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The PINs portal – what is it?



The Public Information Notices (PINs) Portal - tellmesotland - is Scotland's national public information notices website and allows public notices from across the country to be published in a single location for the first time. It was launched on 20 December 2010, and seventeen councils are already posting live notices. A further eight councils have committed to adopting the portal in the near future.

A national shared services initiative, endorsed and supported by COSLA leaders, SOLACE and The Scottish Government, the portal can now be accessed at www.tellmesotland.gov.uk.

The aim is to provide improved accessibility to statutory and non-statutory information, and to help Scotland's 32 councils make efficiencies in the time and effort involved in the administration of public notices. The portal is flexible to the point that it is scalable for use by the wider public sector.

The portal creates a new channel of communication to local communities via the internet. Visitors to the site can quickly search for listings and maps of public notices by area, such as road closures, planning or property developments, licensing and any other type of general notices – in a clear and easy-to-understand format.

Anyone can use the national PINs Portal to search for live and archive adverts, and see how they might be affected by statutory or public service developments in their local authority area, or any other part of Scotland.

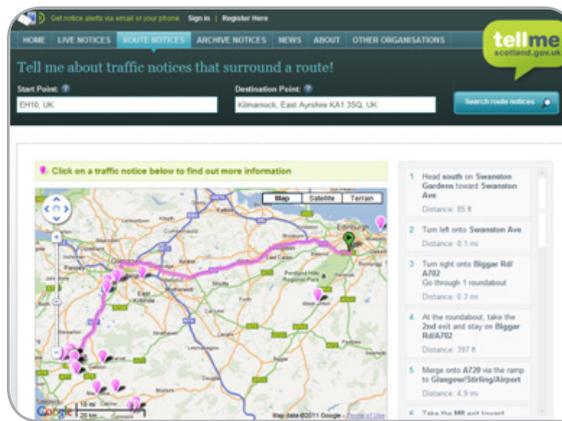
Furthermore, users can search between two points on a map, and view all notices that occur along that journey.

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What can it do?



The portal is free for councils and public sector organisations to use, and access and registration is free for public users. Anyone can therefore use the national PINs portal to search for live and archive adverts and see how they might be affected by statutory or public service

developments in their local authority area or any other part of Scotland. There are also realtime SMS and e-mail alerts available that will notify the user immediately a notice is published that matches the user's predefined requirements. This is a significant improvement in the accessibility and depth of information provided previously through local advertisements. These improvements, in turn, should lead to greater engagement and a higher level of response to public notices.

Key improvements for users of the national PINs portal include:

- A clear visual representation of the notice location and what it involves, with the interactive online map highlighting the areas or streets affected.
- A more coherent national picture of the whole journey. For example, how a series of street closures may impact on someone travelling through more than one local authority. This will be much clearer to see online.
- A much quicker search and response for those seeking information – which is available 24*7 all the year round.
- The opportunity to obtain extra information beyond the statutory requirements, which will enhance the public's knowledge of notices.
- The public will be able to register and based on their postcode be notified via email or text message of the published notices that will impact on them – immediately.
- The ability to see statutory or public service developments in other regions of Scotland, and how these are implemented.

The priority for the PINs portal is to ensure that the public can access information in the most effective way possible and to ensure that councils and taxpayers get the best value for money.

The PINs Portal is continually being developed, guided by the Steering Group's suggestions. Recent enhancements include a new postcode radius selector tool to assist user alerting, a new Superuser Administration system (Tier 1) and the addition of wider public sector organisations to the Portal. The PINs Project

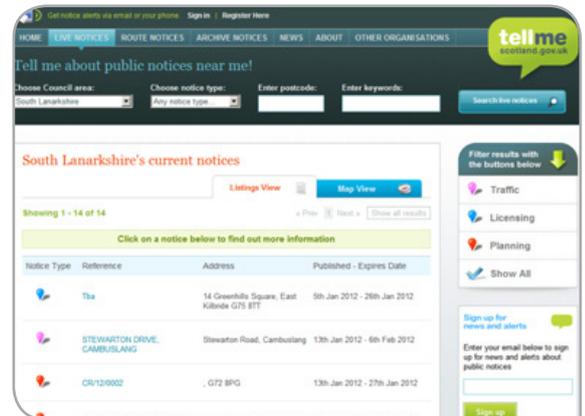
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Team are keen to make the best use possible of tellmescotland as a public sector asset and have been engaging with 68 public sector organisations since March 2011, many of which are keen and ready to utilise the PINs Portal.

tellmescotland is also to be used as a Proof of Concept for Open Data, due to be delivered to the Scottish Government by Q1 2012. Northgate have now built an update to the existing Licensing transfer mechanism, allowing Councils to automatically upload Occasional and other licensing types. This is currently being tested and will be made available to all Councils in early 2012. A Generic XML tool is also now being developed and discussions have been held around an iPhone App and mobile website for tellmescotland.



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