

Creating and using RSS feeds with Consultation Finder

What is RSS?

RSS stands for "Really Simple Syndication". It is a way of being able to get new and updated information (or feeds) from websites without having to keep going back to those websites.

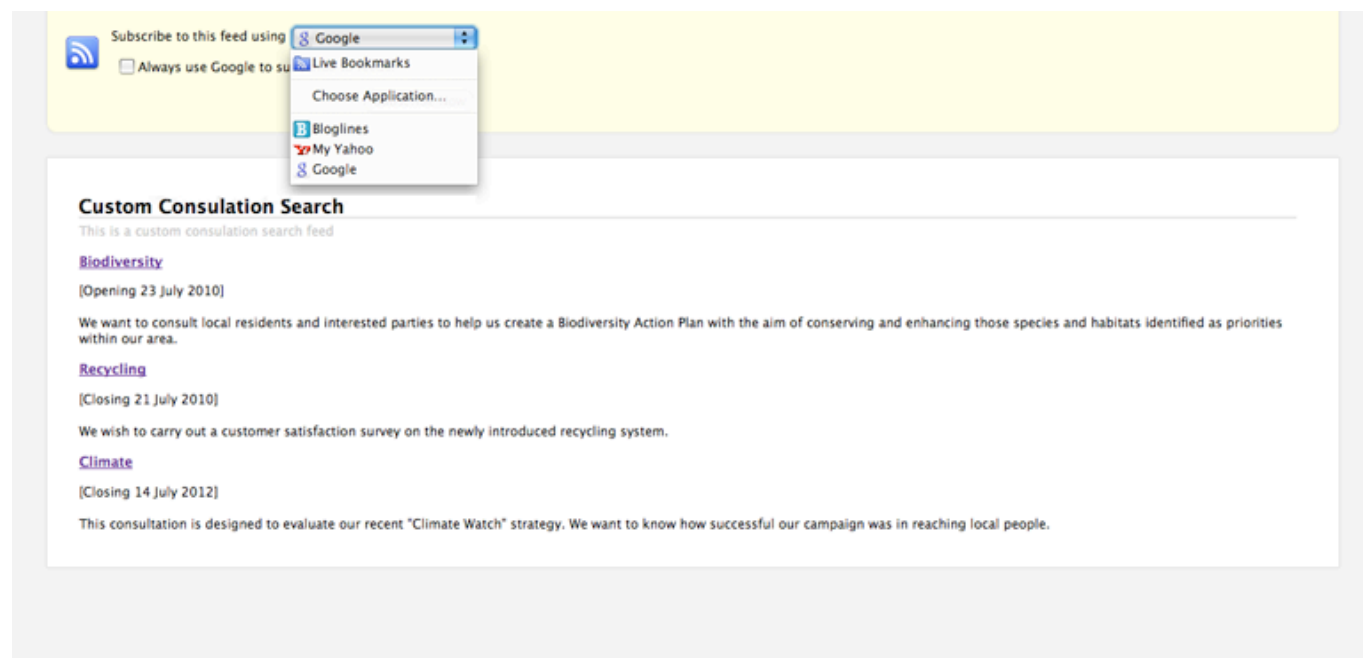
In Consultation Finder, we use RSS to allow people to get feeds of the latest consultations that appear on the home page and create their own customised feed from the advanced search page. In this way, people can always be kept up to date with the consultations that interest them.

How do I get it?

You first need a feed reader (aka feed aggregator). This is a piece of software that checks your chosen feeds whenever you are connected to the internet.

There are two major types of readers:

- Browser-based news readers let you catch up with your RSS feed subscriptions from any computer connected to the internet, similar to a web-based email service.
- Downloadable applications retrieve and store feeds on your main computer, which you can read anytime.



Wikipedia has a comprehensive list of feed aggregators at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_feed_aggregators

Google Reader and Netvibes are a popular choice.

What do I do with it?

Once you have chosen a feed reader, all you have to do is to decide what content you want it to receive. Just look for the orange RSS button on the Consultation Finder home page and advanced search pages.



Please note: many websites use this icon to indicate a feed is available:



How do I create my own feed?

If you want to create a customized RSS feed of information in Consultation Finder, go to 'Find Consultations' then 'Advanced Search'. Then create the search you require, click 'Search'. Depending on your feed reader, either:

- click 'Create RSS feed from results' to view the feed URL, then add it your feed reader.
- right click the 'Create RSS feed from results', copy it, then paste it to add to your feed reader.

How can I embed an RSS feed into my website or blog?

You can share the information on consultations in Consultation Finder with other people by embedding a feed from the finder into your own website or blog. For example, an environmental group may wish to present all the environmental consultations in Consultation Finder with their members through their own website, or councillors may wish to have an automatically updated list of consultations for their ward presented on their blog.

Doing this is simple;

- You must be logged in as an administrator in order to edit/customize your blog or website.
- You will probably need to add a widget/plugin into your blog or website, or whatever your site requires for displaying feeds.
- Finally you need to copy and paste the RSS feed's URL where prompted.

The exact instructions will vary depending on your blog and website platforms available. For your convenience, we have provided some links below to assist you, or check the help/support section on your platform's website.

Popular blog platform help pages for adding feeds

Blogger:

http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/228391/how_to_add_an_rss_feed_on_blogger.html?cat=59

Vox:

<http://help.vox.com> and look for the article 'All about feeds'

WordPress:

http://codex.wordpress.org/Plugins/WordPress_Widgets#Using_RSS_Widgets

or

<http://faq.wordpress.com/2006/12/24/using-the-rss-widget/>