



The #SoilStix project - tuna tins, pee sticks, AeroPress coffee and soil mapping

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The #SoilStix project aimed to increase the visibility and understanding of soil mapping as well as create a low cost crowd sourced soil sampling method. In conjunction with Denbigh High School we trialled the SoilStix soil mapping methodology across Luton (UK) collecting and analysing 120 individual soil samples. The Year 9 and 10 students (age 14-15 years) from Denbigh High School with assistance from researchers at Cranfield University, collected and analysed soil samples from the school grounds and around Luton. From the collected soil samples the students assessed the soil texture, soil moisture content and bulk density. Using simple experiments with urinalysis sticks the students measured pH and nitrate concentrations in the soil. We produced a map of the soil properties illustrating the diversity of soil types in areas of Luton familiar to the students (their school, gardens and local parks). We highlight the accessibility of this method and the potential for its use in helping involve and communicate soil science to communities.