



## Gender Based Violence - SCSN working in partnership

This month we've chosen to focus on gender-based violence and share some of the work in which SCSN has been involved in relation to Equally Safe, Scotland's strategy for preventing and eradicating violence against women and girls (VAWG). It also coincides with the enactment of the Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018 on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019.

Co-authored by some women working across the sector this article gives an overview of Equally Safe, the new Domestic Abuse Act, VAWG partnerships and the supporting network and explores the relationship between community safety and gender-based violence and opportunities for more collaboration across these areas.

### The Gold Standard

Who could have failed to see the coverage last month of the new Domestic Abuse Act for Scotland as it came into force on 1 April 2019? This ground-breaking legislation creates an offence covering not just physical abuse but psychological and emotional treatment and coercive and controlling behaviour and has been described as "the world's new gold standard". To echo the comments offered by Humza Yousaf, Cabinet Secretary for Justice, Scotland is "leading the way with this ground-breaking legislation which uniquely recognises the effect of domestic abuse on child victims as well as adults"... and, for the first time, courts will be asked to consider this as an 'aggravating' factor when sentencing. The offence will apply to both male and female victims and brings with it clarity for victims that what their partner or ex-partner has done to them is wrong and can be dealt with under the law.

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## Community Responses to Organised Crime - Alastair Crerar, SG Organised Crime Unit



When someone mentions organised crime, people often think of the Godfather, and the other books, movies and TV shows that have shaped public perception of serious organised crime, but the reality of organised crime is a much more varied and less glamorous picture. From nail bars to nurseries and property management to puppy farming, organised criminals are adept at finding ways to exploit people and communities in Scotland.

Through Scotland's Serious Organised Crime Taskforce, there's a vast range of work ongoing to reduce the harm organised crime causes. partners.

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## SCSN Chairs and Leads Event - 28 May

### #SCSNChairsLeads19

The event encourages information sharing and networking within the community safety sector at a strategic level; and provides delegates with an opportunity to consider emerging themes and influence future developments. The theme for the day will be 'making the case for community safety' and there will be inputs from national partners on current and future work and opportunities to network with colleagues from across Scotland.

The target audience for this event is both Chairs *and* lead officers from Community Safety Partnerships but we know that the landscape is changing and therefore invite and encourage Chairs and leads of any partnership or individual organisation that has community safety within its remit, such as Community Planning, Community Justice etc.

Among the excellent speakers at the event are: Dr Liz Aston, Scottish Institute for Policing Research; Dawn Wheildon, Community Justice Scotland; Alastair Crerar, Head of Organised Crime Policy at ScotGov and Hayley Barnett from COSLA.

Find out more and book your place [here](#).

## Fond farewells and warm congratulations!

### Farewell to Stuart Stevens!

SCSN Board member Stuart Stevens is stepping down from his role having taken up a new post as Deputy Assistant Chief Officer, Strategic Planning and Performance Directorate within the SFRS. SCSN wishes him all the very best in his new role!



We'd like to take this opportunity to thank Stuart for all of his dedication and hard work on behalf of SCSN, particularly his proactive social media championing, which we hope he will keep up in his new role!

### Congratulations to John McKenzie!

Congratulations to another of our board members, John McKenzie, who has taken up a new role in Police Scotland as Commander of J Division.



## Question of the Month

Our Question of the Month for April came from Gil Gillies, Youth Worker and husband of our Chief Officer. He is currently working with Gypsie Travelling people and he asked:

28.1% of Gypsy Traveller Leavers leave school with no qualifications at SCQF level 3 or higher, compared to 1.9% for all secondary school leavers. Is there anything we can do about this?

- 80% of respondents said Yes
- 10% said No and 10% said Not Sure.

## Question of the Month

### May 2019

Our Question of the Month for May comes from Marsha Scott, CEO of Scottish Women's Aid.

She wants to know:

Is your community safety network doing everything it can to keep victims-survivors safe from perpetrators of domestic abuse?

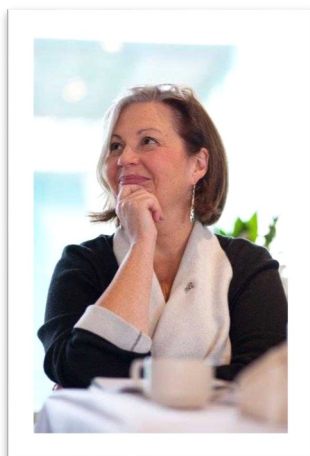
Take part in our poll [here](#)!

## 60 seconds with... Dr Marsha Scott

### CEO Scottish Women's Aid



**In this month's newsletter we focus on work that we are involved in supporting with partners across Scotland on gender based violence and the Equally Safe campaign. To that end we are delighted to be interviewing Marsha Scott, CEO of Scottish Women's Aid for our 60 Seconds this month. Look out for a video version of this interview on our Youtube channel very soon!**



**Congratulations to you and Scottish Women's Aid on your achievements with the new Domestic Violence Act. What difference do you think this could make?**

Thank you! We think Scotland's new Domestic Abuse Act has the potential to shift a number of critical problems. First, in criminalising coercive and controlling behaviours, Scottish law for the first time responds to what victims-survivors have been telling us for 40 years—that it is the emotional and psychological abuse that is the most traumatic, that takes the longest to recover from, and that is ignored most easily by criminal justice mechanisms. Second, the Act frames children's experiences of domestic abuse in an entirely new—and better—way. The aggravator in the Act does not require that children “see, hear, or are present” but reflects what the evidence tells us: if children are in a family with an abuser, they are victims of that abuse.

**What are your reflections on Equally Safe having been involved in this from early on?**

Scotland's human rights approach to VAWG was a necessary (but not sufficient) foundation for developing an effective strategy. The investment by women's and children's rights groups in working with officials to develop *Equally Safe* was critical. Add to that the enabling environment of an Equality Unit that listened to survivors and took seriously the UN

citing of VAWG as a cause and consequence of women's inequality nurtured a sound strategy that identified primary prevention equalled ending women's inequality. The new Act was developed in that environment, and that was essential to a number of its features.

**What do you think community safety and community planning partnerships could do to improve things and drive forward the Equally Safe agenda?**

The evidence from a 70-country study done over 40 years says that the single most important factor for development of good VAWG work is a well-resourced women's rights sector. Invest in your local critical friends, make sure they are at every table where decisions are made about resources, and remember that domestic abuse and sexual violence affect *at least* one out of four women and children and are perpetrated by an equal number of men in your communities. This is the biggest driver of negative outcomes in your partnerships, and you marginalise them and your responses at your peril.

**What do you think will be the potential benefits of gendered analysis data?**

Effective policy and services that are actually designed appropriately, that deliver positive outcomes and stop wasting money and time.

**What wider role do you believe communities could play in the gender based violence/ Equally Safe agenda?**

Communities that harness what I believe is an almost primal belief in fairness, in social justice, in caring will support the hard decisions needed at community level to privilege the needs of those in most need by shifting the playing field for women and children by ending abuse, by increasing their access to local justice, by improving public transport (used more by women and children), by getting serious about child poverty (which is usually also their mothers' poverty), by paying a living wage, by providing child care that is provided around families' needs, and so on. It's all within our local powers if we have the political will.



## Turning the Tide - Working together to prevent drowning in Scotland

Guest blog post by **Carlene McAvoy**,  
**Community Safety Development Manager at RoSPA Scotland**

### **Scotland's rate of accidental drowning is almost double the UK average**

Scotland carries a disproportionate rate of accidental drowning fatalities in comparison to other areas within the UK. This will come as little to surprise given that the country has an [estimated 30,000 freshwater lochs](#) and a huge coastline, giving residents and visitors considerable access to water.

Yet even with this in mind, it is alarming that Scotland's rate of accidental drowning is almost double the UK average – according to statistics collected by the Water Incident Database ([WAID](#)), there were 46 accidental drowning fatalities in Scotland and a further 26 water related suicides in 2017.

Tragically, in [4 in 10 of Scotland's accidental drownings, the person had no intention of entering the water](#). Instead they were participating in healthy and beneficial everyday activities such as walking, running or cycling.

This is a state of affairs that the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) is determined to change through collaboration with other water safety organisations and our partners in Scottish local government.

### **Delivering the Scottish Drowning Prevention Strategy**

In early April of this year, a workshop was organised by RoSPA and RNLI to discuss the management of water safety in Scotland's local authorities. Representatives from Perth and Kinross Council, RoSPA and the Royal National Lifeboat Institution ([RNLI](#)) led workshop sessions at the water safety summit at the RNLI's headquarters in Perth. The event was supported by the Scottish Community Safety Network and Water Safety Scotland and aimed to help local authorities gain a better understanding of water safety policies and their benefits.

**You can continue reading this article in full on our website [here](#).**

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## **Family lives today: where's the risk?**

Child Safety Week runs from 3rd to 9th June 2019 with the aim of reducing the numbers of Scottish children killed or seriously injured by accidents.

Free printed accident prevention resources are available for anyone in Scotland working with families and children, but you need to sign up to get yours [here](#). It takes a few moments – so don't miss out.



Around 40% of (non-neonatal) deaths of Scottish children under 15 are a result of unintentional harm. So many of these accidents can be prevented through simple changes in family routines and behaviour. The first step is awareness of the real risks to children in the home and out and about.

This is why it is so beneficial to register for a free Child Safety Week pack. There's no obligation, it takes a few moments and it means you'll receive the latest information about the most serious accidents and the simple things families and carers can learn that help to prevent them.

You can find out more about Child Safety Week, and the resources available, from the Child Accident Prevention Trust [website](#).

## Analysis of Home Injuries in Scotland: Bridging the Gap - Injury Surveillance



RoSPA Scotland has published an analysis of the currently available data on home injuries in Scotland.

The report shows an increase in injuries and fatalities, particularly home injuries and fatalities in the older age group.

During the five year period, Scotland had an average of 968 fatalities in the over 65s due to unintentional injuries. In 2017/18 there were 1,125 fatalities, 16 per cent above the five-year average.

Within the home, there was an average of 151 fatalities in the over 65s due to unintentional injuries. In 2017/18, there were 171 fatalities, 13 per cent above the five-year average.

Download the full report [here](#).

### Local Government Benchmarking Overview Report 2017/18 published

This is the seventh annual report for the Scottish Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF). All 32 Scottish councils have worked with the Improvement Service (IS) over the last eight years to develop a common approach to benchmarking, which is grounded in reporting standard information on the services councils provide to local communities across Scotland.

There is a continuous improvement programme to refine the benchmarking framework and the current priority is on improving the outcome benchmarks for the health and wellbeing of children, economic development, and outcomes for older people.

Download the report [here](#).

### Improvement Service Business Plan 2019/20 published

The Improvement Service has published its business plan for the coming year. It sets out deliverables and activities for the next year, in the knowledge that a further refocus will take place following the outcome of the IS Strategic Review.

The interim Business Plan for 2019/20 takes forward the commitments set out in the 5-year IS Strategic Plan 2016/21. At the same time, it is also aimed at supporting wider local government strategic objectives endorsed by the IS Board as part of the IS Strategic Review.

Download the IS Business Plan [here](#).

### Preventing Unintentional Harm through collaboration: the role of community safety and public health Friday, 7 June, SFRS Cambuslang, Glasgow

Following the success of last year's event, the Building Safer Communities Unintentional Harm Executive Group is hosting its 2019 event on Friday 7th June.

The focus of this year's event is on how we can collaborate more effectively to prevent and reduce unintentional harm and injury. We are keen to explore the role of community safety and public health within this context, and consider what more needs to be done to enable this to happen. The event will be opened by Ash Denham, Minister for Community Safety. Book your place [here](#).



## Gender Based Violence - Working in Partnership

Continued from front page

Undoubtedly, the commencement of this legislation is bound to have an impact across Scotland, both in terms of those who will rely on this legislation for protection and on those services that offer invaluable help, advice and support to victims. However, it is important to stress that the impact of domestic abuse can be felt across many agencies and organisations and that no single service, agency or organisation is responsible for tackling this issue; it requires a multi-agency response at the local and national level.

With this in mind, it is important that we consider the impact of the legislation in the context of the wider landscape and work on-going across national and local government to prevent and eradicate violence against women and girls

The Domestic Abuse Act directly contributes to the Scottish Government's Building Safer Communities Programme which sets out a vision for "a flourishing, optimistic Scotland in which resilient individuals, families and communities live safe from crime, disorder and harm". It will help to ensure that perpetrators of domestic abuse are held to account for their harmful behaviours and that people and communities affected by domestic abuse are safer and have improved wellbeing.

### Equally Safe

It also forms an integral and important part of the Scottish Government's wider commitment to tackle domestic abuse and all other forms of violence against women and girls through its [Equally Safe Strategy](#). The strategy was developed by the Scottish Government and

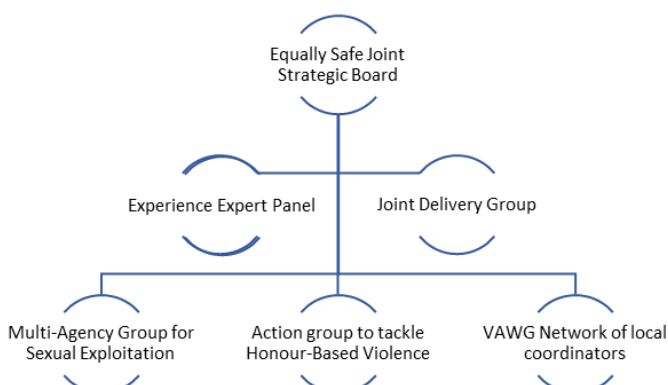
COSLA in association with a wide range of partners from public and third sector organisations and was first published in 2014 with an updated version published in 2016.

In November 2017, the Equally Safe [Delivery Plan](#) was published to complement the strategy and to ensure that that its overarching ambitions were rooted in practical delivery that would make a real difference to the lives of women and girls. Significant progress has been made in relation to a number of actions in the Plan and the Scottish Government and COSLA published the first Equally Safe [update report](#) in November 2018.

The strategy is predicated on a **gendered analysis of violence** that recognises that women and girls are disproportionately affected by different forms of violence precisely **because of their gender**. It also considers violence against women and girls as both a cause and a consequence women's inequality and recognises that, in order to tackle this violence, it is **necessary to tackle the underlying causes and attitudes that help to perpetuate it**. However, the strategy also recognises that interventions must be effective and maximise the safety and well-being of

*"...do everything I could to improve opportunities for women and girls – that's a commitment that's extremely close to my heart. We've taken a range of measures to challenge gender stereotypes, help women's voices to be heard and to tackle violence against women and girls."*

First Minister Nicola Sturgeon speaking to the National Advisory Council to Women and Girls (NACWG)



women and children and that perpetrators of such violence should receive a robust and effective response. That is why significant levels of funding both locally and nationally are being invested in some front line specialist services, including Scottish Women's Aid, Police Scotland and others; and new legislation has been enacted in order to help tackle and prevent violence against women and girls.

To help measure the progress being made to tackle gender-based violence at a local level, the Scottish Government, COSLA and the Improvement Service published the [Equally Safe Quality Standards and Performance Framework](#) in 2018. The Quality Standards aim to raise awareness of the types of services, policies and processes that are most effective in improving the safety of women and girls and capture data on the extent to which they are currently being delivered across Scotland. The performance framework aims to measure the impact that these services, policies and processes are having on the lives of people and communities affected by gender-based violence. Collectively, the resource aims to provide a consistent basis for measuring the progress being made to implement *Equally Safe* at a local level and identify any areas where improvements may be required.

## **A Place for Community Safety Partnerships**

Violence against women and girls breaches a person's human right to dignity, equality, safety, respect and physical and mental wellbeing. It includes but is not limited to domestic abuse, commercial sexual exploitation and other forms of sexual violence such as rape. These are accepted community safety issues and feature frequently as a strategic "priority theme" for Community Safety Partnerships in Scotland, however few CSPs take a gendered or equalities approach to tackling it; and often only focus on sexual violence and domestic abuse.

There are a wide variety of local arrangements through which VAWG is addressed:

- Domestic abuse or VAWG as a CSP priority reporting via the CSP
- A VAW Partnership, sometimes with CSP representation, drives work and reports via social work, public protection and Chief Officer Group (COG) mechanisms.
- There are a small number of partnerships led by CSPs that look at issues through an equally safe 'gender lens', but most CSPs tackle issues of domestic abuse and sexual violence; an approach tackling 'gender-based violence' tends to be led by the local VAW Partnership.
- Few local (or national) analysts look at data according to gender or more

broadly than sexual offences and domestic abuse incidents and offences.

SCSN were involved in the early stages of the work of the joint delivery group for *Equally Safe* and there is a specific commitment (2.29 within the delivery plan) for the Scottish Government to

***"Engage with CSPs to explore how they can embed Equally Safe in their work."***

In the past six months SCSN has spoken to the VAWG coordinators at the national VAWG network and the CSP lead officers and partnership analysts about the intersect between VAWG and community safety, what the change to a gendered approach means and tried to identify opportunities for collaboration.

We have continued our involvement in this area by developing new relationships with the Scottish Government's *Equally Safe* team nationally and COSLA's *Equally Safe* Policy coordinator working across COSLA's policy Boards. We've also shared learning from events we've attended on primary prevention hosted by Zero Tolerance, the Scottish charity working to end men's violence against women by challenging attitudes which normalise it and promoting gender equality.

## **I work for a CSP, What can I do?**

A strategic approach to community planning requires that Community Safety Partnerships and VAW Partnerships coordinate their activities and collaborate effectively towards common goals. Wherever possible, the two Partnerships should explore opportunities to pool their collective resources (e.g. budgets, staff, training) in order to maximise the positive impact of their respective investments in interventions that improve the safety and wellbeing of women and children affected by gender-based violence. There may also be other benefits in working collaboratively such as opportunities to share knowledge and good practice about effective interventions and jointly undertake consultation, needs assessment or progress reporting activity to satisfy requirements for both planning systems.

***Continue reading on page 8....***



## Connect

The Scottish Government and COSLA recognise that a shared understanding of VAWG and local collaboration is key to driving forward the delivery of Equally Safe at a local level. Local connections between VAWG partnerships and CSPs will enrich and enhance progress. SCSN and the Improvement Service are happy to support this and would encourage VAWG coordinators and CSP leads to reach out to one another and make that local connection if it is not there already. Please link with [hannah.dickson@scsn.org.uk](mailto:hannah.dickson@scsn.org.uk) or [Joanna.mclaughlin@improvementservice.org.uk](mailto:Joanna.mclaughlin@improvementservice.org.uk) for any support with this.

## Data and Analysis

We would specifically encourage CSPs to share relevant information and data to support their local VAW Partnership to complete their Equally Safe Quality Standards and Performance Framework data return. The deadline for 2018/19 Data Returns is the 30<sup>th</sup> June 2019.

In collaboration with your local VAW Partnership, we would encourage CSPs to reflect on the Equally Safe principles and ensure that their focus is in line with these principles. In particular to ensure that your partnerships are tackling VAWG and its underlying causes and recognise all forms of VAWG not just domestic abuse or sexual assault. Read our 60 seconds interview with Dr Marsha Scott on page 3 for further thoughts on opportunities to bring these agendas together. We have also been thinking about the role gender plays within the wider safer communities portfolio. Undertaking gendered analysis of community safety data could offer a valuable framework for collecting, examining and interpreting information about the differences in women's and men's experiences of safety within Scotland's communities and how partnerships plan and respond to these potentially differential experiences (for example in the way the experiences of female prisoners has been researched). It will also help ensure that decision making is better informed and joined up across policy areas. Get in touch if you have done this, or would like to work with us on this exciting piece of work at [Hannah.dickson@scsn.org.uk](mailto:Hannah.dickson@scsn.org.uk).

## Participation

At a national level the Scottish Government

has invested to date in a number of participatory programmes through which survivors of VAWG have informed the Equally Safe Delivery Plan. There have also been opportunities for broader participation to explore how Equally Safe can better prevent VAWG by promoting gender equality. The Experience Expert Panel has taken learning and experience from work including WISE Women, Power Up Power Down, Everyday Heroes; people who have lived and informed experience of VAWG.

As work continues to enhance participation we think there is an opportunity to explore locally how survivors can inform and participate in local planning to better inform local approaches to preventing and tackling VAWG in communities. We would like to hear from you if your organisation or partnership has involved survivors or broader citizen groups in conversations about gender inequality and its links to VAWG, expert VAWG and other linked local service support for those affected, and perpetrator responses. Please get in touch at [Hannah.dickson@scsn.org.uk](mailto:Hannah.dickson@scsn.org.uk) and [katie@cosla.gov.uk](mailto:katie@cosla.gov.uk). Broader discussions on gender inequality with communities contribute to the wider participation approaches and link to the broader violence agenda and we'd like to hear about them too.

You can keep up to date with relevant developments through joining the VAW Network KHub and the Equally Safe KHub; and follow them on [Twitter](#) and subscribe to their bulletins.

*Co-Authored by Kirstin McPhee, Scottish Government Equally Safe team, Joanna McLaughlin, Improvement Service Violence Against Women Network lead, Hannah Dickson, SCSN and Katie Brown, COSLA.*

### Grant Programme: Innovative Traffic Calming and Provision for Vulnerable Road Users



The grant programme 'Innovative Traffic Calming and Provision for Vulnerable Road Users' is open for applications until 21 June 2019. Decisions will be made about funding by the Board of Trustees in November 2019.

Their new Grants Policy which contains Guidance for Applicants is now available.

Click [here](#) to make an application.



But an increasing part of the Taskforce's focus is about diverting people away from involvement in organised crime, and deterring criminals from targeting businesses and individuals.

Last year, the Scottish Government published a report, [\*Community Experiences of Serious Organised Crime in Scotland\*](#), that asked people how they felt organised crime impacted them and their local area. This was followed by a conference in Edinburgh which considered the findings emerging from the research.

Both the research and the conference were ground-breaking in the way they involved community members. It was immensely valuable to hear ordinary people's experiences of organised crime in their communities and what they thought would make a real, positive impact to reduce the harm it causes.

One of the most striking findings in the research was that organised crime groups are often more aware than service providers of vulnerable members of the community, but the

research and the conference also showed there are positive things that service providers and citizens can do across every community and every Community Safety Partnership to build community resilience, divert people away from organised crime and protect vulnerable community members.

We are now building on the research by establishing groups of community members in four communities across Scotland to identify specific issues and harms in their community and then potential solutions and actions to address those harms. This work will be community-led. It starts from the principle that community members are the experts on their own communities and are best-placed to understand how to reduce the impact of organised crime in their community.

We are also sharing the findings of the research with policy-makers and practitioners across Scotland, including Community Safety Partnerships, to explore how you can reduce the harm caused by organised crime.

### Missing People Police Survey

The charity Missing People work closely with police forces across the country to support their missing person investigations. They provide a range of services including making and disseminating publicity appeals; reaching out directly to missing people at the request of the police; and providing emotional support to families while someone is missing. More information can be found on their [website](#).

They are seeking to improve the services they offer to police officers and have launched an anonymous survey.

You can take part in the survey [here](#).

### Scottish Government consider rise in age of criminal responsibility

The Scottish Government is to consider raising the age of criminal responsibility in Scotland higher than 12, children's minister Maree Todd has announced.

The Age of Criminal Responsibility Bill, which would increase the age at which a child can be held responsible for a crime from eight to 12 is currently making its way through parliament. Todd has announced that a new group will be set up to consider whether the age should be raised higher still as some have called for.

We (SCSN) are involved in the 'victims delivery group' as part of the process and will be part of the group of partners working through the timetable to implementation and will share updates via newsletter wherever we can. If any partner wants to chat re community safety impact then please get in touch with [Hannah.dickson@scsn.org.uk](mailto:Hannah.dickson@scsn.org.uk).

## Upcoming Partner Events

### **'Secured by Design' Products day at the Scottish Police College, Tulliallan, Kincardine on Forth, 6<sup>th</sup> June**



This event is an opportunity for those involved in the areas of Design, Planning, Building Control, Maintenance, Security, Housebuilding and Registered Social Landlords to meet with SBD accredited suppliers and view first hand some of the latest products that have achieved Secured by Design Police Preferred accreditation. Products on display will include a range of windows and doors, access control systems, locks and hardware, fencing, bollards and many other security related products. There will also be selected product CPD presentations taking place during the day within the conference rooms at the Police College from Videx, CLD fencing, Martec and an exciting new Plasterboard product from British Gypsum, full details and timings will be forwarded of those available on registration.

Due to security constraints and the current threat level, pre-registration is required for access to the Police College on the day, however, registration will be accepted up to the 4<sup>th</sup> June. If you would like to book a space at this **free to attend** event, please reply to [architectural.liaison@scotland.pnn.police.uk](mailto:architectural.liaison@scotland.pnn.police.uk) or contact directly on 01592 418461.

### **No Knives Better Lives Network Event: Exploring how to deliver key messages on risks and consequences**

The No Knives, Better Lives network is an opportunity for partners from across Scotland to come together and discuss risks and consequences and No Knives, Better Lives. There is an exciting agenda for the day covering:

**No knives, better lives.**  
[www.noknivesbetterlives.com](http://www.noknivesbetterlives.com)

- No Knives Better Lives National Delivery Team sharing updates
- Speakers to be confirmed

Registration will open at 9.45am and the sessions will start at 10am. The event will close at 3pm. Lunch and refreshments will be provided. This event is specifically designed for teachers, youth workers, Police Officers and other practitioners working with young people.

Book your place [here](#).

### **Fifth International Conference on Law Enforcement & Public Health**



With an overarching theme of 'Collaborative Leadership', the conference will present a multi-focused Conference Program that will address three main areas:

- Substantive issues – all the particular issues in which the police-public health partnership is important
- Organisational issues – how to best achieve optimal and sustainable partnerships
- Reflection and methodological issues – creating a science of the public health and law enforcement intersection

Find out more and book you place [here](#).

## In other news...

news

### Consultations open for responses

#### Strengthening Fire Safety for High Rise Domestic Buildings

The Scottish Government is gathering information and views on proposed actions to strengthen **fire safety for people who live in high rise domestic buildings**.

Find out more and submit a response [here](#).



#### Reviewing the fee for occasional licenses and considering a limit on the number and duration of occasional licences

The Scottish Government is consulting on whether to make changes to the fee for occasional licensing to ensure that applicants aren't circumventing parts of the licensing regime.

You can find out more and submit to this consultation [here](#).

#### Proposed Stalking Protection (Scotland) Bill: Consultation

The dramatic rise in stalking offences since 2012 has led to calls, from victims of stalking and relevant stakeholders, for victims of these crimes to be given greater protection. A survey by the Scottish Government in 2017/18 found 27% of women aged 16-24 had experienced at least one incident of stalking in the previous year. Overall 11% of adults experienced at least one type of stalking and harassment in 12 months.

Rona Mackay MSP has introduced a private members bill in response and is seeking responses to a consultation on the bill. You can find out more and submit a response [here](#).

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#### Vulnerable Witnesses Bill Passed Unanimously by Scottish Parliament

MSPs have unanimously passed "milestone" legislation that will allow child witnesses to pre-record evidence ahead of trials to spare them the trauma of appearing in court.

The changes in the Vulnerable Witnesses Bill are intended to minimise further distress to children who have experienced or witnessed serious crimes such as murder, sexual assault or human trafficking.

It is also expected that it will improve the quality of evidence that they can give as it will be recorded at an earlier stage in proceedings. Read more [here](#).

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#### SHARE YOUR NEWS!

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](mailto:info@scsn.org.uk)

The closing date for the June newsletter is 7 June.





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