## Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Chief Executive</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The President</td>
<td>5 - 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Development</td>
<td>8 - 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualifications for Communities</td>
<td>10 - 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scottish Pollution Control Co-ordinating Committee</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Health and Housing Working Group</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Society of Chief Officers of Environmental Health in Scotland</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Standards Agency Scotland</td>
<td>16 - 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scottish Food Enforcement Liaison Committee</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Protection Scotland</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and Safety Executive</td>
<td>19 - 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASH Scotland</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief Medical Officer for Scotland</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scottish Parliament</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Federation of Environmental Health</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Malawi Environmental Health Association</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendices</td>
<td>31 - 38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Contributors</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Core Values and Vision</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About REHIS</td>
<td>41 - 42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This is the second year of the Institute’s new style annual review in which it celebrates Scotland’s environmental health partnerships – its partners external to the Institute and those within. The importance of positive partnership working, especially in environmental health, cannot be over-stressed. The Institute continues to work in partnership with the Scottish Parliament, the Scottish Government, the Food Standards Agency Scotland, Health Protection Scotland, the Health and Safety Executive, the Society of Chief Officers of Environmental Health in Scotland, ASH Scotland, the Environmental Health Officers’ Association (Ireland) and the International Federation of Environmental Health, and its commitment to developing the partnership with the Malawi Environmental Health Association also continues.

It is, however, with much regret that I must record that the Institute no longer enjoys the positive relationship it once had with the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health. The near unanimous support of this Institute’s members in formally voicing their regret over the CIEH’s decision to establish a CIEH Region in Scotland at the Institute’s Annual General Meeting in November must also be recorded, as must the Institute’s gratitude for the support of many Members of the Scottish Parliament over the same issue. The Institute is especially grateful to Stewart Maxwell MSP, Ken Macintosh MSP and Robin Harper MSP, all of whom are Honorary Vice-Presidents.

The Institute is an unusual organisation. It is governed by a Royal Charter and Bye-Laws, is a registered Scottish charity, is a membership-based society, is an organisation which governs the Environmental Health Profession, is an awarding body for a wide range of environmental health qualifications and is a national training organisation with Approved Training Centres across Scotland, the rest of the UK and further afield.

As a registered Scottish charity the Institute, through its Charity Trustees (all Members of the Institute’s Council are designated as Charity Trustees – Appendix 1), must act for the benefit of the public and continue to comply with the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, and guidance from the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator.

I take this opportunity to express my gratitude to the individuals from all the partner organisations who contributed to this report. The names of these individuals and of the organisations they represent are listed on page 39.

In closing, I record my thanks to all the Institute’s staff for their support throughout the year.

Tom Bell
2009 was a year of highlights and is a year I will not forget easily for several reasons. The undoubted highlight was being elected and serving as the Institute’s President; this was an honour and a privilege.

The year itself was an extremely busy one with many challenging issues being tackled by the Institute. Two of these issues are interconnected and remain unresolved. I refer of course to the concern over the future of the Environmental Health Profession which is being affected by the falling numbers of new entrants to the University of Strathclyde’s BSc (Hons) Environmental Health degree course and to the loss of local authority Environmental Health Officer posts: both issues are of concern for those who value the Profession’s role in improving and protecting public health. Ironically, one of my Presidential duties was to act as an external assessor at the University of Strathclyde BSc (Hons) final year student dissertation presentations. The standard and quality of presentations was very high and reinforces the need to ensure the continued existence of the course. The Scottish Government Short-Life Working Group set up in 2008, to consider these and other related issues has, worryingly, yet to finalise and report on the outcomes of its deliberations.

Positive support, however, from the Scottish Government to the Institute was displayed at two major events. The first was in March at Dundee College where Shona Robison, Minister for Public Health and Sport, attended the launch of the Institute’s Elementary Control of Infection Course which is being delivered through our national Approved Training Centre network. The launch of this course demonstrates the Institute’s commitment to expanding its approach to improving and protecting public health through education, training and qualifications in the wider community.

The Minister also attended and delivered the keynote address at our Annual Conference which took place in Ayr during May within the authority of South Ayrshire Council, my former employer. Again the Minister used this opportunity to reaffirm the potential of Environmental Health Professionals to influence and drive the public health agenda. The conference was well organised, well attended and enjoyed by all participants.

The other reason 2009 will be remembered is for the major financial downturn which affected all sectors and aspects of the country. The Institute is no more immune to this phenomenon than any other organisation; however, it is encouraging to note that at a time when areas of potential savings in businesses and organisations could include training provision, the number of courses delivered by REHIS Approved Training Centres remains stable and ensures that the environmental health message continues to be delivered to the nation.

A benefit of the financial downturn meant that the Institute was able to take advantage of lower property prices and move from leased premises to an outright purchase of permanent offices. As well as a prudent financial investment it is a further commitment to our position as the voice of Environmental Health in Scotland.

The only issue of real disappointment for me during my Presidential year was the breakdown in relations with the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH). Despite my personal intervention and despite this Institute making its views crystal clear, the CIEH Council went ahead with the establishment of a regional structure in Scotland. At a time when the energies and attentions of both organisations should have been concentrated on promoting environmental health, valuable resources were wasted. This Institute does not recognise the CIEH presence in Scotland and regrets the consequent breakdown in the hitherto amicable relationship. I take this opportunity to thank all our members and friends for their support and, in particular, I thank Stewart Maxwell MSP, one of our Honorary Vice-Presidents, for his active support in the Scottish Parliament over the action taken by the CIEH.

The position of President is essentially that of a custodian and in November I relinquished office to Rod House. Another long-standing Council member, John Beveridge, stood down after many years of sterling work. I am delighted that Robert Howe, a past President, has been appointed to the position of Director of Professional Development where his knowledge, experience and good humour will be of great benefit.

My Presidential year was superbly supported by Tom Bell, Chief Executive and all the office staff to whom I am indebted.

Colin Wallace
The Institute continues to support a variety of academic routes into the Environmental Health Profession through the BSc (Hons) in Environmental Health degree course at the University of Strathclyde, the MSc in Environmental Health degree course by tuition also at the University of Strathclyde, and the MSc by distance learning at the University of Derby. These routes complement each other and it allows any person who has wishes to become an Environmental Health Officer (EHO) to find an appropriate route to gain the required underpinning academic knowledge. All three courses are about to go through the Institute’s accreditation process and we will work with both institutions to ensure that the content of all three courses is relevant and up-to-date.

During the year the Institute further developed and improved ‘Learning by Experience’, its Scheme of Practical Training for Student and Graduate Trainee EHOs. The Scheme was amended to incorporate a written examination into the Professional Examination. The written examination will be undertaken ‘closed book’ and will be two hours in length. The written examination will be designed to test the student’s ability to identify and assess risk and determine appropriate interventions to manage the risk, taking into account the relevant technical and legal factors. The criteria in relation to candidates’ case studies has also changed. Candidates will have a wider choice and can submit a case study based on any one of the seven programme areas. If a candidate elects to submit a case study on an inspection, investigation or initiative not related to food safety, they will be required to answer the food safety written examination question. Conversely, if a candidate’s case study is based on food safety, he/she will not be permitted to answer the food safety written examination. These changes will affect students who register from 1 January 2010.

The Institute continued its work supporting the structured practical training of Student and Graduate Trainee EHOs across Scotland. This support took the form of visits to workplaces, arranging student seminars with key partners and holding the Professional Examination. In addition to this practical support, the Institute worked with a number of partners, namely the Food Standards Agency Scotland, Health Protection Scotland and the Society of Chief Officers of Environmental Health.
Health in Scotland to secure a number of additional Student and Graduate Trainee posts within local government. The Institute, through its General Reserve ‘good works’ Fund co-funded a Graduate Trainee EHO placement with West Lothian Council and is considering ways in which the Fund can be used to co-fund a small number of Student EHO placements with Scottish local authorities who joined the first year of the University of Strathclyde BSc (Hons) Environmental Health degree course at the start of the 2009/10 academic year.

During the year two Professional Examination diets were held in Edinburgh and 15 candidates were successful in gaining the REHIS Diploma in Environmental Health, the Scottish Environmental Health Officer qualification.

2009 was also a very busy year for post-qualification professional development. The Institute organised and ran the usual range of professional update courses and, in addition, the Southern and Northern Centre Committees ran a number of smaller, local events. These events provide opportunities for professionals to keep themselves up-to-date with the latest developments in the field of environmental health and share good working practices. Furthermore, for those members who are Environmental Health Officers, these Continuing Professional Development events are key to achieving Chartered status. 194 Environmental Health Officers achieved and maintained Chartered status in 2009 (Appendix B).

The Institute again made significant contributions to the development of the Regulators’ Development Needs Analysis Tool for Health and Safety, the National Occupational Standards for Health Protection and to the UK Public Health Register Standards for Specialist and Practitioner registration.

The Institute again endorsed the FSA Scotland’s low-cost training programme for local authority enforcement staff. A range of events covering HACCP, investigation skills, tactical interviewing, risk rating, approved establishments and social marketing were awarded maximum hour values consistent with the Institute’s Schemes of Continuing Professional Development for EHOs and non-EHOs.

Kevin Freeman resigned from the position of Director of Professional Development to take up the post of Regional Inspector with the Scottish Government’s recently formed Healthcare Environment Inspectorate and Robert Howe was appointed to the post at the end of the year and will take up his post in January. Ian McGruther continued, on a part-time basis, to assist the Director of Professional Development by undertaking workplace visits to Registered Student/Graduate Trainee EHOs across Scotland.

Qualifications for Communities

The Institute is Scotland’s awarding body for a wide range of courses and qualifications including food hygiene, food and health, HACCP, occupational health and safety, and infection control all of which are aimed at the general public as well as industry. The courses leading to these qualifications are presented by a network of over 700 REHIS Approved Training Centres throughout Scotland, from Shetland to Dumfries and in Germany, Malawi and the Middle East. A range of qualifications is also available as International Certificates which can be delivered abroad. A strict quality assurance system is in place in order to maintain a consistent standard of training across the network of Approved Training Centres. The Institute also organises specific subject update seminars for the training community and a wide range of resources is provided for our Approved Training Centres.

REHIS Introductory, Elementary, Intermediate and Advanced qualifications are equivalent to Level 1-4 Awards in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Elementary Food Hygiene examination papers and some of the training resources are available in foreign languages.

REHIS recognised the need for Elementary Food Hygiene training for school students some years ago and the Food Hygiene in Schools Initiative was launched to meet that need. Schools can be approved to deliver the Elementary Food Hygiene Course to students aged 13-18 inclusive, attending school full-time. The Food Standards Agency Scotland provided funding during 2009 for schools and a total of 192 secondary schools were registered to deliver the Elementary Food Hygiene Course, with a total of 11,103 pupils participating.

The new REHIS Elementary Control of Infection Course, aimed at combating Healthcare Associated Infections (HAIs) in non-NHS care establishments across Scotland, was launched by Shona Robison MSP, Minister for Public Health and Sport, at Dundee College on 16 March. The course, devised in partnership with a range of health professionals, partners and institute staff, will provide participants with the underpinning knowledge to enable them to develop the following core competencies: a knowledge of the hazards, a knowledge of the risks, an ability to assess risks, an understanding of how to break the chain of infection, an awareness of local and national policies, an awareness of their accountability and responsibility, and an understanding of how to comply with the law.
Until now the battle against superbugs such as MRSA ( meticillin-resistant staphylococcus aureus) and Clostridium difficile has been concentrated in hospitals and other healthcare settings. This new, one-day course will be offered to staff providing a care service in care homes for the elderly and for children and young people in early education and child care.

Where a standard REHIS qualification is not appropriate, the Institute works with a partner to develop a sector or organisation specific qualification which can be certified by the Institute. Two new joint awards were developed and launched in 2009; a two day Handling Conflict Constructively course in partnership with The Scottish Community Mediation Centre (SCMC) and a Bivalve Purification Operations course with the Seafish Industry Authority.

An update seminar for registered presenters/trainers was delivered in 2009. The event took place in Dundee College in October. Once again this proved to be very popular with over 120 delegates attending. Presentations on food safety and health and safety issues, including campylobacter, health and safety in the 21st century, mycotoxins, food pests, cleaning and disinfection and food safety legislation, were delivered by food and health and safety industry experts.

During 2009 the Institute developed an e-learning support pack for the REHIS Intermediate Food Hygiene Certificate. The pack was piloted by Seafish, the industry authority on seafood. The pilot was very successful with 14 seafood industry trainees in Shetland, Inverness, Fraserburgh, Hull, London, Devon and Cornwall taking part. The e-learning pack allows flexible and cost-effective training throughout the UK. This programme is ideal for participants at supervisor and management level and is now available through REHIS Approved Training Centres. Successful completion of the course leads to a nationally recognised certificate and the Institute’s network of centres ensures that the course and the final examination can be arranged at a convenient time and venue to suit the participant.

The 7th joint symposium run by the Scottish Food and Drink Federation (SFDF), the Institute of Food Science and Technology (IFST) and the Institute was presented this year. The event attracted representatives from all parts of Scotland’s food and drink industry, government and its agencies and the enforcement community. The event was well received by the delegates at the Apex Hotel in Dundee. Speakers from the Food Standards Agency, industry advisory agencies, Scottish food researchers and academic bodies all featured on the programme which was also interspersed with inspiring case studies featuring small and large Scottish food manufacturers.

REHIS is grateful once again to Highfield.co.uk Limited for sponsoring the annual training awards for the course participants achieving the highest marks in a range of REHIS examinations. The awards were presented by the President of the Institute, Colin Wallace and Jayne Sprenger, Highfield’s Customer Services Director at the Annual Awards Ceremony, held in Edinburgh in November.

The Institute now has 14 standard qualifications available for delivery by Approved Training Centres. During 2009 a total of 47,623 certificates were issued for these qualifications.
Sustainability

REHIS continues to actively participate in the Healthy Environment Network and to scan the Government’s Strategic Objectives for new opportunities to enhance Scotland’s health. The network has challenged the Environmental Health Profession and its partners to adapt services to consider, in particular, the needs of the most vulnerable receptors in our society by asking:

How can we better serve children’s health, development and safety at present, and what can we do to champion those matters, be they road safety, routes to school, better places for play and experiencing healthy behaviour, that support and encourage healthy life choices as those children progress into adulthood?

Scottish Pollution Control Co-ordinating Committee

The remit of the Working Group is to discuss matters pertaining to pollution control; noise control, air quality and contaminated land and to advise the Institute on these matters.

In 2009 the committee met on three occasions in Glasgow, in January, March and December. In addition to local authority officers from all spheres of pollution control we are fortunate to have representatives from SEPA, the Scottish Government, Environmental Protection UK and Health Protection Scotland. The input from these officers is much appreciated by all. The Society of Chief Officers is also invited to send a representative. The local authority representatives attend on behalf of the Local Pollution Liaison Groups and the Secretaries of these groups ensure feedback to their members.

In 2009 the group spent a considerable amount of time discussing contaminated land matters, an area of work that is expanding. This is reflected in the attendance at meetings of Helen Barron and Nicola Paton to discuss ongoing training matters, and whilst not required to attend every meeting they keep in touch via the circulation of the minutes.

The core discussion of each meeting is the feedback from the four Local Pollution Liaison Groups, with a separate feedback from the Contaminated Land Sub-Groups of the aforementioned LPLGs along with an update from Environmental Protection UK. This sets the scene for the remainder of the meeting when the representatives of Scottish Government give their updates on Air Quality, Biomass, Noise, Antisocial Behaviour Act, Domestic Wind Turbines, Odourhub, Nuisance Provisions and Contaminated Land. On occasions a presentation relating to a specific matter on pollution will be included, an example mentioned earlier relating to training in Contaminated Land.

The time given by all those attending is much appreciated by the Institute and ensured that all avenues for discussion are fully investigated.

Biomass, Noise, Antisocial Behaviour Act, Domestic Wind Turbines, Odourhub, Nuisance Provisions and Contaminated Land. On occasions a presentation relating to a specific matter on pollution will be included, an example mentioned earlier relating to training in Contaminated Land.

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Public Health and Housing Working Group

The Public Health and Housing Working Group (PHHWG) continues to provide a valuable discussion forum for Environmental Health representatives from each local authority. In 2009 the membership of delegates was expanded to include representation from Health Protection Scotland and key civil servants within the Scottish Government with expertise in topics covered by the group Members of the group assisted in writing the guidance for Part 5 of the Public Health etc (Scotland) Act 2008. Other topics considered in 2009 included the new statutory nuisance provisions, the development of schemes of assistance for the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006, and standardisation of conditions relating to animal boarding. Guest speakers are now invited to each meeting to provide information and generate discussion on relevant topics. The group continues to assist the profession in ensuring consistency in enforcement practices and sharing good practice.

The Society of Chief Officers of Environmental Health in Scotland

Chief Officers from all 32 of Scotland’s local authorities are members of the Society and are able to meet together on a regular basis to discuss subjects of interest and to share good practice.

There is an Executive Council which meets approximately six times per year.

Partner organisations are also invited to attend meetings and there are generally representatives from the Food Standards Agency Scotland, Health and Safety Executive, Health Protection Scotland, Convention of Scottish Local Authorities, Scottish Environment Protection Agency and the Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland.

An Annual Congress is held each year, usually in March, with other general meetings held at other times hosted by member Councils around Scotland and, occasionally, partner organisations.

The Society plays an important role in liaising with important decision-makers, having very strong links to Government Departments and with bodies within Scotland as well as throughout the UK. The Society is able to represent the collective view of Chief Officers in consultations to Government at various levels, whether in written submission or by ongoing dialogue with officials.

Details of the Society’s activities may be found at http://www.scoeh.com.
Food Standards Agency Scotland

The Public Inquiry into the September 2005 Outbreak of E.coli O157

In March, the report on the Public Inquiry into the September 2005 outbreak of E.coli O157 in South Wales was published. The Agency’s response to the report was to establish the Food Hygiene Delivery Programme to spearhead the FSA work in this area. The Programme will run until 2014 to reflect Recommendation 21 of the Inquiry Report, that there should be a substantial review of hygiene enforcement after approximately five years.

The overall purpose of the Programme is to minimise the level of foodborne disease through:

- Improved awareness and control of food safety hazards by food businesses, food law enforcers and consumers; and
- Reliable assurance that compliance with legal standards is maintained, using timely, effective and proportionate enforcement where necessary.

A key point to highlight is that, though the Inquiry focussed on E.coli O157 in meat in Wales, the Food Hygiene Delivery Programme covers all foodborne pathogens and all food groups across the UK and delivery through local authorities, the Meat Hygiene Service and the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development in Northern Ireland. This is because food safety management systems, guidance, training, audit and enforcement are generic tools for managing food safety risks.

The Agency wrote to Scottish local authorities in July, requesting details of what action local authorities had undertaken in response to the report. We received a 100% response to this request. This was followed up by an enforcement workshop in November, where issues of concern were discussed and grouped across four main themes:

- Enforcement Officer Competence and Training
- Food Business Operator Audit Process
- Enforcement Guidance and Gap Analysis
- Current Enforcement Powers.

The output of this workshop was very comprehensive, so the Agency and the Scottish Food Enforcement Liaison Committee has requested Food Liaison Groups to review this and list their three top priorities for each of five main threads:

- Policy and Guidance;
- Training;
- Resources;
- Communication; and
- Procurator Fiscal Service/Formal Enforcement Action.

These priorities will be discussed at the SFELC meeting in February 2010. This will result in the Agency having a clear picture of the areas where attention requires to be focussed to ensure effective enforcement of food law. This will inform future decision-making within the Agency and will become a SFELC workstream.

Left: photograph provided by the Department of Microbiology, University of Aberdeen
In October, the Agency supported REHIS in the organisation of the Food Update course which was heavily over-subscribed. The primary topic for the day was E.coli O157. Notable speakers included:

Sharon Mills - the mother of Mason Jones who tragically died as a result of the South Wales E.coli O157 outbreak - she provided an extremely powerful and moving account of the personal tragedy of a child dying from food poisoning; and Professor Hugh Pennington, who expanded on some of his thoughts in relation to the inquiry.

The combination of speakers representing the Agency, the enforcement community and Health Protection Scotland, resulted in a very successful day which has helped drive forward work in Scotland to ensure that the lessons from the inquiry are learnt by all. Presentations on eggs and allergens reminded attendees that we must continue to be vigilant in other areas while striving to deal with the risks of cross-contamination.

Food Hygiene Information Scheme

Following the Board’s decision on ‘Scores on the Doors’ in December 2008 six local authorities have already implemented the Food Hygiene Information Scheme and a further 19 local authorities have indicated that they intend to implement the Scheme within the following three years. A UK-wide Stakeholder Steering Group has been established to provide advice and guidance on the development, implementation and operation of the six-tier scheme for England, Wales and Northern Ireland and the two-tier scheme in Scotland, with a view to shared learning and commonality of approach as far as possible. This group has agreed guidance for common areas such as scope and appeals. In Scotland an Implementation Group advises on the project and a working group has been set up to provide practical support to the authorities working on implementing the Scheme. In addition a Link Workers’ network with a representative from each Scottish local authority has been set up and met for the first time on 8 September 2009 to discuss the Scheme and share experiences. In summary, implementation of the Food Hygiene Information Scheme across Scotland is underway and progressing well.

Eatsafe

During 2009, the Scheme has continued to grow and we have passed the milestone of the 600th award. During 2010, the scope of the Scheme will be expanded to include all establishments covered by the Food Hygiene Information Scheme (ie, all establishments supplying food directly to consumers).

Code of Practice

The revision of the Code of Practice was published on 20 March 2009. This revision introduced the concept of an intervention based approach to official controls, returned approved establishments into the risk rated inspection scheme and streamlined primary production feed and food enforcement.

Elementary Food Hygiene in Schools

During 2009, the Agency has continued to provide funding to allow home economics teachers to deliver REHIS Elementary Food Hygiene courses in secondary schools. During the year, 192 schools received funding and a total of 11,103 pupils will have been trained. Further information on the Food Standards Agency can be found at www.food.gov.uk.

Scottish Food Enforcement Liaison Committee

The Scottish Food Enforcement Liaison Committee (SFELC) is a group that co-ordinates the food law enforcement and sampling and surveillance activities of Scottish local authorities, and comprises representatives of central and local government, consumers and industry. The committee provides a forum for the discussion of topics relevant to any current problems and may initiate surveys or projects or co-ordinate specific investigations initiated by the local Food Liaison Groups that have been set up in four geographical areas. Food Liaison Groups consist of representatives from Scottish local authorities and are concerned with consistency of food law enforcement activities in their area. During the year SFELC dealt with a wide range of issues including qualifications required by public analysts, national food policy, better regulation, ‘Scores on the Doors’, Pennington Report Wales Update, local authority audit and resources for food sampling. George Fairgrieve, a Chartered Environmental Health Officer and REHIS Fellow, is the SFELC Chairman.

Health Protection Scotland

During 2009 Health Protection Scotland (HPS) welcomed the opportunity to work closely with REHIS over a range of issues. HPS continued to contribute to the Scottish Government Short-Life Working Group on the Future of the Environmental Health Profession and, while at the time of writing this contribution the final report is still awaited. HPS looks forward to an outcome which facilitates a stronger, more skilled Environmental Health Profession which can positively contribute to the public health and health protection agendas across Scotland.

In relation to Student Environmental Health Officer support, HPS continues to organise an annual training day for students working towards their Professional Examination. This year the format was altered to include scenario based training which was very well received by the participants and will therefore be repeated in 2010. HPS was pleased to continue to partner REHIS in supporting and sponsoring student placements in partner local authorities and also for the first time sponsored the best student award for the Public Health Programme in the Professional Examination.

HPS concluded its support in developing guidance to accompany the Public Health etc (Scotland) Act 2008 and this is now published on the Scottish Government website at:

http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Health/NHS-Scotland/publicact
In relation to education and professional development HPS has provided a number of speakers at update training events and seminars organised by REHIS including the Annual Conference. HPS welcomes these opportunities as it allows for improvement in networks with partner agencies and the opportunity to promote the benefits of working in partnership. 

HPS values its partnership with REHIS and looks forward to continuing to progress in 2010. Further information on Health Protection Scotland can be found at www.hps.scot.nhs.uk.

Health and Safety Executive

The partnership between the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and local authorities as co-regulators of health and safety has continued to develop throughout Scotland over the past twelve months, aided by the explicit recognition in the new HSE Strategy of the significant role in health and safety improvement local authorities make.

Additions to the local HSE team include Norma Naisnith as partnership officer who has been seconded from Falkirk to A H1N1v pandemic. However we quickly reorganised our activities, re-prioritised in certain areas, and continued to provide a wide range of operational support to stakeholders in addition to that relating to A H1N1v.

Through our Operational Support function HPS continues to support local NHS Boards and local authorities over a wide range of issues and during 2009 we have offered expert advice on water quality, air quality, contaminated land and public health nuisance. Enquires relating to the water quality of domestic supplies from both public and private sources continue to be received and related to both microbiological and chemical contaminants.

Due to high level of interest in E.coli O157 and VTEC following the Pennington Report on the Outbreak in Wales, HPS in partnership with Scottish Government agreed to establish a VTEC Action Group which is due to meet in early 2010. The purpose of this Group will be to reduce public health risk associated with E.coli O157 and VTEC by reviewing and revising extant guidance on Animal Petting and Open Farms and the Public Health Management of VTEC.

HPS continues to play a key part in the work of the Health Protection Network and while this work was, for a period, suspended due to the impact of a H1N1v the following Guidance was published and can be found on the HPS website http://www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/about/HPN.aspx.

However despite this impact the Network did publish guidance on Prevention and Control of Clostridium difficile Infection (CDI) in Healthcare Settings in Scotland and Clinical diagnosis and management of tuberculosis, and measures for its prevention and control in Scotland. Further projects are now progressing and substantive guidance is due for publication in 2010.

The national priority topics have been identified by HSE, informed by advice and experience of local authority inspectors, as activities that are more likely to lead to injury and ill-health, and hence as topics most likely to result in real improvements in working conditions. Requests to specialist inspectors continued throughout the year and include assistance on accident investigations by electrical and mechanical specialist inspectors, advice from ergonomic specialists and occupational hygienists and entertainment industry inspectors.

Local authorities have additionally contributed to a number of national campaigns: on the asbestos campaign - local authorities have promoted this campaign through visits to building suppliers asking them to distribute campaign leaflets to tradesmen visiting their premises. Officers have also been involved in delivering presentations at local colleges to students who are studying to qualify as joiners, plumbers or electricians.

Significant contributions were also made to the ladders campaign, slips campaign and the dermatitis in catering campaigns.

The partnership team has increased its overall training investment to local authority inspectors this year. HSE provided training on forklift truck safety and workplace transport. Two events were held, one in Glasgow and the other in Aberdeen. HSE’s principal electrical specialist delivered four electrical safety events at venues across Scotland. Other training events included an LPG safety event in response to the Lord Gill report recommendations, a safety in residential care homes event, and a legal update event. The newly-formed health and safety division of the Crown Office Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS) provided input to the legal event.

The team has also supported training events organised by the regional groups. Over 500 training places have been provided this year for enforcement officers.

This year saw the launch of two online training tools, Regulatory Development Needs Assessment (RDNA) tool and the Guidance for Regulators Information Point (GRIP). RDNA is a core regulatory framework of skills and health and safety knowledge set up as a web-based development needs analysis tool. This can be used by staff and managers to identify personal development needs against a competency benchmark.

This is supported by the Guidance for Regulators Information Point (GRIP). GRIP holds an information library of all HSE operational guidance and publications. The RDNA system will be adopted by all local authorities by end of December 2009 and will help to decide on training needs for the future.

Finally, all authorities have been getting to grips with the new Section 18 standard and have been assessing their service against the various criteria set out there. The northern authorities led the way and are piloting a group-wide exercise through to the peer review exercise scheduled for late January, with HSE acting as moderator to ensure consistency of approach. Thereafter, an action plan will be implemented where necessary, hopefully leading to full compliance.

Overall, HSE and local authorities continue to work more closely than ever before and in the forthcoming year this will continue with the possibility of transfer of premises and joint warranting leading to more efficient targeting of resources to those areas where risks are greatest and benefits to the local communities most likely. Further information on the Health and Safety Executive can be found at http://www.hse.gov.uk.
ASH Scotland

I am delighted that ASH Scotland and REHIS have strengthened our joint working over the past year, most recently with the inauguration of the Crofton Award. ASH Scotland is proud to be in partnership with REHIS in this award which recognises the achievement of young people in reducing tobacco and smoking-related harm in Scotland and is named after Professor Sir John and Dr Eileen Crofton, both pioneers in tobacco control.

The quality of applications was high and the first awards were given in November, shortly after the sad death of Sir John Crofton.

The winner of the first Crofton Award was W-WEST, receiving a prize of £1,000 to contribute to their plan to host a youth music festival to raise awareness about smoking amongst primary aged children.

Both projects were awarded a prize for using a variety of innovative activities and making a positive contribution to the local communities where they are based. It is important that the enthusiasm, commitment, knowledge and hard work of young people in combating smoking is recognised and REHIS is to be congratulated for sponsoring this award and including it in their annual ceremony.

In recent years, we have seen a cultural change in the way young people view smoking. They are becoming more actively engaged in tobacco control issues and youth advocacy. Youth prevention is still very much the focus of new work in tobacco control. It is a developing area, and one which ASH Scotland would like to see more involvement in. The tobacco bill which was passed by the Scottish Parliament in January introduces a number of measures to prevent young people smoking including an end to promotional displays of tobacco in retail outlets by 2013.

The Scottish Coalition on Tobacco, of which REHIS is a member, campaigned hard for this Bill; providing evidence to the Health and Sport Committee, writing to MSPs and the media in support of the Bill, and outlining areas where we believed the Bill could be strengthened.

I am delighted that REHIS continues to be a strong partner in highlighting the damage that smoking causes in our society and the importance of prevention for our future generations. Without tobacco, our young people have a bright future. Further information on ASH Scotland can be found at http://www.ashscotland.org.uk.

The Chief Medical Officer for Scotland

During 2009, Scottish Government continued to attach the highest priority to the role of the physical environment in health and well-being. The launch, in December 2008, of Good Places, Better Health, is a very tangible illustration of the Scottish Government’s commitment to exploit to the full, policy and action on environment and place for better, more equal health and well-being for all Scotland’s people.

The initiative takes, as its initial priority, the environmental influences on the health of children from pre-birth to eight years of age and considers also the influence of environmental exposures at that stage of life on the health of individuals throughout their entire life course. Focussing on four child health outcomes - asthma, obesity, unintentional injury and mental health and well-being, Good Places, Better Health seeks to frame these problems using an entirely new approach which takes account, not only of relevant environmental hazards, but also the potential to create positive environments which are safe but also nurturing of health and well-being. By paying unprecedented attention to the interaction of environmental exposures with social, behavioural and other influences, the initiative takes on direct relevance to inequalities in health. Indeed there is overt linkage between Good Places, Better Health and the Scottish Government’s key initiative on health inequalities, Equally Well, which was launched simultaneously.

In addition to an innovative and holistic approach to problem framing in environment and health, Good Places, Better Health heralds a more strategic and systems based approach to the assembly of evidence, its evaluation and the linkage of the evidence to policy in the area of environmental health. During 2009, progress has been made in developing the intelligence streams and creating the structures consistent with a move toward a more evidence informed approach to policy.

Recognising the interconnectivity of many of the key agendas of government and the need to deliver crosscutting working at every level, the Good Places, Better Health team are already engaged in fruitful discussions across government. These are highlighting the convergence of the environmental health agendas with other policy aspirations of government, not least sustainable development and the mitigation and adaptation of climate change.

Looking beyond Scotland, there has been an interesting European discourse on environment and human health. Perhaps the most striking feature of this has been the way that the environmental contribution to human health has moved up the agenda in Europe to become a focus of attention for both the European Union and World Health Organisation. The WHO in particular has reflected, and to a significant degree, shaped this discourse through a series of Ministerial Conferences on environment and health. Their 2004 Ministerial Conference in Budapest launched the Children’s Environmental Health Action Plan with four Regional Priority Goals. This has been a catalyst for policy-makers and a driver for a greater UK collaboration on how best to deliver better environmental health. The next in the series of Ministerial Conferences seems set to retain the child focus and the need for better evidence and linkage of evidence to policy but will link these considerations more closely still with the themes of social inequity and climate change.
Scottish Parliament

As previously stated in this report (‘The Chief Executive’ and ‘The President’) the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health, which represents environmental health interests in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, decided to establish a Scottish region in what appears to be an attempt to usurp this Institute’s role which is enshrined in its Royal Charter.

West of Scotland MSP, Stewart Maxwell, a long-standing supporter of the Institute and the important role it plays in the protection and improvement of public health in Scotland, succeeded in obtaining Government backing for the Institute in an oral question to Shona Robison MSP, the Minister for Public Health and Sport, during Question Time at Holyrood on Thursday 26 November 2009.

In answer to a question posed by Stewart Maxwell, the Minister, while not wishing to speculate on the CIEH’s motivation, replied ‘...the Scottish Government works closely with the Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland as the acknowledged representative body for environmental health in Scotland on the delivery of important environmental health policies and parliamentary consultations. I do not expect that position to change.’

In an interview following Question Time, Stewart Maxwell, an Honorary Vice-President of the Institute, stated that ‘...REHIS meets the needs of environmental health issues which arise in Scotland and provides all the education and training required for Environmental Health Officers working in Scotland. There is no need for an organisation from another legal jurisdiction to move into Scotland and I am glad that the Minister came out so strongly in support of REHIS.’

The Institute is grateful to the Minister for her support over this issue and to MSPs Stewart Maxwell, Ken Macintosh and Robin Harper (all Honorary Vice-Presidents of the Institute) for their support of the work of the Institute.

The Scottish Parliament’s Cross-Party Groups (CPGs) provide an opportunity for Members of all parties, outside organisations and members of the public to meet and discuss a shared interest in a particular cause or subject www.Scottish Parliament.uk/msp/crosspartygroups. REHIS takes an interest in a wide range of Cross-Party Groups and is actively involved in Cross-Party Groups on Tobacco Control, Cancer and Food.
International Federation of Environmental Health

During 2009 the Institute continued to be heavily involved in the work of the International Federation of Environmental Health (IFEH). Bernard Forteath, a Past President of the Institute, continues as President of the Federation. His term of office runs until the 11th World Congress on Environmental Health which is due to be held in Vancouver, Canada in September 2010.

The Federation is an organisation whose full members, like REHIS, are national associations representing the interests of environmental health professionals throughout the world.

The Federation works to disseminate knowledge concerning environmental health and to promote co-operation between countries where environmental health issues are transboundary. It promotes the interchange of people working in this sector and the exchange of Members’ publications of a scientific and technical nature.

Amongst other things, the Federation seeks to provide means of exchanging information and experience on environmental health, to hold Congresses and meetings to discuss subjects relevant to environmental health science and administration, to represent the interests of environmental health to state agencies, national governments and international organisations and to promote field studies of environmental health control.
During the year the Federation issued a quarterly web-based newsletter, aimed at keeping members up-to-date with what is happening within individual member organisations. Environment and Health International, the Federation’s twice yearly magazine, continues to be published in paper form and also on the Federation’s website www.ifeh.org, although this will change to web only during 2010. Two new membership categories were approved at the Federation’s Council Meeting and AGM held in Singapore during July 2009. The first category is open to individuals working in environment and health professions worldwide and the second is reserved for private companies who share the same aims and objectives as the Federation. Also at these meetings two new member organisations, representing colleagues who work in Portugal and Indonesia, were admitted into membership. There are now 39 countries in full membership of the Federation.

REHIS also plays an active role in one of the Regional Groups of the Federation, the European Federation of Environmental Health (EFEH), which continues under the chairmanship of the Malta Association of Environmental Health Officers. The European Federation is one of five groups, the others being Africa, Americas, Asia Pacific and Middle East, who meet and exchange information on environmental health on a regular basis. Although the system has been devised to take account of geographical location, some work, such as co-operation on Sustainability Indicators and climate change, takes place with other Regional Groups and stakeholders. The existing members of the EFEH come mainly from countries in membership of the European Community.

REHIS representatives to the Federation during the year were John Bevendge, Bernard Forteath and Colin Wallace. For further information on the work of the Federation please visit http://www.ifeh.org.
Young Samanyika, the Malawian Environmental Health Officer who visited Scotland in April 2007 as a guest of REHIS, returned in September this year for a twelve week visit as recipient of a Commonwealth Universities’ Professional Fellowship funded by the British Council. The aims outlined in Young’s application were to gain knowledge and skills on: the running of a professional environmental health body, the delivery of CPD courses for EHOs, and the development and delivery of short courses for Malawi’s developing commercial sector. During his stay, hosted by REHIS and again with invaluable support from Dr Tony Grimason of the University of Strathclyde, followed an itinerary which included visits to South Lanarkshire Council, Glasgow City Council, SEPA HQ in East Kilbride, the Food Standards Agency Scotland in Aberdeen and Health Protection Scotland in Glasgow. Young also had frequent discussions with elected members and staff of REHIS, attended meetings of the Examinations and Professional Standards Committee and the Council, was a delegate at the Health and Safety Update course in Edinburgh, was an observer at the Annual General Meeting, a speaker at the Environmental Health Update event and a guest at the Annual Awards Ceremony.

Young was an excellent ambassador for Malawi and made many friends during his stay. Before leaving Scotland on 8 December Young asked me to pass on his thanks to everyone who assisted him and said that the people of Scotland were the friendliest and most helpful he had encountered outside Malawi.

On behalf of the Institute I would like to thank everyone who made Young’s visit so valuable to him and to the development of the Malawi Environmental Health Association and the Environmental Health Service in Malawi.

Editor’s note: 2009 was an important year for environmental health in Malawi. In addition to Young Samanyika being awarded the Commonwealth Universities’ Professional Fellowship, which funded his most recent visit to Scotland, the Malawi Environmental Health Association was revitalised and re-registered. Young was elected as the Association’s President. Another Malawian EHO friend of the Institute and who has also visited Scotland in recent years, Paul Chunga, was elected to the position of Treasurer.

Left: Photograph by Dr Russell Clare, courtesy of Tropix.co.uk
Appendix 1

Members of the REHIS Council 2008/2009

President: Colin Wallace
Senior Vice-President: Rod House
Junior Vice-President: Alistair Thomson
Past President: Robert Howe
Centre Chair (Northern): Karen Foote
Centre Secretary (Northern): Bob Drummond
Centre Chair (Southern): Martin MacNiven
Centre Secretary (Southern): Andrew McPherson

EHO (SOUTH):
John Beveridge
Martin Keeley
Robert Steenson
Paul Bradley
Keith McNamara
John Sleith
Andrew Jamieson
Alan Morrison
Evonne Tennant

Total of 27 places, held by 26 members.

EHO (NORTH):
Graham Robertson
Martin Henry
Bob Drummond
Sarah MacLeod-Bonar
Raymond Hubbocks
Christine Morrison
Wendy Barrie
Sandy Fraser

Appendix 2

Institute staff

Chief Executive: Tom Bell
Director of Training: Graham Walker
Director of Professional Development: Robert Howe
Training Advisers: Ian McGruther
Dr Jane Bunting

Appendix 3

Fellows of the Institute

Kofi Aidoo
Tom Bell
John M Beveridge
Paul Bradley
David J Cameron
Elizabeth S Corbett
John F Crawford
George M Duffus
George Fairgrieve
Robert P Findlay
Bernard J Forteath
Christine Fraser
Michael Jackson
Brian Kelly
Angus Lowden
Eoin M MacLure
George McCracken
Keith McNamara
George P Morris
Gilbert Robertson
John Sleith
Kenneth Stewart
John R Stirling
John P Summers

Appendix 4

Honorary Members of the Institute

James Fallens
Robert P Findlay
Bernard J Forteath
Eoin M MacLure

Appendix 5

Honorary Vice-Presidents of the Institute

George Georgallas
Stewart Maxwell MSP
Robin Harper MSP
Ann Marie Part
Kenneth Macintosh MSP
Appendix 6

Recipients of the Award for Meritorious Endeavours in Environmental Health

This award was introduced in 2006 to recognise the efforts/achievements of individuals and their contributions in the context of environmental health. Recipients:

2006  Stewart Maxwell MSP
2007  Ken Macintosh MSP
2008  Dr Harry Burns, Chief Medical Officer Scotland
2009  Dr Tracy Morse

Appendix 7

Annual Awards Ceremony 2009

Awards of Honorary Membership of the Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland

Dr Anthony Grimason

Awards of Fellowship of the Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland

George Fairgrieve
Christine Fraser
George McCracken

Award for Meritorious Endeavours in Environmental Health

Dr Tracy Morse

REHIS Diploma in Environmental Health

Linda Conroy
Ailsa Findlayson
Gemima Harper
Alana MacDonald
Lynne MacGregor
Rachel McGrath
Christine Morrison
Morgan Sales

REHIS Award for the Best MSc Student at the University of Strathclyde

Linda Kain

SFSOROB Ordinary Certificate in Food Premises Inspection

Karen Moverley

SFSOROB Higher Certificate in Food Premises Inspection

Helen Crossley

SFSOROB Higher Certificate in Food Standards Inspection

Brian Alexander
Alison Lothian

Alistair Orr Award for the Best Final Year Student at the University of Strathclyde

Stuart Currie

John Merrylees Award for the Best Final Year Project at the University of Strathclyde

Stuart Currie and Andrew Hill Joint Winners

John Merrylees Award for the Best MSc Student at the University of Strathclyde

A M M Connell Award for the Best EHO Student at the REHIS Professional Examinations

Alana MacDonald
Iain McDonald Award for the Best EHO Student in the Occupational Health and Safety Programme Area at the REHIS Professional Examinations
Christine Morrison

FSA Scotland Award for the Best Candidate in the Food Safety Programme Area at the REHIS Professional Examinations
Alana MacDonald

Health Protection Scotland Award for the Best Environmental Health Officer Student in the Public Health Programme Area at the REHIS Professional Examinations
Alana MacDonald and Moira Malcolm Joint Winners

REHIS Journalism Award
David Graham

Highfield Award for Advanced Health and Safety
John Govan Winner

Highfield Award for Intermediate Health and Safety
Toby Bond Winner
Jim McIlravey Joint Runner up
Christine Paterson Joint Runner up

Highfield Award for Intermediate HACCP Practices Certificate
William Fraser Winner

The Crofton Award
WWEST Winner
‘Why Waste Everything Smoking Tobacco’
LANDED Peer Education Service Runner up
Appendix 8

Chartered Environmental Health Officers

The following Environmental Health Officer members have been designated as Chartered Environmental Health Officers:

Brian Auld
Helen Barron
Josephine A Bell
Lyne M Bissett
Kevin Boyle
Aileen A Brodie
Jervis Browne
Valerie Cameron
Andrew Charnick
Maria Corrigan
Lynne M Bissett
Philip Bloomer
Margaret Blyth
Kevin Boyle
Linda Bradley
Anna M Brown
Kathryn Cairns
Anthony R B Carson
Angus J Clark
Catriona Cowan
Lyn Crothers
John R Dawson
Alastair Dewart
Ian Doctor
Nicola J Donegan
David Duffy
Peter A Ewen
Karen Foote
Peter Fowler
Steven Glass
Martin R Hall
Gerald Hannah
Anne Higgins
Julia Howie
Andy Hurst
Alexander Innes
Ken Jones
Martin D Keeley
John W Laird
Kenneth A Lang
Gordon Lauder
Andrew R Law
John M Lee
John Love
Donald Mackay
Noreen MaPhail
Lisa McCann
George McCracken
Ian D McGruther
Rachel Mclnnes
Martin McNab
Margaret Moir
Richard Mowat
George M Niblock
Jill E O’Brien
Allan Parry
Gordon A Pollock
Christopher Ratter
Lorna J Red
Graham Robertson
Ruth M Robertson
James B Sharp
Karen A Silverwright
Lynn S Slight
Eleanor Smyth
Roy F Stewart
Marion T Summers
Nigel A Taylor
Alastair J Thomson
Lorna R Twynam-Perkins
Christine M Walker
Mark Walsh
Denis F Watney
Stephen A Williamson
Christina Yildirim
Andrew R Law
Lesley Lees
Gregor MacCormick
Iain G MacLeod
Veronica Maley
Lyn McConnachie
Fiona McFarlane
Emma McGuinness
Jim McIntyre
Lynsey McNair
Crawford Morgan
Matthew Murdoch
Colin M Nicoll
Derek A Oliver
Nicola A Paton
W Graham Pollock
Michelle H Reid
Leigh B Richardson
Ian S Robertson
June E Ross
Alasdair N Sharp
Zoe Skinner
Matthew Smith
Craig Somers
Janet M Stitt
Allan R Tai
Evonne M Tennant
James A Thomson
Nicholas O Vines
Rowenna M Wallace
Gordon Wands
James S White
Carole-Ann Wright
Andrew R Young
Bye-Law 8.3A allows members or Fellows who are Chartered Environmental Health Officers the privilege of using the designatory letters ‘Ch.EHO MREHIS’ or ‘Ch.EHO FREHIS’. REHIS is the only organisation able to confer ‘Chartered EHO’ status and only REHIS members can be described as Chartered Environmental Health Officers.
Core values and vision

REHIS is established to promote the advancement of Environmental Health for the benefit of the community. Environmental Health embraces all aspects of public health, hygiene and safety in all or any of their branches.

In particular the Institute aims to promote:

• improvements to the environment which can have a positive impact on public health or safety
• safe and healthy housing
• an environment which is safe and prevents harm to human health
• good standards of occupational health, safety and hygiene
• food which is safe, wholesome and accurately described
• sustainability, locally, nationally and internationally
• effective education and training to ensure environmental health standards are maintained and improved
• the resolution of health and environmental health inequalities
• equitable, practical and consistent regulation and enforcement
• high standards of professional training and conduct amongst Environmental Health Officers and others engaged in maintaining and promoting environmental health.

List of Contributors:

Tom Bell, Chief Executive, REHIS
Robert Howe, Director of Professional Development, REHIS
Colin Wallace, President, REHIS
Graham Walker, Director of Training, REHIS
John Stirling, Secretary, Scottish Pollution Control Co-ordinating Committee
Pat Hoey, Chairman, Public Health and Housing Working Group
John Sleith, Secretary, The Society of Chief Officers of Environmental Health in Scotland
Andrew Morrison, Food Standards Agency Scotland
Rod House, Consultant in Environmental Health/Head of Group, Health Protection Scotland
Paul Stollard, Health and Safety Executive
Sheila Duffy, Chief Executive, ASH Scotland
Dr Harry Burns, Chief Medical Officer for Scotland

Bernard Forteath, President, International Federation of Environmental Health
About REHIS

The Institute was incorporated as a Company Limited by Guarantee on 18th February 1983, to give effect to the amalgamation of The Royal Sanitary Association of Scotland and The Scottish Institute of Environmental Health. The Institute was Incorporated by Royal Charter on 8th March 2001, following which the Company was wound up.

The Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland is a registered Scottish charity, Number SC009406.

The objects for which the Institute is established, contained in Article 3 of the Charter, are for the benefit of the community to promote the advancement of Environmental Health by:

a. stimulating general interest in and disseminating knowledge concerning Environmental Health;
b. promoting education and training in matters relating to Environmental Health; and
c. maintaining, by examination or otherwise, high standards of professional practice and conduct on the part of Environmental Health Officers in Scotland.

The Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland is an independent and self-financing organisation. It neither seeks nor receives grant aid. The Institute’s charitable activities are funded significantly by the subscriptions received from its members.

The Institute’s affairs are managed by a Council which is elected by members. The Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland is a founding member of the International Federation of Environmental Health.

The Institute frequently uses the acronym: REHIS®.

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For further information

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