



# SAFETY NET-WORKS

SEPTEMBER 2023

## MENTAL HEALTH & SUICIDE PREVENTION EDITION

[www.safercommunitiesScotland.org](http://www.safercommunitiesScotland.org)

### Spotlight on: The Canmore Trust



## The Canmore Trust

Our Safer Communities Scotland Podcast guest this month is John Gibson, CEO of [the Canmore Trust](http://theCanmoreTrust.org).

The Canmore Trust is a suicide prevention and recovery charity set up by John following the tragic death of his son Cameron (an anagram of Canmore), and his own subsequent suicide attempt as he struggled to cope with his loss - especially the sense of meaninglessness it brought about.

The Canmore Trust are all about working with people to find a safe space – a space that allows and encourages them to stay in the world, despite all the struggles and difficulties they may be facing right now. They work to prevent suicide – **suicide prevention** – by influencing Government policies and lobbying for change in all sectors of society.

They work with individuals, communities, practices, workplaces, schools, colleges and universities touched by suicide – **suicide postvention** – to support those in need through the carnage that results from each and every suicide.

They also train those impacted by suicide to become “experienced friends” – people who have developed the skills to walk with others on the journey of suicide grief.

For 24/7 support and help for anyone feeling that the world is not currently a safe place to be, please text **CANMORE** to **85258**.

### New Suicide Prevention Strategy for England published

The UK Government has published a new five year suicide prevention strategy for England - with rates of suicide unchanged since 2012 & rates of self harm increasing.

The plan includes action to aid specific groups at risk of suicide, including children and young people, middle-aged men, autistic people, pregnant women, and new mothers.

The National Suicide Prevention Strategy delivers a firm commitment to see the number of suicides in England decrease within two and a half years at the very latest.

The NHS Long Term Workforce Plan sets out an ambition to grow the mental health workforce by 73% by 2036 to 2037, and the workforce already continues to grow to help cut waiting lists – one of this government's top five priorities. In March 2023, there were almost 9,300 more mental health staff working than the previous year.

Read more [here](#).

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### **SCSN publishes response to Victims, Witnesses, Crime & Justice Reform (Scotland) Bill**

The SCSN has published its response to the Scottish Government's Victims, Witnesses, Crime and Justice (Reform) Bill. The SCSN supports the creation of a Victims and Witnesses Commissioner and the establishment of a specialised sexual offences court. We also welcome the introduction of anonymity for those reporting sexual crime.

We also support a reduction in jury size from 15 to 12 and the introduction of an 8 to 4 majority for guilty verdicts.

However, we do not support the abolishing the Not Proven verdict or introducing single judge trials with no jury with particular concerns that these changes are driven by a desire to increase convictions and will increase the chances of more unsafe convictions.

You can read our full Consultation Response [here](#).

### **SCSN joins others in asking First Minister for action on Poverty**

The SCSN was pleased to add our name to a [letter and campaign](#) by the Poverty Alliance calling on the First Minister to put tackling poverty at the heart of his next Programme for Government. We note that following the Programme for Government announcement, the Poverty Alliance and others have [expressed disappointment](#) at a missed opportunity to tackle poverty in Scotland.



We urge the Scottish Government to continue to do all they can to tackle poverty in Scotland. Poverty and inequality are among the biggest root causes of so many of the issues affecting the safety of our communities, including crime, problematic substance use, unintentional harm & injury and more.

### **SCSN Consultation Response: Licensing of Activities Involving Animals**

We recently submitted a response to the Scottish Government Consultation on Licensing of Activities Involving Animals.

We support a statutory licensing scheme for dog walking businesses & think a recognised qualification from a regulatory body would be appropriate. Read our full response [here](#).

### **SCSN Chief Lorraine Gillies among new board members to guide the vision of neurodivergence charity**

The SCSN are delighted to report that our Chief Officer, Lorraine Gillies, has joined the board of the Donaldson Trust, the National Body for neurodiversity.

"Following my own experience of creating a neurodivergent inclusive culture within the Scottish Community Safety Network, I am looking forward to seeing how my contribution will help to support even more organisations in their journey to becoming neuroinclusive."

## Safer Communities Scotland Podcast

### With John Gibson, CEO, The Canmore Trust



For the latest episode of our Safer Communities Scotland Podcast, we were delighted to speak to John Gibson, CEO of the Canmore Trust - a suicide prevention and support charity.

John founded the Canmore Trust after losing his son Cameron (an anagram of Canmore) to suicide in 2019. Struggling to cope, John made an attempt on his own life in 2020.

However, John is now in recovery and now uses his experience of suicide to help others, especially encouraging men to talk about feelings of suicide.

In this episode, we discuss John's story, the Canmore Trust, the latest stats and research on suicide and more.

Listen via our Podcast [here](#).

Listen on YouTube [here](#).

## Question of the Month

Our Question of the Month for August 2023 was based around our August newsletter theme of 'Celebrating Community Safety Partnerships'.

Community Safety Partnerships carry out a lot of work in local communities, but very often can be something of an invisible hand - influencing and shaping our communities in ways that might not be obvious to the casual observer.

We wanted to know:

***"Are you aware of the work of your local Community Safety Partnership?"***

- 66.67% said Yes (6 Votes)
- 33.33% said No (3 Votes)
- 0% said Not Sure (0 Votes)

## Question of the Month

Our Question of the Month for September comes out of our newsletter theme for the month of 'Mental Health and Suicide Prevention'.

Our latest Safer Communities Scotland Podcast episode with John Gibson of the Canmore Trust focussed specifically on suicide prevention & awareness raising.

We're asking:

***"Would you feel comfortable raising the topic of suicide or suicidal thinking with a friend or loved one?"***

Vote in our Poll [here](#).

## New Collaboration to Focus on Reducing Inequalities

A collaboration between three major public bodies will see the launch of an innovative new hub to improve health and social inequalities throughout Scotland.



**POLICE  
SCOTLAND**  
Keeping people safe  
**POILEAS ALBA**

The University of Edinburgh's Futures Institute, Police Scotland, and Public Health Scotland will come together to collaborate on a pioneering Scottish Prevention Hub that will embed a public health approach to policing and improve wellbeing.

Key staff from the three partners will be co-located at the Hub to build more effective collaboration.

A major focus of the group will be to convene wider partner and stakeholder involvement, working together to address some of the nation's big health and wellbeing challenges, by building shared understanding, knowledge and resources.

This new Hub will co-directed by Dr Kristy Docherty, Public Sector Lead at Edinburgh Innovations and Edinburgh Futures Institute, Clair Thomson, Collaboration Transformation Manager at Police Scotland, and Dr Diane

Stockton, Head of Clinical, Public Health Intelligence and Research at Public Health Scotland.

Edinburgh Futures Institute places a focus on bringing people, data and diverse disciplines together in an open environment to create new ideas, working closely with and engaging communities, businesses, public services and governments. It convenes 'spaces' for co-producing effective ways to work differently.

The Scottish Prevention Hub will be located in the Public Service Ward of the new Edinburgh Futures Institute building at Lauriston Place, which is set to open in phases from spring 2024.

Dr Kristy Docherty said: "Our public services are faced with a variety of significant and complex challenges, which require new kinds of collaborations.

"The Scottish Prevention Hub will bring together Police Scotland and Public Health Scotland with the University's expertise - from our academics across 21 schools, our sister innovation hubs such as the Bayes Centre and our professional services expertise represented in Edinburgh Innovations. The diverse nature of the partnership will generate an innovative research, education and practice, prevention eco-system."

Read the full article [here](#).

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## Latest Fire Safety and Organisational Statistics published

Fire Safety and Organisational Statistics are published each year and the latest report is now available in the '[About Us](#)' section of the SFRS website.



**SCOTTISH  
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE**  
Working together for a safer Scotland

The report shows there are 3,490 wholetime operational firefighters in 2022-23 compared with 3,530 the year before – around a one percent reduction.

SFRS continues to encourage people from all walks of life, including under-represented groups to consider a career with the Service.

Disappointingly, attacks on personnel have increased from 76 in 2021-22 to 80 in 2022-23. More than half of these were verbal abuse. There has been a ten percent rise in objects thrown at firefighters and appliances.

Fire prevention work is a vital aspect of the role of firefighters. Home Fire Safety Visits continue to be a valuable way to help the most vulnerable people in our communities to be safer in their properties.

One in twelve households across Scotland have been given bespoke safety advice in the past five years, with more than 38,000 visits in the past year alone.

Read more, including viewing an infographic of complete stats on the SFRS website [here](#).



## Scottish Firefighters to participate in health screening trials

**The Scottish Government has provided funding of £56,000 to enable firefighters based in Scotland to participate in a UK-wide health screening programme which is being facilitated by the Fire Brigades Union and the University of Central Lancashire.**

Around 1,000 UK firefighters will take part in trials which will include blood tests to look for early signs of illness and cancer and these trials will help to inform the evidence around potential future annual health screening arrangements.

Siobhian Brown, Minister for Victims and Community Safety said: "I am delighted that

we have been able to provide funding to ensure that Scottish firefighters are part of this important research.

"We will continue to work closely with the FBU and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service to ensure the safety and wellbeing of firefighters who work so hard to keep our communities safe."

Research has shown that firefighters report higher incidences of cancers and other diseases when compared with the general population.

Read this story in full on the SFRS website [here](#).

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## OU research reveals shocking level of online violence experienced by women and girls across Scotland

Researchers from The Open University have carried out the UK's largest ever study into societal attitudes and experiences of online violence against women and girls across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

The findings reveal that in Scotland, one in six women have experienced online violence,

with this figure increasing amongst those aged 16-24 (27%) and LGB+ women (45%).

When comparing responses across the nations, the research showed that women and girls in Scotland were the most likely to have witnessed online violence (35%), in comparison to those in Wales (27%), Northern Ireland (27%) and England (30%). Of even greater concern, one in nine Scots (11%) who have experienced online violence said it later progressed to offline violence.

Read more [here](#).

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## Road Safety Conference 2023 2pm-3pm, 3 October

According to Brake, in 2021, more than 1,600 people were killed on UK roads and over 26,700 seriously injured. Rather than putting this down to human error, the Safe Systems approach recognizes that a failure of the road system is the primary cause of accidents. Interventions should be shaped to meet the long-term goal of eliminating traffic fatalities and severe injuries.

This webinar will discuss the important role of standards in helping achieve this target as well as address wider issues on the topic of road safety management.

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

## Dumfries and Galloway Community Safety Survey 2023

Do you live or work in Dumfries and Galloway?

D&G Council are asking members of the public about local issues in their community. The results of the Community Safety Survey 2023 will allow the Community Safety Team to focus their resources on tackling the issues that the public want.

The Survey is open until 6 October and can be completed online [here](#).

If you do not have access to the Internet, call into any Council customer service facility, and staff will be happy to help you complete the survey there.



## National Records for Scotland: Small increase in suicides in Scotland in 2022

There were 762 probable suicides in 2022, an increase of 9 from 2021, according to [figures published](#) by National Records of Scotland.

Female suicides increased by 18 to 206, while male suicides decreased by 9 to 556 deaths in the latest year. The rate of suicide in males was almost 3 times as high as the rate for females.

At local level, the rate was higher than the Scottish average in Highland, Dundee City, East Ayrshire and Perth and Kinross council areas.

Daniel Burns, Head of Vital Events Statistics, said: "While today's statistics show a small increase in the number of suicide deaths, the

rate of mortality in the last number of years has been fairly steady.

"The longer term trend shows that over the last 30 years the rate of suicides for males is around 3 times as high as the female rate.

"Over the last two decades the average age of death has increased, from a low of 41.9 years in 2000 to 48.2 years in 2022.

"The figures also show that the rate of suicide in the most deprived areas in Scotland was 2.6 times as high as in the least deprived areas in Scotland."

Comparable suicide statistics for the rest of the UK for 2022 are yet to be released. However, based on 2021 data, Scotland had the second highest rate of suicide deaths of all countries in the UK after Northern Ireland.

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## New guides to support people to safely share and gather experiences of suicide

The United To Prevent Suicide social movement in partnership with Scottish Recovery Network and the Suicide Prevention Scotland Lived Experience Panel have produced two new guides to support sharing and gathering experiences of mental health and suicide.

### Preparing to share your experiences

This guide is for any individual who wants to share their lived experience of mental health and/or suicide (this includes people who have been bereaved by suicide).

### Gathering lived experiences

This guide is for anyone who supports people to share their lived experiences of mental health and suicide. This can be to inform your organisation's policies and the development/improvement of support services.

Find out more and download the guides [here](#).

## World Suicide Prevention Day

World Suicide Prevention Day took place on 10 September.

Every year, led by the World Health Organisation, organisations and communities around the world come together to raise awareness of how we can create a world where fewer people die by suicide.

This year's theme was "Creating Hope Through Action".

This theme serves as a powerful call to action and reminder that there is an alternative to suicide and that through our actions we can encourage hope and strengthen prevention.

Read more [here](#).

## **Samaritans: Asking directly about suicidal thoughts can help save lives**

To mark World Suicide Prevention Day on 10 September, Samaritans is encouraging people not to be afraid to talk about suicidal thoughts and feelings if they are worried about someone, as well as highlighting the importance of the language we use when we talk about suicide

Every 90 minutes, someone in the UK or Ireland takes their own life.

Evidence shows that asking someone if they're suicidal doesn't make things worse, it can

protect people, as it provides a crucial opportunity to open up, express their feelings and seek help.

If someone does let you know they are having suicidal thoughts, always take them seriously. You don't have to be an expert, just being there to listen and showing you care can help them work through what's going on. Let them know they're not a burden and there's always someone they can turn to – whether it's a family member or friend, or a 24/7 helpline like Samaritans.

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

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## **Scottish Prison Service Plan 2023-2028 will lead to a more trauma informed service**

THE Scottish Prison Service (SPS) is on a journey to becoming a more trauma-informed organisation, its new Corporate Plan reveals. The 2023 – 2028 plan sets out the SPS's ambitions for the next five years. That includes embedding trauma-informed practices in the way SPS staff support those in our care.

Those relationships are central to how SPS intends to reduce the risk of reoffending and support its communities, justice partners, and Scotland as a whole.

In the past 12 months, the SPS has opened three new establishments – the Bella and Lillas Community Custody Units, and HMP & YOI Stirling – all with a trauma-informed and person-centred approach to people's rehabilitation.

Training in how experiences of trauma affect the behaviours and choices of those in our care will be extended to staff across all our establishments over the course of the next five years.

This will support staff in understanding how the trauma people have experienced in their past, affects their behaviour and choices now and in future.

Read more [here](#).

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## **Research: 'The life of Glasgow pigeons is more certain'**

People seeking asylum are known to experience high rates of depression, anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder. This research highlights experiences of mental health and wellbeing of people who are – or who have – navigated the asylum process in the UK.

Using a participatory research approach underpinned by a focus on human rights, this work explores the 'Right to Health' and looks at how the asylum process affects mental health and wellbeing. This research draws on

interviews and photo data to highlight key themes and areas for change.

This research was carried out as part of the [Rights in Action](#) project being conducted by the Poverty Alliance in partnership with Maryhill Integration Network. Rights in Action is working with communities across Scotland to raise awareness of how human rights can be used as a tool in the fight against poverty, to increase their capacity to address human rights issues and create a supportive community of practice and to support participatory research projects on human rights issues in Scotland.

Download the Full Research Briefing [here](#).

## Lord Advocate decision takes Scotland closer to pilot of safe/drug consumption rooms

Following years of campaigning by harm reduction organisations and others, Scotland will finally be able to legally pilot drug consumption rooms following [a statement](#) released by the Lord Advocate Dorothy Bain KC.

Glasgow City Council & Health & Social Care Partnership is now likely to press ahead with opening the first such facility in Scotland.

In her statement, the Lord Advocate said: "On the basis of the information I have been provided, I would be prepared to publish a

prosecution policy that it would not be in the public interest to prosecute drug users for simple possession offences committed within a pilot safer drugs consumption facility.

"I have not been asked to sign-off or approve any facility and it would not be appropriate for me to do so. However, prosecution policy is for me alone to set and this policy, and the consequences which flow from it, have been considered deeply and thoroughly."

The SCSN welcomes this decision and is pleased that Scotland will now benefit from an internationally proven harm reduction service that will make communities safer.

**Read our latest Blog post on Drug Consumption Rooms [here](#).**

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## Cranstoun Launches Report in Response to Escalating Opioid Crisis

[One of the UK's leading providers for drug and alcohol support, Cranstoun, has launched a report containing 8 key recommendations on how to address the escalating drug crisis.](#) The report is in response to emerging accounts of nitazenes – a potent, synthetic opioid similar to fentanyl – contaminating the UK's heroin supply.

The report has been backed by 35 Parliamentarians, a former Prime Minister of New Zealand, and leading organisations and academics across the political spectrum.

It is believed that the Taliban's policy on reducing the opium harvest could be causing

this development. The clampdown has created a gap in the market here in the UK, with Afghanistan previously supplied 95% of the supply into the country. Reports of super-strength synthetic drugs are leading to overdoses and more deaths on the streets.

The opioids which have most commonly been found are being attributed to rising levels of overdose and drug related deaths in recent weeks, are called nitazenes and fentanyl.

The charity has called the situation a "rapidly developing public health emergency, which could mirror the crisis in North America" where the situation is at endemic levels.

Read more [here](#).

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## Nitrous oxide to be banned

The UK Government has followed through and [announced a ban](#) on nitrous oxide, despite scathing criticism from harm reduction experts and [against the advice](#) of its own Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD).

It's the latest in a long line of UK Government decisions which serve to continue the failed so called 'War on Drugs' - which campaigners say is in fact simply a 'War on Drug Users'.

The Government claims that the ban will reduce the risk of neurological harm and social harms such as drug driving and anti-social behaviour and littering.

However, responding to the Government decision, a wide range of [experts and critics have warned](#) that the ban could in fact increase harm to users (including via criminalising yet more people) and will do nothing to tackle anti-social behaviour.

The SCSN strongly agrees with these criticisms and hopes that the UK Government or any incoming future government will reverse this decision as soon as practically possible.

We believe in taking a pro-social approach to anti-social behaviour that seeks to tackle the root causes of ASB with evidence-based policies that help keep people safe - and wherever possible, keep people out of the criminal justice system.



## Homelessness Statistics, 2022-23

An annual update on Homelessness Statistics covering 2022-23 has been released by Scotland's Chief Statistician.

Findings for that period show:

- There were 39,006 applications for homelessness assistance – an increase of 3,247 (9%) compared with 2021-22, and higher than pre-pandemic (37,053 in 2019-20).
- There were 32,242 households assessed as homeless or threatened with homelessness – an increase of 2,903 (10%) compared to 2021-22, also higher than pre-pandemic (31,618 in 2019-20).
- There were 15,039 households in temporary accommodation at 31 March 2023 – a 6%

increase compared with 14,214 at 31 March 2022. This compares to 11,807 at 31 March 2020.

- The number of children in temporary accommodation has increased to 9,595 in March 2023 from 8,805 in March 2022 (9%). This compares to 7,355 at 31 March 2020.
- There has been an increase in rough sleeping, with 2,438 households reporting rough sleeping during the previous three months and 1,500 the night before the application. These remain lower than pre-pandemic and are the same proportions of all applications as the previous year (6% and 4% respectively).

You can read the figures in full on the Scottish Government website [here](#).

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## Homelessness Prevention Task and Finish Group: final report and recommendations

This report by the Prevention Task and Finish Group provides an outline of the groundwork needed to achieve the potential of the proposed new homelessness prevention duties, as well as outlining the steps needed to catalyse public bodies into taking action to support the duties' implementation. In doing so, it seeks to contribute to the Scottish Government's efforts to build on and develop our shared national approach to homelessness prevention.

The report is based on some key organising principles and values that dominated the

Group's discussions throughout its work:

- Cross-sector culture change and leadership is required so that homelessness prevention is seen as everyone's business
- No-one should experience homelessness after leaving the support of any public body
- Public bodies should be fully supported and resourced to enable workforce development and training
- Housing must continue to be built, acquired and updated

Read the report [here](#).

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## CYCJ publishes Glasgow Youth Court evaluation

The Glasgow Youth Court is a judicially-led initiative, supported by Glasgow City Health and Social Care Partnership (GCHSCP), and was introduced in Glasgow Sheriff Court in June 2021. The court operates on a problem-solving basis, hearing the cases of those aged between 16 and 24 years old. All options are available to Sheriffs sitting within the youth court, but where the presiding Sheriff is satisfied, Structured Deferred Sentencing (SDS) may be employed.

An SDS combines regular court review and monitoring with targeted social work and other interventions, based on the needs of the child/young person as outlined within their Criminal Justice Social Work Report. A key purpose of the youth court is to support more rehabilitative and participatory justice for young people in conflict with the law.

Read more [here](#).



## LATEST COMMUNITY SAFETY RESEARCH

### Repeat violence in Scotland: a qualitative approach

[This report](#) presents findings from a qualitative research study which explored peoples' experiences of repeat, interpersonal violence. The research involved in-depth interviews with people who have lived experience of repeat violence and community stakeholders who support them.

Following the original research specification, guided by the international literature on repeat violence, our recruitment strategy targeted people living in communities affected by deprivation, people with convictions and people defined as having multiple complex needs. Most participants experienced violence across the life course, but the nature and

intensity of this violence changed according to their circumstances, for example increasing in tandem with escalating substance use and diminishing during periods of recovery support. For others, experiences of violence were more time-limited, though the impact of such violence and external responses to it could be long-lasting.

The report distinguished three groups of lived experience of repeat violence: **Unsettled Lives**, comprising men & women 25-59 with unsettled living situations or in recovery from addiction; **Mutual Violence**, mostly men aged 16-44 living in social housing; & **Intermittent Victimization**, mostly women aged 25-44.

The report also discussed factors including gender and alcohol and other drugs in repeat violence in Scotland.

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### “You Can’t Punish People for the Rest of Their Life for Something that They Learned from, and Changed from:” Collateral Consequences, Inclusion, and Narratives of Responsibility

This [article](#) contributes to the study of carceral citizenship in the United States by offering one of the first academic efforts to appraise the opinions of people with criminal records about “collateral consequences,” the civil restrictions attached to convictions. In thirty-two extended interviews with people visiting a re-entry-support organization in New York City, participants were asked what they thought the rules ought to be across multiple policy areas, and whether they would like to engage in each activity if the law permitted them to.

Emphasizing themes of personal change, fairness, and the difficulty of living with a record, interviewees strongly rejected automatic, permanent restriction of gun rights, access to public housing, and the ability to work. Mindful of risks of harm, however, many endorsed focused limits, while arguing for universal access where they did not see threats to safety.

### Children's Services Reform Research study: Case Studies of Transformational Reform Programmes

In 2022, CELCIS was asked by the Scottish Government to carry out a research study with the aim of gathering evidence to inform decision-making about how best to deliver children's services in Scotland in light of the proposed introduction of the National Care Service for Scotland, and its commitment to Keep the Promise of the Independent Care Review (2020).

The purpose of the Children's Services Reform Research study is to answer the question: “What is needed to ensure that children, young people and families get the help they need, when they need it?”. The study has four separate strands of work, which together aim to provide a comprehensive and holistic approach to answering this question.

Read more and view the latest report [here](#).

## Climate Crisis Corner

### Crown Estate Fund Open for Applications

Crown Estate Scotland's Sustainable Communities Fund, designed to support projects and ideas to benefit the environment and local communities, has opened for its fourth round of applications.

Set up in 2020, the fund has already delivered around £970,000 in valuable support to people across the country and consists of two grant programmes:

- **Community Capacity Grants** - open to all communities within five miles of Scotland's coastline, or one of Crown Estate Scotland's four rural estates. Early-stage financial support is available for community projects that will contribute to local regeneration and sustainable development. Grants will range

between £20,000 and £50,000, with a total of £300,000 being made available in this year of the programme.

- **Environment Grants** - available to Crown Estate Scotland tenants, providing grants of between £5,000 and £20,000 for projects which can deliver demonstrable environmental benefits within 18 months of an award being made. A total of £125,000 is available this year. The deadline for Expressions of Interest for the Community Capacity Grants Programme, which is administered by [Foundation Scotland](#), is Monday 26 September while the deadline for the Environment Grants Programme, administered by Crown Estate Scotland, is Monday 23 October.

You can find out more about the Sustainable Communities Fund on [Crown Estate Scotland's website](#).

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### Parks for Life

Parks4Life is a simple way for everyone who uses and loves Scotland's parks to make a donation, large or small.

Greenspace Scotland are delighted to have received a grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund to kick-start the development of Parks4Life. The grant has provided pound for pound match funding to help us reach our current total of over £900,000.

The ambition is to create a multi-million-pound sustainable endowment fund which will help to keep Scotland's treasured parks in good heart for future generations to enjoy. The funds will be invested to provide an endowment which will provide a steady source of funds for our parks. The endowment will be used by communities to support parks improvements, activities and projects.

Find out more [here](#).

### Risk of mass deaths as heatwaves start to pass survivability threshold

**Between 1.5 and 2°C of global warming will lead to heatwaves so extreme that healthy people can't survive outdoors for long, in areas where people aren't used to extreme heat.**

As the world warms beyond 1.5°C, large parts of the world will start to have heatwaves so extreme that healthy young people could die within several hours if they fail to find respite, a study has warned. This could result in mass deaths in places where people and buildings aren't adapted to extreme heat and air conditioning is rare, says Carter Powis at the University of Oxford.

Read more [here](#).



## Latest news from the Home Safety Scotland Forum

We're always on the lookout for new members to join our forum! If you work in or are interested in home safety, and would like to join or attend our forum, please contact Kevin Chase at [hss@scsn.org.uk](mailto:hss@scsn.org.uk).

You can follow Home Safety Scotland on Twitter at [@HomeSafetyScot](https://twitter.com/HomeSafetyScot)

### Latest Blog: Accessibility, Adaptability & Usability of Scotland's Homes Consultation

**By Kevin Chase, SCSN Development Officer & Convener of the Home Safety Scotland Forum**

So, it has finally arrived. The Scottish Government has announced the consultation for home adaptations and home use, or to give the consultation the full title, "Enhancing the Accessibility, Adaptability and Usability of Scotland's Homes". You may know the consultation by another title, "Housing for Varying Needs". This Consultation is extremely important. It affects where and how we live, and the quality of life we want or can have. The consultation has also been released with the Scottish Government's ambitious 'Housing to 2040' commitment, to improve the country's housing stock.

So why is this consultation so important? There are several reasons. Scotland needs housing stock that considers an ageing population. The [Making Adaptations Work](#)

[Report](#) quoted an Age Scotland Survey in 2022, revealing that over 30% (of older adults) needed adaptations within their home now, 55% did not believe their home would be suitable in 5 years' time, and this increased to over 75% who believed their home would not be suitable in 10 years' time. These figures are startling and highlight the issue of inadequate, unsafe housing stock. This is especially poignant when you consider the Scottish Government's 2040 ambitious building program has already started.

So, what happens when part of the home is no longer is accessible for its occupants? Well, the part of a property not used by the occupant creates several risks, most notably from fire, whether from an ignition source that is undetected, or obstructing safe route out of a property. The positive impact – if homes were adapted to ensure people regardless of mobility could escape a property safely – would be significant.

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

### Falls Prevention Week - RoSPA Falls Prevention Hub

Falls Prevention Week took place between 18-22 September.

Our friends and partners at RoSPA have teamed up on a new home safety project, promoting the importance of remaining active in later life.

Falls are the single biggest cause of accidental injuries in the home. While they can affect people of all ages, they are most common

and tend to be more serious for people in later life.

You'll find lots of helpful information and advice in [this web hub](#), including:

- Video demos from Later Life Training on the role that exercise, particularly strength and balance exercise, can play in preventing falls and promoting wellbeing
- A step-by-step guide to fall prevention around the home
- Checklists and an exercise tracker to help you stay safe and active.



## Gas Safety Week: Fighting for a Gas Safe Nation

Home Safety Scotland and our hosts, the Scottish Community Safety Network, were proud to support Gas Safety Week 2023, which took place 11 - 17 September.

Gas Safety Week is an annual safety week to raise awareness of gas safety and the importance of taking care of your gas appliances. It is coordinated by Gas Safe Register, the official list of gas engineers who are legally allowed to work on gas.

Badly fitted and poorly serviced gas appliances can cause gas leaks, fires, explosions, and carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning. CO is a highly poisonous gas that can kill quickly and without warning, as you cannot see it, taste it, or smell it.

By taking care of your gas appliances properly and spotting the warning signs of an unsafe appliance you are taking care of your home and your loved ones. Follow these few simple steps to keep you and your family safe.

Read more [here](#).



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## Making Scotland's buildings safer

Progress to identify, assess and fix unsafe cladding on Scotland's medium and high-rise multi-residential buildings will be accelerated, under plans to safeguard homeowners and residents in this year's Programme for Government.

A Cladding Remediation Bill will give Ministers new powers to remediate buildings with unsafe cladding that present a risk to life. This will support the delivery of the Cladding Remediation Programme and help to speed up the remediation process.

Read more [here](#).

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## Keep water beads away from young children

With their bright colours and squishy feel, water beads are especially appealing to young children. When dry, water beads are tiny and can easily be swallowed without detection.

As they bathe in stomach fluids, they expand to many times their original size, posing a

serious risk of blockage in a child's bowel.

Some water beads grow to more than 15 times their original size, up to the size of golf balls.

This [Irish Competition and Consumer Protection Commission video](#) shows just how large they can grow.

Read more [here](#).



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