk/scotland.php

Triodos Bank

www.triodos.co.uk

(3) **Scottish Environment Week 2007 is organised by:**

Scottish Environment 

Scottish Environment LINK is the network for Scotland's voluntary sector environmental organisations. LINK has 36 member organisations spanning interests across the natural environment and associated cultural heritage and supported by around 500,000 people. Further information on LINK is available at www.scotlink.org

(4) **For more information** contact Scottish Environment LINK's parliamentary office: Jane Herbstritt email: jane@scotlink.org or Alex Hopkinson email: alex@scotlink.org Tel: 0131 225 4345