



## August 2023

The SCSN Media Monitor provides a snapshot of Community Safety related media/press stories from across Scotland, the UK and sometimes internationally.

Some of the stories are not from Scotland, but are included as developments in the rest of the UK and internationally may be relevant to community safety here in Scotland and we hope will be of interest and contribute to sector conversations.

We will only source articles from media/press sources that correspond with our values as an organisation and that refrain from using stigmatising language or images.

## Crime & Justice

### **Crimestoppers' youth service launches campaign to encourage youngsters to "be safe and make positive choices this summer"**

Coinciding with the start of the Lanarkshire school holidays, Fearless, the youth service of charity Crimestoppers, has launched a new campaign to encourage youngsters to "be safe and make positive choices this summer".

The organisation has chosen to lead with a "pro-social" behaviour stance rather than traditional anti-social behaviour messaging, using artwork featuring young people explaining what pro-social behaviour means to them. The campaign also seeks to challenge the myths and negative stereotyping around anti-social behaviour. - Read more [here](#).

### **Police patrols lead to drop in anti-social behaviour**

High profile policing has helped to see a 17% drop in anti-social behaviour incidents in West Lothian. Local police commanders conceded extra resources had to be put into hotspots including Livingston's shopping centre and Black Moss in Armadale.

"Management and Security have been working alongside police, West Lothian Council, education officers as well as young people services to help tackle these issues. These included additional local police patrols and reinstating youth workers. Senior officers have attended several meetings with management." - Read more [here](#).

### **Co-op warns rising crime could create 'no-go' areas for shops**

The Co-op has warned some communities could become "no-go" areas for shops due to soaring levels of retail crime.

The convenience store operator said crime in its outlets had hit record levels, increasing by more than one third over the past year. There were about 1,000 cases of crime, shoplifting and anti-social behaviour in its shops every day in the six months to June, the chain said. - Read more [here](#).

## **Projected surge in female prison population is 'incredibly worrying', says charity**

A rise in crime since the pandemic, longer jail sentences and court backlogs are projected to lead to a rise in the female prison population, which a charity has told Sky News they're "incredibly worried" about.

Despite numbers falling in the past five years, the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) estimates a female prison population of 4,300 by July 2025 - almost a 30% increase of the present population. - Read more [here](#).

## **Victorian prison ill-suited to demands - inspector**

Inspectors have called for a 100-year-old Victorian-style prison to be replaced due to concerns about the condition of the facility. In a report, HM Inspectorate of Prisons for Scotland (HMIPS) called for a new prison estate to replace HMP Greenock, following a visit in March. The report praised the staff, but said the building was "ill-suited" to the demands of a modern-day prison. - Read more [here](#).

## **Despite Scotland's presumption against short prison sentences, about 75% of inmates were jailed for six months or less in 2020-21 – Karyn McCluskey**

How long after New Year did your resolution disappear? What made you crack? The last unopened box of chocolates staring wistfully at you every time you opened the cupboard door? Your insistence you weren't waterproof enough to go running on cold January evenings? Lots of great intentions, policies and practices can slip back into old ways and it takes sunlight and commitment to reinvigorate them.

Back in July 2019, the Scottish Government extended the presumption against short sentences to under 12 months. This means a court should not jail someone for a year or less unless it considers no other sentence is appropriate. It's a laudable and evidence-based move, with an understanding that the revolving door of short sentences provides no time to work with people on their offending. - Read more [here](#).

## **Prisoners like me are left homeless and sleeping in tents once we are released, how can we start again? (Comment)**

Nearly 16 years ago, Michael hurled a brick through a window of a building just so he could cause damage and go back to **prison**. "I was homeless, I had nothing," the now 46-year-old tells **i**. "I was shoplifting food from supermarkets to feed myself. In prison, we had three meals a day."

Since he was 16, Michael has been in and out of prison for drug-related offences. His drug habit started as a way to drown out certain parts of his past, but it became an addiction. To get the drugs he depended on, he also sold drugs, an offence that kept putting him back behind bars. - Read more [here](#).

## **I started work as a prison officer full of optimism, but in a rat-infested jail I saw the ugly, violent reality (Opinion)**

I've been asked many times why I became a prison officer. People don't often ask me why I quit. But the reasons are very similar. I was 22 years old when I joined the Prison Service, a young woman starting at a high security men's prison in Cambridgeshire. I can still remember how nervous I felt, how shiny my unworn boots looked, how heavy those keys felt in my pocket. - Read more [here](#).

## **Peek inside HMP Grampian as new in-cell landlines rolled out for inmates**

The Scottish Prison Service is introducing new in-cell landline phones across all its prisons – including HMP Grampian in Peterhead.

These will replace prison-issued mobile phones, which were introduced in July 2020, as a temporary measure during the Covid pandemic when in person visits were restricted. The installation of the hard-wired phones was completed at HMP Grampian this week and the temporary mobiles will all be removed from the prison this Saturday.

Justice Secretary Angela Constance visited the facility where she hailed the positive impact the move would have on inmates and reoffending. - Read more [here](#).

## **Appeal court overturns Manchester rape conviction of man who spent 17 years in jail**

A man who spent 17 years in prison for rape has had his conviction overturned by the court of appeal.

Andrew Malkinson was convicted in 2004 of raping a 33-year-old woman who was left for dead on a motorway embankment in Salford, Greater Manchester. After enduring two decades of being labelled a sex offender, Malkinson, 57, had his conviction quashed on Wednesday after a DNA breakthrough. - Read more [here](#).

## **Rape reform programme extended across England and Wales**

Women who have made rape complaints have told BBC News that police and court systems are still "weighted in favour of the accused", despite a new programme piloted by 19 police forces. [Operation Soteria](#) is being extended to all 43 police areas in England and Wales. - Read more [here](#).

## **Violence Against Women & Girls**

### **'I had to go to England for my abortion because Scotland told me no'**

The number of women travelling from Scotland to England to receive later abortion care has increased by 55% in the past year, new figures show. In 2021, the number of women travelling to England was 42 but in 2022, new figures from the British Pregnancy Advice Service (BPAS), seen exclusively by STV News, show this increased to 65. Since 2019, 282 women have travelled from Scotland to England to attain the service. - Read more [here](#).

## **Judge's reduction of sentence for abortion shows how law must change, say campaigners**

Prosecutors have been urged to heed a judge's call for "compassion, not punishment" after the court of appeal halved a woman's sentence for [terminating her pregnancy beyond the legal time limit](#). Carla Foster, 45, was sentenced to more than two years in prison after she admitted illegally procuring her own abortion when she was between seven and eight months pregnant. - Read more [here](#).

## **Laura Whitmore on incels, rough sex and cyber stalking**

Broadcaster Laura Whitmore is arguably most famous for appearing on shows with a "fluffy façade", such as Love Island and Celebrity Juice, but her upcoming TV series could not be more different. It started as a documentary idea about incels - young men describing themselves as "involuntarily celibate", who hold misogynistic beliefs, with some launching violent attacks. - Read more [here](#).

## Alcohol & Other Drugs

### Westminster must not prevent Scotland decriminalising drugs (Opinion)

Decriminalisation of drugs – all drugs – would draw so much poison from society. Its chief benefit is obvious: an immediate halt to the ghastly revolving door of addiction, imprisonment, homelessness and death.

Money spent on jail can go towards rehabilitation and health care, resources woefully underfunded. So the Scottish Government must be applauded for its bravery in calling for decriminalisation of all drugs for personal use. It's a move which everyone who understands the world of crime and addiction knows is the only intelligent step. - Read more [here](#).

### Scottish police officer wants to change drug laws

Just recently the Scottish Government announced [proposals to decriminalise](#) the personal possession of drugs and explore a roadmap to legal regulation. Their proposals show a commitment to treating drugs as a matter of health, rather than a criminal issue. If Westminster were to allow Scotland to move forward with these proposals, we could see a drastic reduction in drug deaths and see Scotland shed the title as the *drug death capital of Europe*.

This blog is written by Ian Andrew, a member of [Law Enforcement Action Partnership](#) (LEAP) Scotland. - Read more [here](#).

### 'Alarming' increase in drug-related A&E attendances

Medics have called for urgent action to halt Scotland's drug crisis after figures revealed an "alarming" increase in drug-related A&E attendances.

A total of 1,081 people were seen in Scotland's emergency departments due to drugs between March and May this year, an increase of 13% compared to the same three-month period in 2022. This was slightly higher than the 1,058 drug-related attendances reported in March-May 2021. - Read more [here](#).

### Reduce 'scandalous' drink drive limit, doctors urge

England's "scandalous" [drink driving](#) limit is "behind the times" and should be tightened so motorists can no longer get behind the wheel after having a pint of beer or glass of wine, doctors have said. Police advise against any drinking before driving but the law in England and Wales, set in 1967, states that the legal limit is 80mg per 100ml of blood - equivalent to one or two drinks. - Read more [here](#).

## Wellbeing Economy/Poverty

### First Minister Humza Yousaf urged to turn wellbeing economy 'rhetoric into reality'

More than 200 charities, economists, businesses, trade unions and academics have called on First Minister Humza Yousaf to set out a plan for the creation of a wellbeing economy.

The idea that underpins the wellbeing economy is that progress in areas such as reducing inequality and tackling poverty is measured alongside economic growth. The Scottish Government recently appointed a wellbeing economy minister, Neil Gray, to help deliver the change. - Read more [here](#).

## **Charities call for an end to two-child limit on benefits**

Children's charities have called on the leaders of the UK's political parties to remove the two-child limit policy for benefits.

Fresh figures show released today that 1 in 10 children are now affected by the policy, with more than 80,000 of them living in Scotland. The two-child limit restricts child allowances in universal credit (UC) and tax credits, worth up to £3,235 a year, to the first two children in a family with a few exceptions. - Read more [here](#).

## **Cyber Security/Crime**

### **University working with police and government after cyber attack**

A Scottish university has suffered a major cyber attack affecting most of its systems.

The University of the West of Scotland (UWS) said it is working with experts from the national cyber security centre, Police Scotland and the Scottish Government after its website was shut down for several days. - Read more [here](#).

### **AI could worsen epidemic of child sexual abuse, warns UK crime agency**

Artificial intelligence could further fuel an epidemic of child sexual abuse, Britain's top law enforcement agency has warned, as it said that one in every 50 men pose a risk to children.

The National [Crime](#) Agency (NCA) estimates that up to 830,000 adults – 1.6% of the adult population – represent some degree of sexual danger to children, a figure labelled "extraordinary" by its director general, Graeme Biggar. - Read more [here](#).

## **General Community Safety/Local Government**

### **Concern as firefighters no longer go to all automatic alarms**

Concerns have been raised over a move by the fire service to stop responding to all automatic alarms in a bid to cut unnecessary callouts. The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service's new policy is to establish if the alarm has been triggered by an actual fire. Crews will not attend premises such as schools, offices and places of worship unless a fire is confirmed. - Read more [here](#).

### **I'm a postie who narrowly survived a dog attack. Your 'best friend' can be our worst enemy (Opinion)**

On my work as a postie, I am constantly aware of the possibility that I might be randomly mauled by a dog, simply for doing my job. Certainly, I am no stranger to it. My own experience of being attacked is a harrowing one – but one that will be familiar to many postal workers. - Read more [here](#).

### **Reshaping Scotland's public services (Comment)**

Scotland's local public services, especially in a post-COVID era face significant challenges – the sectors may even be unsustainable in the current form – exacerbated here by more entrenched demographic, economic and policy challenges. Culturally and financially, there is greater dependence on the public sector in Scotland than in the rest of the UK. As well as [employing almost a quarter of its people](#) (compared to [under a fifth](#) for the UK), frontline public services are impacted by historically lower economic growth and corresponding levels of unemployment, poverty and poor health. - Read more [here](#).



## **'Era of global boiling has arrived,' says UN chief as July set to be hottest month on record**

The era of global warming has ended and "the era of global boiling has arrived", the UN secretary general, António Guterres, has said after scientists confirmed July was on track to be the world's hottest month on record.

"Climate change is here. It is terrifying. And it is just the beginning," Guterres said. "It is still possible to limit global temperature rise to 1.5C [above pre-industrial levels], and avoid the very worst of climate change. But only with dramatic, immediate climate action." - Read more [here](#).

## **Gulf Stream could collapse as early as 2025, study suggests**

The Gulf Stream system could collapse as soon as 2025, a new study suggests. The shutting down of the vital ocean currents, called the Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation (Amoc) by scientists, would bring catastrophic climate impacts. Amoc was already known to be at its [weakest in 1,600 years](#) owing to global heating and researchers spotted [warning signs of a tipping point](#) in 2021. - Read more [here](#).

## **Climate change plan will leave UK unprepared, advisers warn**

The UK is still not treating climate change as a national priority, warn the experts who advise the government. They criticised the latest government climate change adaptation plan for not containing any substantial new money or new legislation.

The five-year programme, released on Monday, includes measures to tackle overheating and flooding. - Read more [here](#).

## **Contempt threat against climate activist may undermine trial by jury, lawyers say**

Leading lawyers have accused the government of undermining trial by jury after a climate activist was told she faces contempt proceedings over holding a sign outside court. The placard allegedly held by Trudi Warner, 68, outside a trial of fellow climate activists in March, read: "Jurors: you have an absolute right to acquit a defendant according to your conscience." - Read more [here](#).

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