



Neighbourhood
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A public health approach to reducing crime

Guest blog from Niven Rennie,
Director, Violence Reduction
Unit

2020 hasn't been the best of years. There aren't too many silver linings to a global pandemic, but what has been encouraging to see is the renewed appreciation for public health. 'Viral load' and 'R numbers' have become part of everyday dinner table conversation as people learn more about the life-saving science striving to keep them, their family and their community safe.



The SVRU have been card-carrying members of the World Health Organisation's Violence Prevention Alliance for more than a decade. But why is a police unit a member of a health body? Like the WHO we believe violence is a disease. It sounds strange to compare the two, but plot the outbreaks of violence on a map, as epidemiologist Gary Slutkin did in Chicago, and you'll see they follow the same epidemic curves as a viral outbreak.

Just as public health experts around the world are doing right now with Covid 19, Scotland has been applying a public health approach to reducing violence since 2005. It is a systematic method of gathering data on the outbreak, analysing the causes, developing interventions and rolling out what works across the country. Rather than just treating the symptoms of the disease – physical abuse, assaults, homicides – we look for the root causes and how we can intervene to stop the spread and escalation of violence.

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COSLA launches a new Blueprint for Scottish Local Government

The Blueprint will allow Local Government to build around an ambitious vision for Scotland's future - one based on the empowerment of people and communities.

The document ([which can be viewed here](#)) has been framed around 6 themes,

- Strengthening Local Democracy
- Funding Services and Communities
- Wellbeing – including Health and Social Care
- Education and Children and Young People
- Economy and the Environment
- Supporting Vulnerable Communities

Speaking as he launched the Blueprint, Councillor Graham Houston COSLA's Vice-President said: "The Blueprint we are launching today provides a narrative around the kind of country we want, and about the changes that could make a real difference to communities across the country."

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SCSN AGM - 1st October 2020

The SCSN AGM will take place online for the first time on the 1st of October this year due to the ongoing pandemic restrictions. This date will also see the launch of our Annual Report for 2019/20, as well as the launch of our revamped website! The theme for AGM this year is '**What makes communities safe?**'

Speakers at our AGM include:

- Andy Martin, Team Leader, Community Safety, Aberdeenshire Council
- Alastair Muir, Chief Inspector, Deputy Director of the Violence Reduction Unit
- Colin Convery, Chief Inspector, Safer Communities Police Scotland
- Gemma Fraser, Improvement Lead, Community Justice Scotland

Our AGM will take place on Microsoft Teams and is an open event for Community Safety stakeholders.

The event link can be found [here](#).

SCSN launch new Community Safety Media Monitor

During the early stages of the Covid 19 pandemic, we began publishing a Covid 19 Media Monitor, collecting together the latest news articles around the pandemic relative to community safety. As the volume of news and stories around Covid 19 has begun to subside, we've decided that along with reverting to one newsletter per month, we would continue to publish a general Community Safety Media Monitor!

We'll be publishing this roughly every two weeks and you can access our first Media Monitor and all subsequent editions on our website [here](#).

Question of the Month

Our Question of the Month for August was based around our [Conversation With Dr Christine Goodall](#) of Scottish Health Action on Alcohol Problems (SHAAP). We discussed issues around alcohol arising from the Covid 19 pandemic, including anti-social behaviour, domestic violence, unintentional harm and more.

We asked:

Have you been aware of increases in anti-social behaviour related to alcohol use in your area since lockdown restrictions began to ease?

- **33.3% said Yes**
- **53.3% said No**
- **13.3% said Not sure**

Question of the Month September 2020

Our Question of the Month for September relates to our 'Conversations with' interview with Niven Rennie, Director of the Violence Reduction Unit in Scotland (see page 3) where we discussed the work of the VRU and changing attitudes to crime, punishment and how we can best keep communities safe.

We're asking:

Do you believe that we put people in prison too easily?

You can take part in our poll [here](#).

SCSN Conversations with...

Niven Rennie, Director

Violence Reduction Unit, Scotland



Our 'Conversations with' interview this month is with Niven Rennie, Director of the Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) in Scotland. The VRU was recently featured in a BBC Panorama programme looking at the success Scotland has had in reducing violence by taking a public health approach rather than traditionally tougher/punitive approaches - whether this model serves as one that should be enacted across the UK and explaining how this evidence based, recovery oriented approach actually makes communities safer places.

We discussed all of this and more with Niven in this [not to be missed interview!](#)

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Often the answer is intervention at the earliest point possible. We know that adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) increase a child's chance of becoming in the years that follow, a victim and/or a perpetrator of violence, along with a host of other negative experiences in their lives. The ACEs movement has gathered real pace which has been exciting to witness. However, being trauma informed is just the first step, we will only really make a difference if we use that knowledge to change the way we interact with children at every level of society.

We have a once in a generation chance right now to do just that...a chance to recharge, regroup and regenerate. Yes, the pandemic and its economic consequences will throw up new and difficult challenges, but it will also open the door to a different way of doing things. In Scotland we know change, however hard, is possible, because we've done it before. In 2004/5 Scotland was among the most violent places to live in the developed world. We've seen homicide levels, especially in Glasgow, fall dramatically to levels last seen in the 1970s. Scotland achieved this by

changing the way we did things and pulling together across policing, health, education and of course communities.

However, those big initial declines we saw in violence have levelled off. The number of homicide cases in Scotland has remained at around 60 deaths a year for nearly a decade now. So once again, we must think and act differently if we want to see different outcomes. This time however we start with the knowledge that there is nothing inevitable about violence. We know that if we follow the evidence lives can and will be saved and communities healed. Together we can make 2021 the dawn of a safer Scotland for all.

Reading Recommendations



If you'd like to learn more about trauma and how it affects human brain development and behaviour we recommend reading:

The Body Keeps the Score - Dr Bessel van der Kolk

When the Body Says No - Dr Gabor Mate

Road Safety Framework to 2030 Consultation Opens

The Scottish Government Consultation on the Road Safety Framework to 2030 is now open. The Road Safety Framework to 2030 sets out a compelling long-term vision for road safety, Vision Zero, where there are zero fatalities and injuries on Scotland's roads by 2050. The journey to achieving this vision will also include ambitious interim targets where the number of people being killed or seriously injured on our roads will be halved by 2030.



Views are being sought to inform proposals for achieving the targets which will be crucial to Scotland having the best road safety performance in the world.

SCSN Development Manager Hannah Dickson said: "As a member of the Road Safety Operational Partnership Group in Scotland and part of the stakeholder group working on the strategy we're delighted to see the consultation on the Road Safety Framework to 2030 published today. We'd encourage everyone with an interest in road safety to submit their response. SCSN will be submitting a response to this consultation and will be publishing via our normal channels."

You can find out more and take part in the consultation [here](#).

Funding available - Road Safety Trust

A £300,000 fund has been opened to help local authorities respond to changing road use and emerging road safety issues as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.



Launched by the Road Safety Trust, the fund will be open to applications on 15th September 2020 for five weeks. Each project will get between £20,000 and £50,000.

Since it was established in 2014, the Road Safety Trust has awarded grants worth £3.7m to 49 different projects.

Sally Lines, chief executive of Road Safety Trust said:

"We are pleased to be able to reintroduce our grant-giving this year and be responsive to current road safety issues with our Small Grants Plus Programme to help smaller local projects around the UK. We are focusing this round of funding on the changing road use and emerging safety issues as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Projects should have the potential for being brought to scale, with the ultimate goal of reducing deaths and injuries both locally, and across the UK."

Find out more and apply [here](#).

Road Safety Week 2020

16-22 November

Road Safety Week is the UK's biggest road safety event, coordinated annually by Brake which aims to inspire thousands of schools, organisations and communities to take action on road safety and promote life-saving messages during the week and beyond.

It also provides a focal point for professionals working in road safety to boost awareness and engagement in their work.

Every year a different road safety theme is set upon which to focus and for 2020 is "NO NEED TO SPEED."

Find out more [here](#).

Governments commit to halving road traffic deaths and injuries in new decade of action



The UN General Assembly recently adopted resolution A/74/L.86 "Improving global road safety", proclaiming the Second Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030, with the ambitious target of preventing at least 50% of road traffic deaths and injuries by 2030.

WHO and the UN regional commissions, in cooperation with other partners in the UN Road Safety Collaboration, are invited to develop a new plan of action for the Second Decade. The plan of action, currently being initiated by members of the UN Road Safety Collaboration for consideration by Member States and other stakeholders, will provide a framework for achieving the Second Decade's target.

To generate political will, the UN General Assembly also decided to convene a high-level meeting of the UN General Assembly on road safety no later than the end of 2022. The resolution also endorses the Stockholm Declaration, approved during the Third Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety held in February 2020, and encourages Member States to favor policies to promote walking, cycling and using public transport as inherently healthy and environmentally sound modes of transport.

"In a post-pandemic world, we must take the opportunity of these unprecedented times to reimagine mobility, to make it safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable," notes Dr Etienne Krug, WHO Director of the Department of Social Determinants of Health. "Road safety is at the heart of making this vision a reality."

Find out more [here](#).

Society of Evidence Based Policing Updates

The Society of Evidence Based Policing has been gathering together resources including from the London Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime's (MOPAC) Evidence and Insight Unit that produce regular horizon scans.

You can view the collection of resources, including the Global Policing Database (searchable database capturing published and unpublished evaluations of policing interventions since the 1960's) and the College of Policing's Crime Reduction Toolkit (allowing users to weigh up evidence on the impact, cost and implementation of different interventions) [here](#).

You may also wish to view their 2020 Conference website with links to useful expert podcasts [here](#)

Scottish Institute for Policing Research (SIPR) Annual Report published

The Scottish Institute for Policing Research



The SIPR has recently published it's Annual Report for 2019/20.

The report includes sections highlighting SIPR's work with our policing partners, activity associated with each of our networks, the postgraduate community, and some examples of international and partnership activity.

In her director's introduction, Dr Liz Aston, highlights some of the key work SIPR has been engaged in over 2019/20 to improve their strategic focus, processes and governance - including the launch of their strategic plan for 2019-2024.

Download the SIPR Annual Report [here](#).

Focus on: Community Safety via evidence based approaches to crime

New Research Project: Trauma informed practice in Scottish Community Safety Partnerships - Steph Crisp

Before beginning this PhD research project at the University of Stirling, I worked in various community safety roles in inner London for over ten years. Most recently, I was a community safety lead for youth crime and serious youth violence which included our work on Child Criminal Exploitation (County Lines). It was in this role that I developed an interest in the impacts of trauma and the implementation of Trauma-Informed Practice (TIP) in community safety contexts.

Much of the current research about TIP emphasises the importance of understanding trauma as a social phenomenon, as opposed to solely seeing it as a kind of illness and how that illness impacts on individual people. We already know there is an unequal distribution of trauma's effects in society, with more people from disadvantaged backgrounds affected. The events of 2020 have thrown this sharply into relief, and we don't yet know what the full repercussions will be, nor what each new day will bring. For those involved in delivering public services, this is an important time to reflect on the nature and impact of social trauma.

So far, the implementation of TIP has tended to focus on interventions with individual people, for example through screening for Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), specialist medical intervention, or seeking to change individuals' behaviours through parenting courses or staff training. There is as yet relatively little research (especially in the UK) that examines if or how the principles of TIP are being implemented in settings which have more explicitly community-oriented remits, concerned with broader social conditions and environments. The project will explore some of these issues by looking at the day to day

practices that are involved in community safety work, seeking to understand what this can tell us about the implementation of Trauma-Informed Practice and what it means to be trauma-informed.

This research is taking place during a time of immense challenge and uncertainty for public services, with rapid change happening to how they are being delivered, to their priorities and to the demands being placed on their resources. The project will therefore also explore how all of the above is being impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, and what the experiences of those working in this field can tell us.

By taking stock of where we are now and reflecting on these issues, it is hoped that the findings will benefit community safety work across Scotland and crucially, the communities who come into contact with those services. My aim is to capture and generate insights that can support future service design and delivery and, with the support and guidance of the Scottish Community Safety Network, to disseminate these insights in ways that are practical and useful to those working in the field. I shall be looking for professionals working in a wide range of roles relating to community safety in Scotland, to share their experiences with me.

SCSN will be hosting a webinar where you can find out more about the work from Steph, what participation in the work would entail and how to get involved. We will provide more details on this in October.

If you would like to know more about the study or to take part, please contact Stephanie Crisp at: s.j.crisp@stir.ac.uk Data collection will start around November / December time depending on ethical approval.

New disclosure provisions to come into effect

Changes to rules about previous criminal convictions which people need to disclose to prospective employers will take effect this year.

The reforms will, from 30 November, reduce the length of time that many convictions need to be disclosed by most job applicants, or in other instances such as when applying for insurance.

For those aged 18 or older at time of conviction, a six month custodial sentence would need to be disclosed for two-and-a-half years rather than the current period of seven years.

Meanwhile a fine will be considered 'spent', and therefore not needing to be disclosed, after 12 months rather than the current five years.

For those under 18 when convicted, the disclosure period for a six month prison

sentence will be reduced from three-and-half years to one-and-half years and a fine will be six months instead of two-and-a-half years.

More than a third of adult men in Scotland have been estimated to have a criminal record and the reforms were supported across the Parliament when the Management of Offenders (Scotland) Act was passed in 2019.

The reforms will not change disclosure periods for more serious convictions which result in prison sentences above four years. Nor will disclosure rules for sensitive occupations such as teaching or medicine be altered.

"These important reforms balance the requirement for safeguards to understand a person's recent offending behaviour with the need to allow people to move on with their lives – to seek gainful employment, support their families and contribute positively to their communities.

You can read explanatory notes on the changes being made [here](#).

Crime Inequality Webinars

The University of Edinburgh, as part of their Understanding Inequalities (UI) Project, is hosting a series of webinars in October exploring the nature, origins and impacts of inequality.

Of particular relevance to Community Safety in this series are two webinars on uncovering insights into some of the drivers of crime inequality and key lessons for policing and practice.

Changing inequality in exposure to crime webinar | Thursday 1 October, 3pm – 4.30pm (BST)

Event registration and further information [here](#)

Shaping policing responses to crime inequality

Wednesday 14 October, 3pm-4.30pm (BST)

Event registration and further information [here](#).

Street Cones launches short film 'Something to Lose'



Commissioned by Community Justice Glasgow 'Something to Lose' follows the fictional journey of a young man on a Community Payback Order 'CPO' and the impact it has on his life (as an alternative to a short term prison sentence).

Directed by [ADAM ROBERTSON](#) and Written by [MARK MACNICOL](#) the film also interviews both Justice Professionals and individuals issued with CPOs. In line with our commitment to lived experience the lead actor JAMES GREIG has previously spent time on a CPO.

You can view the video [here](#).

Youth Justice- A rights-based approach to getting it right

We recently attended a seminar from Red Harbour on youth justice and how a rights-based approach could be key to changing the system for the better.

Dr Claire Lightowler – Director of the Children and Young People's Centre for Justice, presented on her work '[Rights Respecting? Scotland's approach to children in conflict with the law](#)', which is a seminal piece of work and the first of its kind to translate the UNCRC into Scottish specific actions to improve policy, practice and experience in youth justice. Dr Lightowler also discussed the overall policy direction of youth justice in Scotland and the journey we are still on to getting it right. She explained the need for a cultural and attitudinal change towards thinking of children as rights holders and defenders and how, until we begin to do this, we are not in-keeping with the UNCRC. There is clearly a real opportunity with the incorporation of UNCRC into Scot's Law to progress a rights and entitlement-based approach in Scotland going forward.

We also heard from Martin Dorchester, Chief Executive of Includem and Amy, a young person who is supported by Includem and has lived experience of the youth justice system in Scotland. They discussed the importance of a rights based approach in terms of early intervention, public awareness and perceptions and understanding root causes. In the ensuing presentations and discussions, some related key themes also emerged....

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

Do our attitudes to crime and punishment promote safer communities?

By David Barbour, SCSN Communications Officer

A few recent prominent media stories got our team, and myself in turn, interested in thinking more about this. The first was the case of a [15 year old boy arrested and charged with the killing of a Shetland pony](#) in West Lothian. It brought about strong feeling. Comments on social media around this case from members of the public expressed shock – but they also expressed uncompromising vitriol and a desire for retribution and harsh treatment against the 15 year old boy who committed the crime.

Another example shortly thereafter was the [arrest of a 12 year old boy from Solihull in England for sending racist tweets to the footballer Wilfried Zaha](#), announced by West Midlands Police on Twitter with the somewhat triumphal sounding hashtag #ARRESTED with the assertion that 'racism won't be tolerated.'

Following on from this, we saw a return to the news of the Shamima Begum case, the young girl who at age 15 left the UK to travel to Syria to join ISIS, as the [UK Government takes its case to the UK Supreme Court to stop her from returning to the UK](#) to fight her case

against being stripped of her UK citizenship. You may be well aware that comments on social media regarding this case have been of the pitchfork and flaming torch, 'hanging's too good for her' variety. The UK Government appears minded to sympathise with such thinking.

However, as [Scottish Sentencing Guideline proposals](#) take into account, the evidence shows that young people in particular are less able to take responsibility for, or appreciate the consequences of their actions; are more vulnerable to peer pressure and exploitative relationships and are more likely to take risks. They also have a greater potential to be rehabilitated. SCSN agrees that rehabilitation should be the core consideration when sentencing young people.

Trauma, crime and young people

We know that childhood trauma and [adverse childhood experiences](#) (ACEs) do not only have an impact on a person's health over the life course, making it much more likely they will suffer from mental health problems, physical health problems and addictions – but can also manifest in criminal behaviour, including violent, sexual and other crimes too.

Read the blog in full on our website [here](#).

**Latest Neighbourhood
Watch Scotland
News and Alert Updates
Rural Safety Advice - Harvest
Season**



Neighbourhood Watch SCOTLAND

With harvest season well under way and farmers making the most of each dry day in the coming weeks, Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks (SSEN) is urging everyone working in the fields to **“look out, look up”** and avoid coming into contact with overhead power lines.

Modern farm machinery can often tower over its smaller 20th century predecessors, and with some modern combine harvesters extending as tall as 4m, there is a real danger that farmers and their colleagues focused on the harvest may forget about overhead electricity lines in the fields where they are working, an oversight that has the potential to cause serious injury, or worse, to those involved.

To read this story in full, click [here](#).

Latest Cyber Resilience Bulletin Published

As a result of the significant rise in COVID-19 related scams, over the next few months the Scottish Government Cyber Resilience Unit will share important information. They aim to update the Bulletin on a regular basis and ask that you consider circulating the information to your networks, adapting it where you see fit. Advice and information is changing daily as they navigate our way through the COVID -19 pandemic, so please ensure you only take information from trusted sources. This Bulletin is also available online [here](#).

Latest Scamshare Bulletin published

The latest Trading Standards Scotland Scamshare bulletin has just been published. Get all the latest news [here](#).

ONS Sustainable Development Goals Survey

Do you work with local data? If so, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) Sustainable Development Goals Team need your help! Please complete [their short survey to help them better understand:](#)

- **What are users' local level data needs?**
- **What is users' engagement with Sustainable Development Goals at a local level?**

What work is being done toward Sustainable Development Goals?

Your feedback is invaluable in helping to improve the country's monitoring and progress toward reaching the Goals.

Opportunity: Community Alcohol Partnerships Adviser for Scotland

This is an opportunity to take a leadership role in helping to change Scotland's relationship with alcohol starting with young people. Community Alcohol Partnerships (CAP) is looking to employ the services of a dynamic, results-oriented person with great people skills to set up at least 12 CAP projects in high harm areas by the end of 2022.

To find out more about the roles available, click [here](#).



Home Safety Scotland News and Updates



Scottish Government Consultation on Regulation of short term lets

A consultation will gather final views on proposed new legislation for the regulation of short-term lets. The Scottish Government's proposals include a mandatory licensing scheme to ensure that all short-term lets are safe and to address issues faced by neighbours.

The regulations, if passed by Parliament, would come into force by April 2021. These would also give councils powers to manage pressures created by the use of whole properties as short-term lets.

You can find out more and take part in the consultation [here](#).

Short on Safety?

Commenting on the Scottish Government's plan to regulate short-term lets, Wayne Mackay, Public Affairs Manager for Scotland and Northern Ireland, for leading consumer protection charity, Electrical Safety First, said:



"We warmly welcome the Scottish Government's commitment, given in its Programme for Government, to legislate for short-term lets (STLs), such as those listed on Airbnb - which have dramatically increased in recent years.

"However, we believe it is imperative that the proposed licensing scheme includes a requirement for mandatory electrical safety checks. Three quarters of Scotland's fires are caused by electricity. In fact, it is the number one cause of fire in Scottish homes. And the risk of fire is likely to be increased if a property has a high turnover of residents and lacks regular electrical checks.

"The Scottish Government led the UK in protecting tenants by requiring regular electrical safety checks, by a registered electrician, in all privately rented homes. But the legislation doesn't cover tenants in owner occupied homes. As the majority of STLs are in owner-occupied properties, with research finding that a quarter of Scotland's STL guests had experienced an electrical safety issue, this shortfall must be addressed.

"Electrical Safety First is calling for STL's to be required to have mandatory, fiveyearly, electrical safety checks carried out by a registered electrician, so that it is on par with the private rented sector. Given the fact that many electrical fires are caused by appliances, we would also want to see a requirement for all electrical appliances provided in STLs to be registered with the manufacturer. This would allow companies to contact owners, should there be a fault with the product and need to be recalled.

"We believe our proposals benefit all, protecting both STL guests and STL landlords, by helping to ensure both people and properties are safe from electrical risk."

In other news...



National Hub for Reviewing and Learning from the Deaths of Children and Young People Scoping Report

The Scottish Government has been working towards establishing a system for reducing child deaths in Scotland and exploring the best way to undertake reviews of child deaths which have not been the subject of any other review. Healthcare Improvement Scotland and the Care Inspectorate, in collaboration with the Scottish Government, are hosting a National Hub for reviewing and learning from the circumstances surrounding the deaths of all children and young people in Scotland, with an aim to co-ordinate all current review activity.

In 2019, we wrote to 48 organisations (NHS boards and local authorities) to investigate the different types of reviews currently being carried out across health and social care. The results of this scoping exercise have provided a map of how reviews, into the deaths of children and young people, are currently conducted in Scotland. This has allowed us to consider what methodology is required to ensure that every child and young person has a robust, high quality review carried out following their death. A copy of the scoping report was published today and is available on our [website](#).

If you have any queries, or would like to discuss the report or the wider programme, please email us using the mailbox address hcis.cdrnationalhub@nhs.net.

How have communities responded to the Covid 19 pandemic

Public Health Scotland (PHS) would like to understand more about how communities have responded to the impact of Covid-19 on the way we live our lives, right now and in the next few months, and how local community groups and organisations have supported this. They are looking for examples in two areas:

- Firstly, how communities have adapted to the challenge of how we get around - has the way you travel changed as a result of Covid-19? Perhaps by walking, wheeling and cycling more, or as a result of changes to public and community transport services. What impact has this had?
- Secondly, they are looking for examples of how communities and organisations have used their local areas differently by adapting streets and spaces, for example for children's outdoor play or for leisure and relaxation, or how they have used or changed existing spaces for example parks, areas with trees or grass.

If you have examples to share you can [submit your information](#) and PHS will be in touch with you.

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