

**The Environmental Rights
Centre for Scotland (ERCS)**

Snapshot of Advice Service

The first 250 cases

In June 2021, ERCS launched Scotland's only free legal advice service in environmental and related planning law.

Our aim is to assist everyone, especially those who face the biggest barriers, to exercise their rights and hold public authorities and polluters to account on the environment.

This is a snapshot of the **first 250 enquiries** to our advice service.



Number of enquiries

We want to increase awareness and confidence in exercising environmental rights. We offer free advice to individuals, community groups and organisations on environmental and related planning law.



“ Through the advice provided, our knowledge and understanding of environmental law has increased, as has our confidence in using such knowledge in campaigns.”

Our advice service

You can contact us if you are seeking specific advice on an environmental issue or a general enquiry. For example, a worrying planning application or loss of greenspace in your neighbourhood. Or you might have a general question about environmental or related planning law, such as your rights to environmental information.

Enquiries by region



Having immediate access

to well structured information and advice helped to formulate how my issue could progress.”

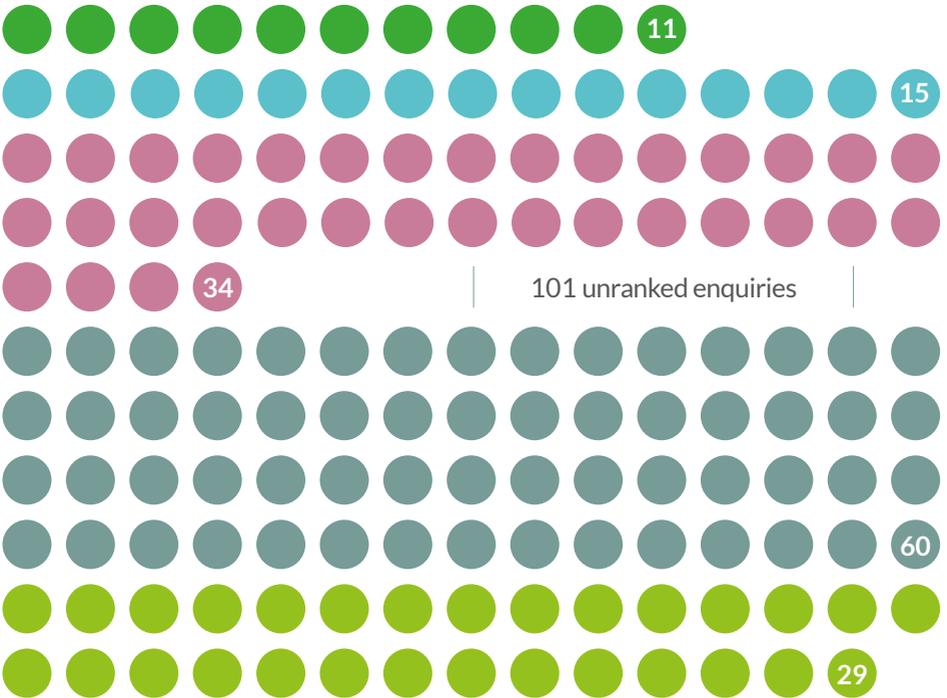


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No specific location

SIMD rank of enquiries

The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) is a relative measure of deprivation across 6,976 small areas. This was recorded for 149 of the 250 enquiries. It was not recorded for enquiries from organisations.



- 1-20% most deprived areas
- 21-40% most deprived areas
- 40-60% most deprived areas
- 21-40% least deprived areas
- 1-20% least deprived areas

“ In general we received extremely helpful advice from ERCS and it was good to get objective opinions. We had been working in isolation and having another POV was extremely useful.”

Breakdown of advice work

This is a breakdown of the advice work categorised by the broad environmental area(s) and then problem(s). Cases may cover more than one category.

Environmental area	Environmental problem	Total
Air	Air quality/pollution	20
Biodiversity	Invasive species/non-native species	3
	Protecting species and habitat	52
	Site of special and scientific interest	1
Climate change	Climate change planning	4
	GHG emissions	7
Land and soil	Contaminated land	10
	Greenspace/bluespace	38
	Soil health	4
Waste	Impact of waste	2
	Waste generation	1
	Waste management	6
Water	Aquaculture and fishing	3
	Drinking water quality	2
	Flooding and runoff	5
	Marine protected areas	-
	Protected freshwater	1
	Sewage/contamination/sanitation	5
	Water quality/pollution	14
Other	Built environment	71
	Cultural heritage	3
	Food insecurity	-
	General environmental standards and legislation	10
	Noise/vibration	8
	Safety and security	4
	Statutory nuisance	11
Procedural rights	Access to information	12
	Participation in decision-making	54
	Access to justice	9



ERCS was great! really informative and guided our plan of action. outcome was really successful, and we now know you guys are there for the future.”



The Environmental Rights Centre for Scotland (ERCS)

We support individuals and communities to use their rights to protect the environment, tackle climate change, and improve local biodiversity and greenspaces for health and wellbeing.

ERCS understands environmental law as including law relating to land-use planning, climate change, pollution control, environmental health, the conservation of biodiversity, and any other field (e.g. cultural heritage, transport and energy) to the extent that it impacts on the natural environment and/or the right to live in a healthy environment.

What can I do about an environmental problem?

Contact our Rights Officer to talk more at rights@ercs.scot
Contact our free legal advice service at www.ercs.scot/get-advice
Call our office on **0131 358 0038** or freephone on **0800 861 1738**