



Community Safety and Problem Drug Use - Austin Smith, Policy Officer, Scottish Drugs Forum

Problem drug use has been a significant public health issue in Scotland for decades.

According to a recent Government study, problem drug use is the eighth most common cause of premature death and years lived with significant illness in Scotland – more than alcohol dependence, diabetes, suicide, breast cancer or dementia.

There is a level of political, media and public concern about the issue which has both helped and hindered progress in developing an adequate response to the challenges raised by this kind of drug use. The evidence about what should be done to prevent the harms that drug use can cause is clear. Unfortunately, we have not always followed that evidence and made the appropriate investment and service developments.

The most obvious aspect of Scotland's drugs problem is the high number of people who have a poly drug use problem based on injecting heroin. This is far higher than in other countries – even in the rest of the UK. This polydrug use often includes the use of benzodiazepines (valium-type drugs) and, more so recently, cocaine. There are around 57,000 people with a problem with opiates and/or benzodiazepines in Scotland.

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Developing a Community Safety Narrative Report published

SCSN were delighted to have Tricia Spacey of Fife Council seconded to work between SCSN and the Scottish Government from late 2018 into early 2019. We are now equally delighted to publish her report: [Developing a Community Safety Narrative for Scotland](#).

Continue reading on page 4

BSC Unintentional Harm Online Hub launched!

The Unintentional Harm and Injury Executive Group, of which we are members, are delighted to launch the new Unintentional Harm Online Hub! The Building Safer Communities Unintentional Harm and Injury Executive Group is a collaboration of national and local partners working together to prevent and reduce unintentional harm in Scotland.

Visit the Online Hub [here](#).

Neighbourhood Watch
Scotland coming together
with SCSN!

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Scottish Community
Safety Network

SCSN Update

SCSN welcomes Cathy Barlow to Board

We're really pleased to say that Cathy Barlow will be our new Board member representing SFRS. Cathy's role is National Manager Community Safety Engagement and is already a 'well kent' friend of SCSN.

Upcoming #SCSNMasterclass Event: Participation Masterclass



Venue: The Pearce Institute, 840-860 Govan Rd, Glasgow G51 3UU

Time: 10am – 4pm (registration from 9.30am)

Date: 22nd July 2019

Cost: FREE but booking is essential

Find out more about this event and book [here](#).

SCSN Strategic Plan Launched!!



We were delighted to launch our new graphically illustrated, co-produced Strategic Plan at our Chairs and Leads Event in May!

We produced our Strategic Plan via staff and board strategy days, a stakeholder/member event and based on feedback from our Stakeholder Consultation last year.

You can find out more about the process we used by watching this [short video](#) we created!

View the full Strategic Plan on [our website](#).

Question of the Month

Our Question of the Month for May came from Dr. Marsha Scott of Scottish Women's Aid. She wanted to know:

Is your community Safety Partnership doing everything it can to keep victims/survivors safe from perpetrators of domestic abuse?

- **75% of respondents said yes**
- **25% said they could do more**

Thanks to those who took part!

Question of the Month

June 2019

This month's Question of the Month comes from Kirsten Horsburgh of the Scottish Drugs Forum.

She's asking:

Do you believe that drug consumption rooms would improve community safety in your area?

Take part in our poll [here](#).



#SCSNConversationsWith...

Kirsten Horsburgh, Strategy Coordinator, Drug Death Prevention, The Scottish Drugs Forum



We are delighted to finally have the technology and ability to launch a new type of monthly interview with experts in community safety issues from across Scotland. The **'#SCSNConversationsWith...'** video series will now replace or accompany our previous 60 seconds written interviews, all published on our Youtube channel.

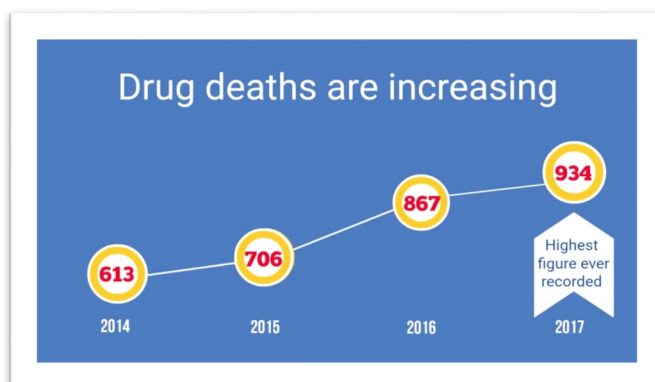
This brings to life our commitment to using technology to increase engagement and learning, and alongside these videos we will now be regularly publishing videos of event presentations, meaning that even if you can't attend the event, you needn't miss out!

For our 'Conversations with...' video interview this month, we spoke with **Kirsten Horsburgh, Strategy Coordinator, Drug Death Prevention at the Scottish Drugs Forum**. Kirsten has worked in the addictions field for many years, including playing a leading role in the National Naloxone Programme in Scotland.

Our Communications Officer David Barbour, sat down with her to speak about the driving forces behind Scotland's current drug deaths crisis, ongoing interventions and public health efforts, and what more can be done to reduce drug deaths and drug related harm.

Notably, David and Kirsten discussed stigma associated with injecting drug use and faced by drug users, and how essential it was not to see drug users or use as something the communities need protected from, but as part of our communities who deserve protection.

View the interview [here](#).



SCSN Conversations with... Dr Marsha Scott, Chief Executive of Scottish Women's Aid



Diary commitments meant we weren't quite able to bring this video interview out along with the 60 second interview featured in last month's newsletter, but we are delighted to bring you what was technically the first of our #SCSNConversationsWith series, an informative and enlightening conversation with Dr Marsha Scott, Chief Executive of Scottish Women's Aid. Here, our Communications Officer, David Barbour, discusses work on tackling domestic abuse in Scotland and asks some supplementary questions on the relationship between alcohol and domestic abuse. You can view the video [here](#).

SCSN and Neighbourhood Watch Scotland join forces!

We're delighted to be able to tell you about something exciting that's happening between Scottish Community Safety Network and Neighbourhood Watch Scotland.

From September 2019, SCSN will host Neighbourhood Watch Scotland. That means we are entering a contractual partnership to provide management, administration and governance support to NWS. In turn, NWS will enable us to have much better links with communities and community groups.

The partnership will have other mutual benefits such as closer working relationship, sharing of work sites and equipment, representation on each other's boards and some shared staff resources.

For the community safety sector – the new partnership will bring together two significant organisations working to keep our communities safer and will ensure more co-ordinated support to Community Safety Partnerships and local communities across Scotland.

Both organisations will retain separate identities and there will be no change to the level of service they provide to members and communities.

We will continue to provide updates as the partnership develops.

For more information or to discuss further, please contact Lorraine Gillies on

lorraine.gillies@scsn.org.uk

and/or Brian Connel on

brian.connel@neighbourhoodwatchscotland.co.uk

Developing a Community Safety Narrative Continued from page 1

Introduction

What is meant by community safety, or safer communities, has **broadened over the years, and the landscape is increasingly complex**. The initial focus on preventing and reducing crime, anti-social behaviour and disorder is now much wider. Community safety **encompasses everything that helps people to be and to feel safe in their homes, within their community and at places of work or leisure**.

It is fundamentally about improving people's quality of life and includes a wide range of issues such as home safety, road safety, water safety (together known as injury prevention), as well as priorities around community justice, counter-terrorism, child sexual exploitation, online safety and substance misuse. This notion of community safety sits within the broader context of **enabling communities to be inclusive, empowered and resilient and safe**, which recognises the influence of the broader economic, social and physical

environment.

The 2018 report '[Community Safety – the emerging landscape and future opportunities](#)' outlined and discussed the current challenges facing community safety in Scotland, and recommended that the **development of a community safety narrative would help local and national organisations and practitioners** better understand the current community safety landscape.

This paper begins to develop this narrative following a series of discussions between October 2018 and March 2019 with national policy leads and local practitioners working in community safety and related policy areas. The paper is intended to **prompt further discussion and thinking around these issues to help support local community safety partners** to enhance their understanding of current and emerging policy areas and work streams that are relevant to community safety, and increase awareness among those who are working within **other policy areas of the importance of 'thinking with community safety in mind'**.

Download the full report [here](#).

SCSN Chairs and Leads Event in Review - #SCSNChairsLeads 2019

On 28th May, we held our 'Making the Case for Community Safety - Chairs and Leads Event' in Edinburgh. A wide range of expert speakers gave presentations on a breadth of cross cutting community safety issues, with some really interesting panel discussions in between.

Our speakers posed a number of challenges for those working in community safety, or questions to think about - some of which are provided in summary below.

We'd like to say a massive thank you to all of the speakers on the day: Liz Manson of Dumfries and Galloway Council and the Community Planning Network, Gordon Paterson of the Building Safer Communities Programme, Mark McAllister of the Public Health Reform Team, Brian Connel of Neighbourhood Watch Scotland, Tricia Spacey of Fife Council, Dr Liz Aston of the Scottish Institute for Policing Research, Gemma Fraser of Community Justice Scotland, Alistair Crerar of the Serious Organised Crime Unit, Assistant Chief Officer Ross Haggart of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, Supt Tim Ross of Police Scotland - and last but not least to our Chair Person, Mark McCall!

Couldn't be there? No problem!

You can view all the presentations given on the day on the SCSN Youtube Channel [here!](#)



Social Media Engagement in review



We use Twitter hashtags for our events to drive conversation before, during and after events. Our #SCSNChairsLeads 2019 hashtag drove some excellent engagement with our partners, stakeholders and members, comprising:

58 tweets! 77,786 impressions!
20 contributors! 30,019 accounts reached!

Some Challenges and Questions!

Where does community safety sit in your priorities? - Top, middle or bottom?

Where are our safe places? Do we know where they are in our communities?

If you want community empowerment, how are you going to get the right information to the right people at the right time?

How can public health engage more effectively with Community Safety Partnerships?

Serious Organised Crime

What can Community Safety Partnerships do to reduce harm caused by serious organised crime and build community resilience?

What can YOU do in your role?

Scottish Fire and Rescue/BSCP

What do Community Safety Partnership Practitioners see as the future role of the Building Safer Communities Executive Group?

Think about how your local teams can work with SFRS on broadening prevention work!



The Scottish Institute
for Policing Research

Examples of some recent research:

- Evaluation of Stop & Search
- Review of public confidence & police visibility
- Prevention First Strategy in Ayrshire
- Local solutions to local problems: innovation in public participation



#SCSNChairsLeads 2019

In terms of community safety, problem drug use does have an impact but perhaps less than people would think. Although the Scottish prevalence rate is high, Scotland has low rates of violent acquisitive crime ('mugging', for example) related to drug use. Also, people intoxicated with opiates like heroin are far less likely to be violent or aggressive than people using drugs more commonly used elsewhere. In Scotland, other substances have a more profound effect in this respect – most obviously, some people who are disinhibited through alcohol use are more dangerous and violent.

Public misunderstanding makes many people wary if not fearful of people who use heroin. These fears are misplaced and contribute to the stigma people suffer. Stigma stops people seeking help and even believing or hoping their lives can change. Many people come to believe that they are different from other people and cannot change. Yet we know this is not true.

Most of the harms from injecting drug use are suffered by the people involved. These can be health problems – blood-borne viruses like hepatitis or HIV; injecting site wounds, circulatory problems and, of course, overdose.

There is legitimate public concern about people injecting drugs and disposing of their injecting equipment in a way that may mean that others are exposed to risk. People's main concern is that they or others are exposed to risk through a needle injury. Actually, such cases are rare and the risk of being infected with a blood-borne virus is far lower than the public seem to think. However, there is real concern about this type of litter – apart from anything else it is unsightly and an environmental concern.

Often people dispose of injecting equipment inappropriately when they are involved in public injecting. Although the vast majority of injecting drug use happens in private homes, public injecting is fairly common, particularly in Scotland's city centres. People are drawn to the city centre for many reasons and homelessness and rough-sleeping can mean people get 'stuck' there.

Public injecting is almost always carried out in

some quiet or private place – a piece of waste ground, a lane, a public toilet. When people find a convenient and 'safe' place, they tend to re-use it and so some injecting sites are used repeatedly by different people. Very quickly, large quantities of injecting equipment can accumulate at such sites. Although these are usually 'hidden' spots and out-of-the-way, there is a chance that members of the public will be exposed to risk of needlestick injuries and possible infection.

Public injecting and injecting-related litter problems have become an issue around Glasgow city centre, like other city centres in Scotland in recent years. There is also an HIV outbreak affecting around 150 people among the estimated 500 people using drugs in the city centre. This is caused by both sharing equipment and sexual contact within this group or people. These two concerns contributed to the consideration of establishing a facility where people could bring their drugs, be given a set of injecting equipment and inject while being supervised by a nurse. The nurse staff would intervene in the event of overdose and would offer general health advice and support and signpost people to other services which may help the person – including treatment services.

In other countries, for example in Australia, these facilities have developed informally in churches or other locations. There have, of course, often been illegal and policing issues with these which have been resolved over time. In Canada, a pilot was eventually established with federal government approval.

Glasgow sought advice from the Lord Advocate and reassurance that staff working in such a service would not face prosecution for knowingly allowing the use of opiates in a premises over which they had control as this is a breach of The Misuse of Drugs Act 1971. The Lord Advocate was unwilling to give this reassurance and so the matter now is reliant on the Act being amended to allow a drug consumption room. As things stand, currently this is highly unlikely to happen.

Continued overleaf ➡

Fatal overdoses at public injecting sites are relatively unusual so the drug consumption room was not designed to impact on the number of drug overdose deaths – currently running at over three each day in Scotland – but on litter, injecting injuries and infection risk for people using drugs and risk to the public of injury and infection. The main consequences of the Lord Advocate's decision are that the opportunity to engage with people has been lost; people continue to inject in public with the attendant risks including HIV infection and small areas with high levels of drug-related litter persist.

From a community safety point of view the rejection of the Glasgow plan is a setback. We can still act to prevent the problem of drug-related litter. Services involved in injecting equipment provision (IEP) re-enforce messages

around bringing back used injecting equipment to their services in bins in containers ('bins') that are provided. But we have to better understand what drives drug-related litter. In the first place

- A lack of provision of street disposal bins
- The provision of bulky and unattractive 'bins' which people are meant to carry to and from their injecting site
- The actual or perceived possibility that police may use possession of a bin as cause to stop & search and otherwise 'hassle' people
- The lack of out of hours IEP services and outreach IEP services
- A failure to incentivise returns.

There is work to be done by all stakeholders before we can assure community safety.

Expert Group on Drug Related Deaths Announced by First Minister

Nicola Sturgeon has announced the establishment of an expert group to review what is being done to reduce drug-related deaths in Scotland.

The announcement of the group was officially [made during First Minister's Questions](#) on Thursday the 4th of April in response to a question from Miles Briggs MSP.

Mr Briggs asked the First Minister whether she would provide details of the scope and remit of the Scottish Government's new 'task force' to tackle drug deaths.

The First Minister responded: "The Public Health Minister will convene an expert group to examine the key drivers of drug deaths and advise on what changes, either in practice or in the law, could help save lives and reduce harm."

David Liddell, CEO of Scottish Drugs Forum said: "People with a drug problem, their families and communities, will welcome the acknowledgement that their lives matter and that these deaths are a concern to all of Scotland. The prevention of drug-related deaths should be a key public health focus over the coming years."

Cross Party Support for Introduction of Drug Consumption Rooms across the UK

Calls for medically supervised drug consumption rooms (DCRs) have garnered cross-party backing from MPs after the publication of a new report calling for their introduction across the UK.

The report from the Adam Smith Institute – a think-tank – *Room for improvement: How drug consumption rooms save lives*, has received cross-party support from Conservative, Labour, SNP, Liberal Democrat, and Green MPs as well as crossbench Lords, showing the breadth of support from across Parliament to introduce Drug Consumption Rooms and reduce the number of deaths from drug overdose.

The report states that the need for DCRs in Scotland is of particular importance.

In an open letter [published by The Telegraph](#), the MPs say that "Communities are being ripped apart, criminal networks are profiting, and thousands of people are dying every year," before going on to say that "Drug consumption rooms are an evidence-based harm reduction intervention which allows people who use illicit drugs to do so within a medically supervised environment."

Spotlight on Services: Glasgow Council on Alcohol



This month we take a look at an alcohol and drug service in Glasgow, the Glasgow Council on Alcohol, who work to reduce harm caused by alcohol and drugs with a range of programmes touching on a broader range of Community Safety issues - including reducing reoffending, social isolation, discrimination and gender based violence.

A-C-E 10 Structured Group work programme (Achieving Compliance through Education)

The A-C-E 10 session prevention and education programme is aimed at addressing offending behaviour incorporating education on health and personal impact of substance use, coping skills, relapse prevention, achieving personal goals and maintaining recovery.

On completion, clients have reported the following changes to their lives:

- Improved relations with families and friends
- Improved confidence and thought processes

- Develop trust and confidence from the group
- Increased awareness of the effects of alcohol and an ability to achieve alcohol reduction

By referring clients to other GCA in house services, Elevate and Building Positive Pathways, clients have identified a reduction in isolation and a feeling of increased self-worth.

Our service has helped improve communities by developing the personal skills and understanding of clients so that they are better prepared to make a more positive impact.

Prison Throughcare Support (Throughcare planning for release from prison)

This service provides person centred support using a holistic approach to advice and information. A harm reduction approach towards drug and alcohol use is created with interventions to help address offending behaviour.

Read this article in full on our website [here](#).

Homophobic and transphobic hate crime surges in England & Wales

Homophobic and transphobic hate crimes, including stalking, harassment and violent assault, have more than doubled in England and Wales over five years, a [Guardian analysis](#) has shown.

The rate of LGBT hate crime per capita rose by 144% between 2013-14 and 2017-18. In the most recent year of data, police recorded 11,600 crimes, more than doubling from 4,600 during this period.

Transphobic attacks have soared in recent years, trebling from 550 reports to 1,650 over the period examined. Almost half (46%) of these crimes in 2017-2018 were violent offences, ranging from common assault to grievous bodily harm.

Glasgow Council on Alcohol getting to grips with LGBT health inequalities on alcohol and drugs - David Barbour, SCSN Comms Officer & GCA Alcohol Brief Intervention Practitioner

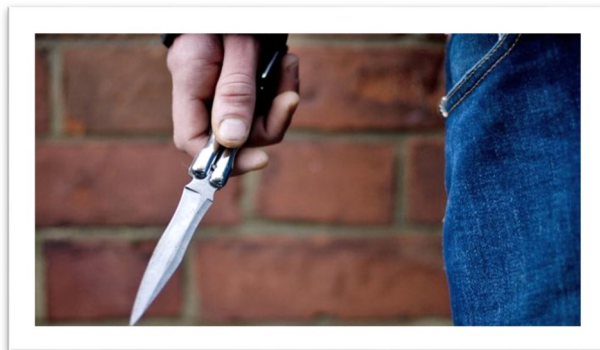
It is of huge concern that homophobic hate crime figures in England & Wales have risen so sharply in the last few years. There have also been numerous concerning statements from high profile UK politicians of late on LGBT inclusive education and the utterly discredited idea of gay conversion therapy.

Homo/trans/bi phobia causes trauma and trauma is rife in the LGBT community. It is no surprise then that we are more likely to suffer from poor mental health and experience health inequalities around drugs and alcohol.

Read about work GCA are doing to address these inequalities [here](#).

Glasgow drives huge fall in violent crime - but alcohol still a major factor

[New analysis](#) of violent crime in Scotland has shown a 35% reduction in violent crime between 2008/09 and 2017/18. 89% of that drop was due to a decrease in violent crime in the West of Scotland and particularly in and around Glasgow.



The study also found that serious assaults were now far less likely to involve a weapon than in 2008/09, that there had been a large drop in young people involved in serious violent crime and that public health campaigns such as No Knives Better Lives had played a crucial role.

Alcohol still a factor

Despite the encouraging overall figures, the study showed that alcohol continued to be a major factor in violent crime - with almost two thirds of serious assaults in 2017/18 having involved drink.

Deputy Director of the Scottish Government's Violence Reduction Unit, Will Linden, said this excellent work in Glasgow needed to be built upon by tackling problems in society such as alcohol, poverty, social isolation and exclusion. He said, "Those are the big issues that we need to actually tackle if we want to reach those next levels of reduction in Scotland."

People in the UK get drunk more than any other country in the world

Findings from the [Global Drug Survey](#) have shown that drinkers in the UK get drunk more than in any other country in the world. Britons reported getting drunk an average of 51.1 times in a 12-month period – almost once a week – the report featuring 36 countries found.

Those behind the report believe it may be time to introduce guidelines on how to get drunk safely, which would reach binge drinkers who may view upper limits as "irrelevant".

The Scottish Government recently launched a major [public health campaign](#) to raise awareness of safer drinking guidelines - no more than 14 units of alcohol per week for both men and women spread over 3-4 days.

Binge drinking has obvious implications for community safety, with people more likely to have accidents, be victims of crime or be involved in crime.

Preventing binge drinking in night life settings - lessons for the UK?



A new [guidance resource](#) for reducing alcohol related problems in night life settings has been published, based on findings from a pan European project.

Described as a manual for communities to reduce alcohol related harm, the STAD (Stockholm prevents Alcohol and Drug problems) report says it is one of the few cost effective local prevention strategies targeting binge drinking, emphasising the importance of a whole-systems multi-component approach.

This resource is now also available on [our website](#).

New Drug Driving Law to come into force in October

New laws to introduce a "zero tolerance" approach to drug driving are being proposed by the Scottish government.

Ministers want to make it easier for the police to target people driving with illegal drugs, such as cannabis and cocaine, in their bloodstream.

The plan would do away with the existing need to prove someone was driving in an impaired manner as a result of taking drugs.

The crackdown will begin in October.

Currently in Scotland it is illegal to drive if impaired by drugs - whether they are prescription drugs or illegal substances such as heroin. But under the changes, there would be specific limits for certain drugs - as there is with alcohol - and a zero tolerance approach to others.

NEW: Place Standard Learning Resource Launched

The Place Standard tool is a way of assessing places both in terms of physical elements and social aspects.

The aim of this learning resource is to enable users through the use of tools and templates to understand and practically apply the Place Standard Tool.

This learning resource is brought to you by NHS Health Scotland, the Scottish Government and Architecture and Design Scotland. This resource extends to any group looking to undertake a Place Standard assessment and has primarily been designed with community and third sector groups and organisations in mind.

To use the Place Standard Tool learning resource click [here](#).

Public Health Reform Scotland: Consultation



Public Health Reform is a partnership between the Scottish Government and COSLA. Following on from the publication of Scotland's public health priorities in 2018, the next major milestone in reform of public health will be the establishment of Public Health Scotland.

Public Health Scotland will provide leadership as Scotland's lead national agency for improving and protecting health and wellbeing.

The Scottish Government, in partnership with COSLA has launched a 6 week consultation seeking views on Public Health Scotland and the necessary legislative changes required to establish the body.

You can contribute to the consultation [here](#).

Community Justice Scotland Report on proposed extension of Presumption Against Short Sentences

In 2018, Community Justice Scotland commissioned research to explore potential impacts of an extension to the Presumption Against Short Sentences from 3 to 12 months.



This research compares the needs experienced by people given a community sentence and people given a custodial sentence of 12 months or under.

Download the full report [here](#).

In other news...

Democracy Matters Conversation Analysis Published

The Scottish Government and COSLA have published an analysis of the Democracy Matters consultation, run last year as part of the Local Governance Review.

Democracy Matters sought the views of people and communities around their involvement in local decision making. The consultation asked five main questions over a series of events and online surveys, with more than 4,000 people sharing their views, along with organisations such as SCDC.



In a joint statement, the Scottish Government said that “options are open as to what services are devolved” following this consultation and also said that legislation around the Local Governance Review would not be brought forward in this parliament.

Read the full report [here](#).

The Scottish Government's National Outcomes Framework for Volunteering

This Framework was developed by the Scottish Government jointly with partners from the volunteering and community sector, local government and NHS, with academics and social researchers, and with volunteers.

Download the framework [here](#).

New: Audit Scotland Report. Planning for Outcomes



Audit Scotland have just published a new report which sets out the main factors that support planning for outcomes, and draws together learning from their previous reports and wider knowledge of good practice and activity in this area.

You can download the report [here](#) or find it on our website under [SCSN Learning/toolkits&resources](#).

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If you would like to submit an article, request information or share good practice in our newsletter, please get in touch! Email info@scsn.org.uk

The closing date for the July newsletter is 8 July.



34b Thistle Street, North West Lane

Edinburgh, EH2 1EA

0131 225 8700/7772

Email: info@scsn.org.uk

Company Ltd. SC357649

Charity No. SC040464

www.safercommunitiesscotland.org