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## Abstract

CitizenScape is a flexible online space that integrates interactive Web 2.0 social networking online tools and offline outreach activities in a socially purposeful way in concrete legislative and decision-making processes. The project is developing a repeatable methodology for engaging with and mentoring Citizen's through different stages of engagement with the aim to ensure that participants have, as a result of the project activities, taken part in some kind of formal decision making process. The CitizenScape technology and first prototype to support this process are described in this document.

## Document History

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1.0	Final for Submission.	17.12.08	C. Howe
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## Executive Summary

CitizenScape is a 2 year eParticipation Programme Trial Project that is integrating and testing state-of-the-art Web 2.0 social networking ICT-based tools and solutions in a socially purposeful way in concrete legislative and decision-making processes - specifically looking at engaging Citizens to debate and engage with the implementation of EU environmental legislation at a local level. The project is developing a repeatable methodology for engaging with and mentoring Citizen's through different stages of engagement with the aim to ensure that participants have, as a result of the project activities, taken part in some kind of formal decision making process.

The technology and first prototype to support this process are described in this document and have a number of core characteristics:

1. All of the component parts of the CitizenScape architecture are built in a flexible and modular way so that stakeholders at each pilot site are able to create a facility that is tailored to their needs rather than requiring standardization across all the CitizenScape sites.
2. These 'widgets' are made available on external sites as well as within CitizenScape so that content can 'travel' to find its audience.
3. Widgets will be split into three types; (a) those which contain CitizenScape interactivity, (b) those which are read only content from external sites and (c) those which contain content from external sites but with some kind of interactivity.

One of the central tenants of the CitizenScape project is the use of existing Web 2.0 content where possible in order to emphasise the idea that the CitizenScape sites are co-created with Stakeholders.

## 1. Introduction

The CitizenScape technical approach has been defined in line with the initial Description of Work created for the project which was then developed in the project requirements document; Deliverable D1.1.1<sup>1</sup>. In developing the technical approach it was clear that the 'social' concept of co-creation and the need to build on existing Web 2.0 activity rather than try to create Web 2.0 activity from nothing was a key idea within the project and informed its highly modular development approach.

This document is intended to give an overview of the first prototype and specification for the CitizenScape development work. The intention of the CitizenScape project is to produce a repeatable approach and architecture that can be used by future CitizenScape implementations. Necessary elements of all CitizenScape development projects will be:

1. Rather than having content actually hosted on the CitizenScape site all content will be drawn from other sources. In the case of future projects this may necessitate Public-i hosting, for example, an instance of Viewfinder so that clients can instigate a single discussion thread rather than the whole discussion board (see viewfinder section for more detail)
2. The sites will be a mixture of CitizenScape-native features that are developed by Public-i and external feeds – both functional and information only
3. All the sites will have a fixed time period after which they will end – though content will continue to exist at its sources
4. CitizenScape sites will have a parallel external widget that can be embedded on other sites (including Facebook pages) which draws users back to CitizenScape. The objective here is to enable content to 'travel' as far as possible to find an audience while at the same time returning the audience to the main hub.
5. Have usage data captured in a statistics feature that will support analysis of the site activity

At this stage we are not planning for individual users to be able to customise the CitizenScape space though this should be possible in the future.

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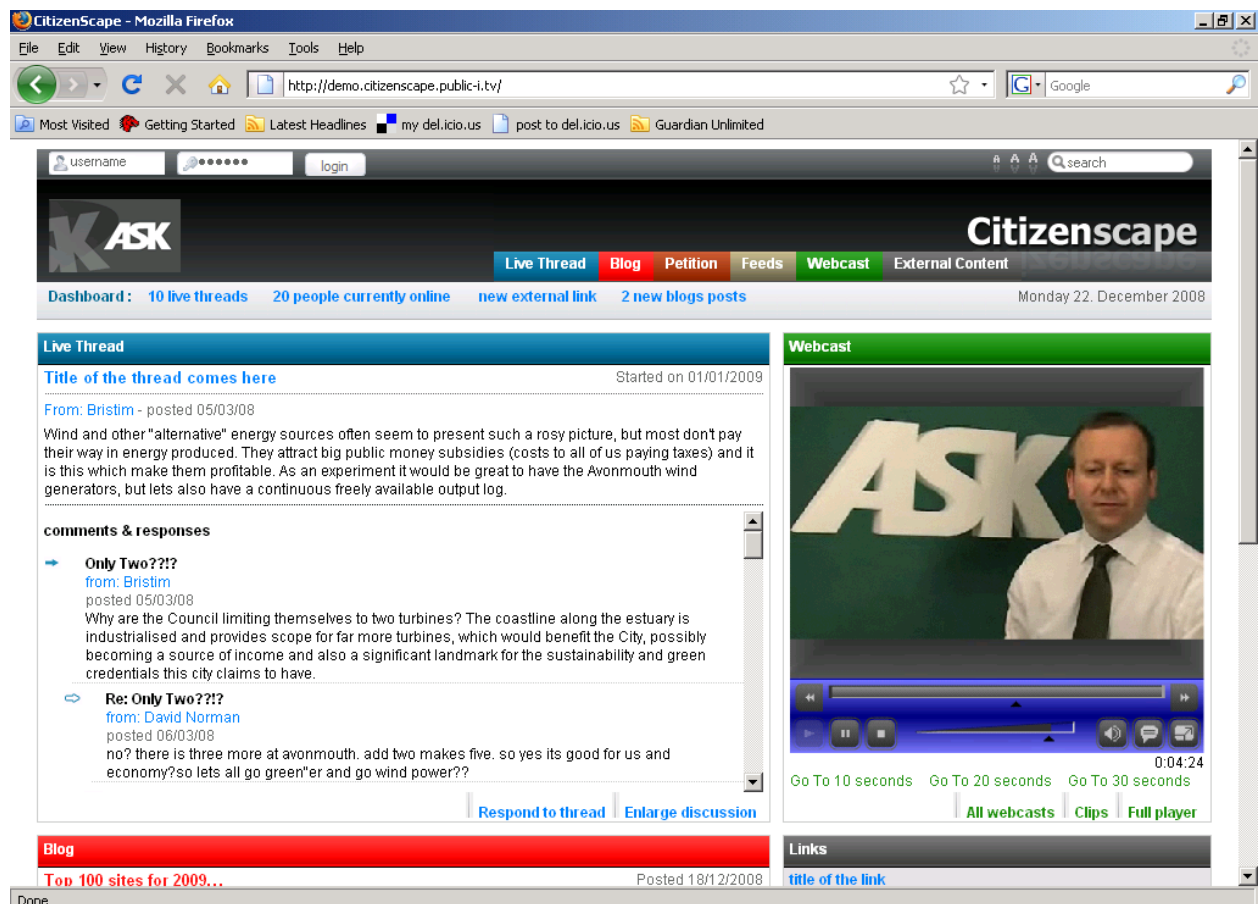
<sup>1</sup>“CitizenScape User & Technical Requirements”, deliverable D1.1.1, June 2008

## 2. Overview of First CitizenScape Prototype

Each CitizenScape will be built as a basic “Container”, which will have

- a banner and some basic branding, and
- a pre-defined set of ‘widgets’ which will display within the container.

The first CitizenScape prototype, which is at <http://demo.citizenscape.public-i.tv/> (with a screen-grab below) shows a mix of widgets from different sources:



The Container is built using a LAMP (Linux, Apache, MySQL, PHP)<sup>2</sup> framework and builds on the existing Public-i webcasting and Viewfinder developments<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> See [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/LAMP\\_\(software\\_bundle\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/LAMP_(software_bundle))

<sup>3</sup> See [www.public-i.info](http://www.public-i.info)

### 3. CitizenScape Native Elements

CitizenScape native elements consist of any application which has been created and hosted by Public-i. The CitizenScape elements will consist of the single smallest logical part of that application represented in widget format.

Examples include:

- Single sign-on and registration
- A single discussion thread
- A single petition
- Individual webcasts:
- Short clip
- Full player
- A feed of webcasts matching particular tags (future, live and archive)
- Map widget
- Common moderation interface
- Common / shared taxonomy / folksonomy system

There is an assumption that anyone using these tools in CitizenScape will already have them in place for other purposes. In the future however it should be possible to license individual elements such as a discussion thread so that the approach can be used to also support events, where the client will not want to set-up an entire Viewfinder installation. This could be readily achieved if Public-i set-up instances of Viewfinder and ePetitions with the client as the community moderators (see below).

There are a few additional elements that do not already exist that will be required:

- Project diary / blog
- Events calendar (beyond those which are webcast)
- Participant biographies for people who have registered
- Email newsletter option
- Single RSS feed

These could be provided by external tools.

The intention is that these widgets will work not only within CitizenScape sites but will also work on external websites; for example the webcast widget could be used to drop webcast content onto other sites. This is specified in more detail below.

### 3.1 CitizenScape Set-up

In order to set-up a CitizenScape site the client will be asked to define the following items:

<u>Item</u>	<u>Description</u>
Site title & URL	Name and address!
Basic branding requirements / Design	This will depend on what is possible in terms of design at each instance of CitizenScape, but it is assumed that we will be able to apply basic branding to widgets and to the site 'wrapper' – obviously the more the better!
Start date / end date	CitizenScape sites will have a finite duration
Defining tags for content feeds	Content will be drawn from Public-i and externally hosted sites according to defined data tags.
List of CitizenScape native widget	Picked from the list above
List of external feeds	Picked from an 'approved' list that will be defined.

Once the site has been created then a “hold page” will be visible until the start date of the site. An exit page will be available for a month after the end date of the space. After that there will be nothing at the URL unless it is reused for a future service.

## 4. Widget descriptions

<u>Widget</u>	<u>Description</u>
Single sign-on and registration	<p>This is to support all of the CitizenScape native tools so that the site host will need to come up with a single set of registration questions. This feature will not handle sign-on to external tools such as blogs.</p> <p>The sign-on will support a standard such as Open ID</p>
A single discussion thread	<p>As per the current Viewfinder threads this widget will display the initial post (not just the title – the video / text as well) as well as the latest comment and stats on numbers of posts and date/time of last post. There will then be an option to expand to see the full thread with all comments shown in full.</p>
A single petition	<p>This widget will display for live petitions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The petition text</li> <li>2. Number of signatures.</li> <li>3. Closing date</li> <li>4. For petitions waiting for consideration</li> <li>5. The petition text</li> <li>6. Number of signatures.</li> <li>7. Date of meeting to be discussed</li> <li>8. For closed petitions</li> <li>9. The petition text</li> <li>10. Number of signatures.</li> <li>11. Feedback on the petition</li> </ol> <p>'Click here to sign' will send the user to the full petition site as will 'Find out more'</p>
Individual webcasts	<p>Individual webcasts need to be accessible to the CitizenScape site as there is an assumption that anyone using CitizenScape will already be webcasting. It will be possible to embed multiple webcasts on a page.</p>
Short clip	<p>This widget will show a short embedded clip with no index points – it will however have right-hand explanatory text.</p>
Full player	<p>Any clip which requires index points will use a widget with the look and feel of the current Public-i player once expanded. The widget will show a still image and intro text with the option to 'click here to watch the video'</p>
A feed of webcasts matching particular tags (future, live & archive)	<p>A dynamic listings box (as per <a href="http://www.public-i.info">www.public-i.info</a>) specific to the CitizenScape tags. This Widget should display a fixed number of listings with the option to expand to view more.</p>
Map widget!	<p>See separate section below.</p>
Project diary / blog	<p>Simple blog – which could be created from an external tool. This would have all standard blog features but comments would be written using Viewfinder and not the Blog tool.</p>

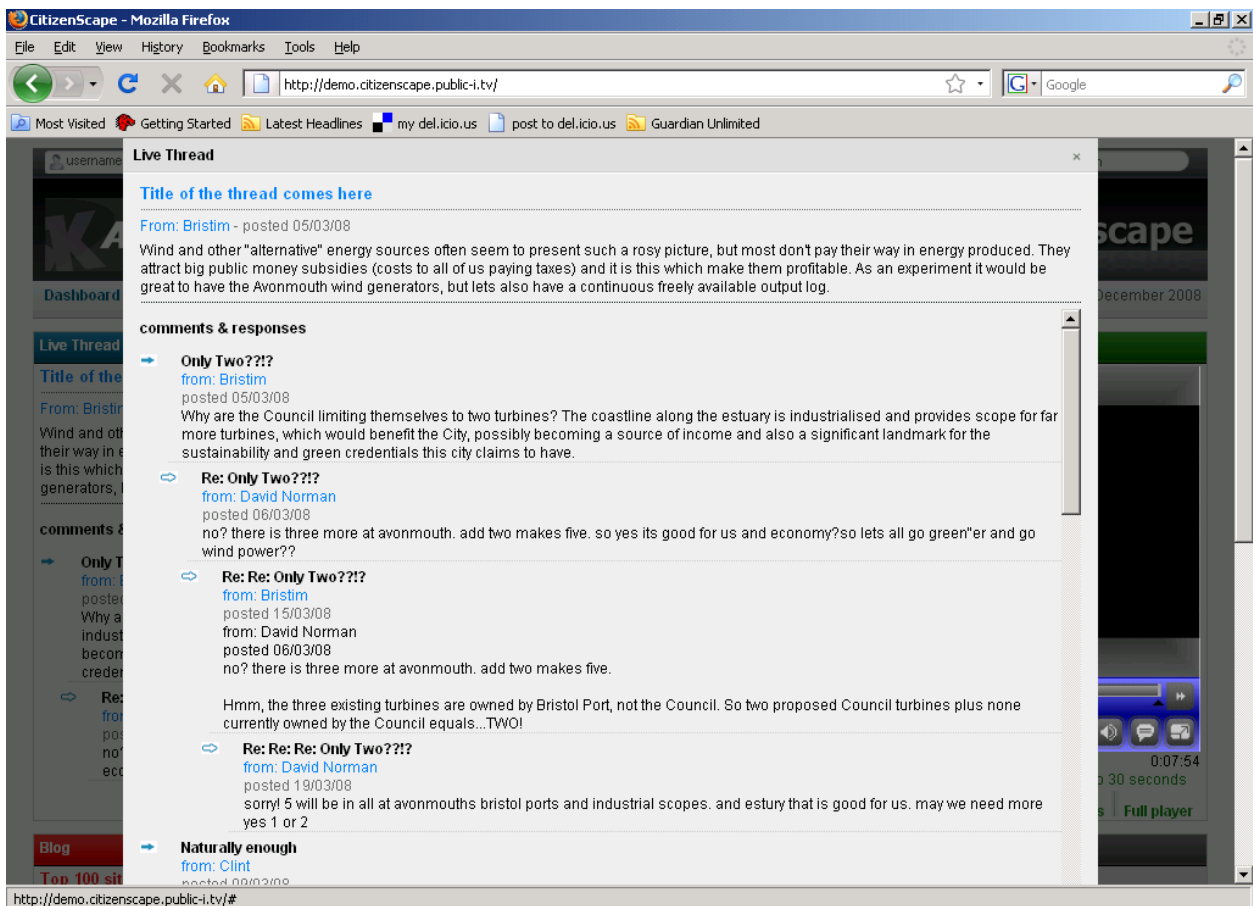
Events calendar (beyond those which are webcast)	A listings calendar that will capture data / location / description of events plus links to the webcast if applicable.
Participant biographies for people who have registered	A short directory of participants which displays their public biography.
Email newsletter option	There is a requirement to support emailing of targeted groups who have signed up to the CitizenScape site.
Single RSS feed	There is a need for a combined RSS feed covering all CitizenScape content.

Where expanding on a widget takes the user back to the source site it will be evident in CitizenScape where a link takes the viewer off-site and advises them to 'open in a new window' in order to save their place in CitizenScape .

## 5. Viewfinder

The current Viewfinder functionality will be reproduced in CitizenScope with the following amendments / extensions:

1. The new version will make it possible to view a thread in its entirety – i.e. all contributions all full text.
2. It will be possible for users to rate comments on a 5 point scale. They will need to be registered and logged in to achieve this
3. It will be possible for sites to just run a single discussion thread from Viewfinder rather than a whole board.



The screenshot shows a Mozilla Firefox browser window displaying a 'Live Thread' on the CitizenScope website. The browser's address bar contains the URL 'http://demo.citizenscape.public-i.tv/'. The page content includes a thread titled 'Title of the thread comes here' with a main post from 'Bristim' (posted 05/03/08) and several replies. The replies include a question from 'Only Two???' (05/03/08), a response from 'David Norman' (06/03/08), and further discussion from 'Bristim' (15/03/08) and 'David Norman' (19/03/08). A video player is visible on the right side of the page, showing a video titled 'Full player' with a duration of 0:07:54.

## 6. Moderation / Administration interface

Each CitizenScape site will need a single administration interface which will enable site hosts to:

- Moderate discussion threads as per current ViewFinder Moderation
- Moderate petitions as per current ePetitioner interfaces
- Add new tags to the CitizenScape site so that additional content will be displayed
- Manage user accounts including participant accounts/biographies
- Manage content on the event diary
- Manage content on the project blog
- Access the email functionality
- Access Statistics

Because an essential part of the project is the creation of Community Moderators, the CitizenScape service will need to include a moderation interface which is a subset of administration and will enable community moderators to:

1. Moderate discussion threads as per current ViewFinder Moderation
2. Moderate comments on petitions as per current ePetitions interfaces
3. Add new tags to the CitizenScape site so that additional content will be displayed
4. Add content on the event diary
5. Add content on the project blog

## 7. CitizenScape external elements

In order to make the CitizenScape approach as inclusive as possible, and to avoid trying to recreate activity such as blogging when it already exists elsewhere, the CitizenScape sites will be able to display content from external sources such as blogs, newsfeeds and perhaps external discussion boards. It is anticipated that these will be added to the CitizenScape portfolio on a case by case basis once the requirements for integration have been defined.

Where external content is being displayed it will be essential that this is correctly labelled as such and any disclaimers from the CitizenScape host are clearly displayed.

Initial external sources to be considered are:

1. Wordpress
2. Blogger
3. RSS News feeds

## 8. Map Widget

The map widget is essentially a display tool that enables the display of data on a map interface. Data is displayed in a layered way and the user has control over which of the layers that are displayed.

Users will be able to select which areas to display and to select sections of the map to display them within. For example you could choose to display all petitions and discussion threads within a specific area.

Data will fall into two types:

1. Data which of necessity has a single geospatial tag (for instance planning applications or community meetings)
2. Data which can be associated with a geospatial area (Local strategic planning consultations or petitions)

For display purposes these types of data will be shown differently. For each instance of the widget the area to be centred on will need to be defined along with the initial resolution. Once this is confirmed then the layers of data will need to be defined.

Initial layers may include:

- Webcasts
- Petitions
- Viewfinder discussion threads
- Events (as per event widget)
- Documents / consultations (TBC how these would be stored or where they would be sourced from)
- Contact data for departments / community moderators / participants in CitizenScape