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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

New Scottish scheme aims to protect children from serious organised crime groups

A new scheme to protect children and young people from being exploited by serious organised crime groups is being developed by the prosecution service and other partners.

It will aim to raise awareness of criminal exploitation and encourage relevant agencies to share information so that they can intervene early and protect young people from being drawn into criminality. The Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS) is collaborating with law enforcement and third sector partners including Action for Children to develop the pilot scheme. - Read more [here](#).

PhD student looking for 'neds' says it's 'time to give them a voice'

A PhD student is looking for people who identified as or were identified by others as “neds” to take part in research aiming to “give them a voice”.

Gavin Brewis, who studies at Glasgow Caledonian University, is conducting research into “Ned Culture” in the late nineties and early 21st century. He told STV News he believes the existence of the culture as a whole has been “dismissed by academia”. - Read more [here](#).

Withdraw review of Prevent anti-radicalisation strategy, ministers urged

More than 200 civil society organisations, community leaders and academics have called on the UK government to withdraw a [controversial review](#) of the Prevent programme, part of its counter-terrorism strategy.

The Home Office accepted all 34 recommendations in the review from William Shawcross, a former chair of the Charity Commission who concluded that the Prevent programme should focus more on Islamist rather than far-right terrorism. - Read more [here](#).

Scottish Prison Service may face prosecution over Allan Marshall death

SCOTLAND'S top law officer has told the police to investigate whether the Scottish Prison Service should be prosecuted over the death of a prisoner. Allan Marshall, 30, was being held on remand at HMP Edinburgh in March 2015 when he suffered a cardiac arrest during a lengthy struggle with staff.

The officers involved were given immunity from prosecution at a fatal accident inquiry examining his death. However, the inquiry also found that Marshall's death was "entirely preventable". - Read more [here](#).

Ministers can veto prisoners' parole in Victims and Prisoners Bill

Ministers will be able to block the release of some prisoners and stop others getting married under new plans to overhaul the parole system.

The idea is among measures in its Victims and Prisoners Bill, which is aimed at giving greater rights to victims of crime in England and Wales. Ministers promise to make it easier for crime victims to get justice. But critics fear efforts to improve life for victims will be lost in a bill which also combines parole reform. - Read more [here](#).

A tragic accident should not have landed Auriol Grey in prison. The UK justice system is stuck in the dark ages (Comment Piece)

The UK's obsession with jail time is counterproductive and cruel. There are better ways to deal with wrongdoing.

Auriol Grey, who has cerebral palsy and lives in specially adapted accommodation, was walking along a footpath in Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire, and was infuriated to see a bicycle coming towards her. She waved her arm at it, making the 77-year-old rider swerve, lose her balance and fall into the road, where she was hit by a passing car and died. An act of what might be called antisocial behaviour was followed by a terrible accident. Grey is now [serving three years](#) in prison for manslaughter. - Read more [here](#).

Alcohol & Other Drugs

Rishi Sunak to ignore independent advice and ban laughing gas in UK

The sale of nitrous oxide, or laughing gas, to the public will be banned and the police will be given enhanced drug-testing powers as part of Rishi Sunak's attempt to crack down on antisocial behaviour "with urgency".

The levelling up secretary, Michael Gove, [said](#) the proposals would stop parks being turned into drug-taking arenas, and would help ministers stamp out antisocial behaviour. The ban comes a month after the independent Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD) [warned against one](#) and said it would be disproportionate with the level of harm associated with nitrous oxide. - Read more [here](#).

If we can accept the failing war on drugs is over, maybe we can win the peace

As a veteran of the lengthy stakeouts of heroin dealers, cultivation of informants, and the stitches, lost teeth and broken bones that come with the war on drugs, former Police Scotland superintendent Martin Gallagher believes it's time for international agreement that the failed war should be over – and for co-operation and collaboration in putting together a more effective plan for peace. - Read more [here](#).

Cocaine production reaches record levels as new trafficking hubs emerge

Global cocaine production has reached record levels as demand rebounds following Covid lockdowns, a new report has found.

The UN Office on Drugs and Crime said coca cultivation rose by 35% between 2020 and 2021 to record levels. Findings suggest new hubs for trafficking have emerged in West and Central Africa. The report also said traffickers were using international postal services more often to get drugs to consumers. - Read more [here](#).

Scotland's minimum pricing linked to 13% drop in alcohol-related deaths, study finds

Scotland's pioneering policy of minimum pricing for alcohol has been linked to a 13% drop in the number of deaths from alcohol consumption, and hundreds fewer hospitalisations, according to a study.

The research was observational, so cannot prove conclusively that the significant fall in deaths was due to the minimum unit pricing policy. However, experts said the study provided the clearest signal to date that the policy had reduced the harm caused by alcohol in Scotland, and added to a large and consistent evidence base on the effectiveness of alcohol pricing action. - Read more [here](#).

Suspected drug deaths in Scotland at worst level for 18 months

SUSPECTED drugs deaths jumped by a quarter at the end of last year, bringing the total for all of 2022 to more than 1,000, according to new official figures. - Read more [here](#).

Policing

More than 80 Police Officers under investigation over claims sexual misconduct and racism

More than 80 Scots police officers are under investigation over allegations of sexual misconduct and racism. The figures come after Britain's biggest force, the Metropolitan Police, was labelled institutionally racist, sexist and homophobic and in need of radical reform.

Under Freedom of Information powers it has emerged 54 Scots officers are being probed for sexual misconduct. It's understood that complaints range from sexual assault to inappropriate comments. - Read more [here](#).

Met police found to be institutionally racist, misogynistic and homophobic

The [Metropolitan police](#) is broken and rotten, suffering collapsing public trust and is guilty of institutional racism, misogyny and homophobia, an official report has said.

The report by Louise Casey, commissioned by the Met after one of its officers abducted Sarah Everard, taking her from from a [London](#) street in March 2021, before raping and murdering her, is one of the most damning of a major British institution. - Read more [here](#).

Police call handlers used fake system for eight years

One of Scotland's main police control rooms used a fake system to manipulate response time targets for eight years, according to documents seen by the BBC. Thousands of calls to the Bilston Glen control room were allocated to a fictitious call sign known as DUMY. Internal systems would register that the calls had been passed to officers - but instead they were parked on a list. - Read more [here](#).

Increase in mental health callouts received by police over past five years

Police forces across Great Britain have seen a significant rise in the number of mental health incidents they have dealt with in the past five years.

Some 21 forces out of 48 in England, Scotland and Wales responded to a BBC freedom of information request - and every force reported a rise since 2017. In Merseyside, mental health-related incidents increased from 7,629 in 2017 to 28,039 last year - a 313% rise. The government says such pressures are stopping officers fighting crime. - Read more [here](#).

Police Scotland resources to be slashed due to £74million budget 'black hole'

Police Scotland is set to face a £74 million cut in spending, with staff numbers and resources expected to be slashed. The Sunday Mail reports that the budget 'black hole' could result in around 230 members of police staff losing their jobs as trade union Unison urges ministers to reconsider the "draconian" measures to avoid putting the public at risk. - Read more [here](#).

Long Covid: Almost 350 police officers and staff off work with condition for more than 12 weeks

A majority of the 345 absences were among police officers. Police Scotland began using the "post-Covid syndrome" category in July 2020. The figures were revealed in a Freedom of Information request by the justice affairs magazine 1919. In the financial year up to December, there were 131 long Covid absences by police officers and staff. - Read more [here](#).

Human Trafficking/Modern Slavery

Rishi Sunak 'extinguishing the right to seek refugee protection in UK'

Rishi Sunak's government has been accused of "extinguishing the right to seek refugee protection in the UK" by the United Nations refugee agency after the introduction of a contentious [new law](#) to stop small boats from crossing the Channel.

After [Suella Braverman](#) was forced to admit that the illegal migration bill was "more than 50%" likely to break human rights laws, the UNHCR said it was "profoundly concerned" by the bill's provisions, which give the government the right to criminalise, detain and deport asylum seekers, saying it would be a "clear breach of the refugee convention". - Read more [here](#).

Hundreds of trafficking victims in UK missing after referral to support scheme

Hundreds of trafficking victims in the UK have gone missing after being referred to the government's scheme to protect them, the Guardian has learned. The news comes after the immigration minister, Robert Jenrick, admitted in January that since 2021 about [200 child asylum seekers](#) had gone missing from hotels where they had been in the care of the Home Office and its contractors. - Read more [here](#).

General Community Safety Stories

It is more important than ever that wellbeing economies stay course

THERE is much debate presently in Europe about the transition towards a sustainable wellbeing economy that responds to the need for greater resilience, equity, ecological sustainability and societal wellbeing to better protect Europe's citizens against economic, social and political threats. - Read more [here](#).

MSP to push for government legislation to snuff out pyrotechnics

SCOTTISH government legislation is the only way to curb the illegal use of pyrotechnics at football matches by supporters according to the MSP who has campaigned for the introduction of strict liability in this country for the past seven years. - Read more [here](#).

Delays to introduction of online road safety portal putting cyclists "at risk", says Cycling UK

Delays to the introduction of an online road safety reporting portal are putting cyclists in Scotland "at risk", says Cycling UK - after Police Scotland took over a year to report an alleged hit-and-incident which left a rider "unable to sit down for a week", leading to the case being dismissed.

Police Scotland and the Scottish Government announced funding for a national safety portal last year, but it hasn't been implemented yet. - Read more [here](#).

Prisons have never been safe for women – removing trans people won't change that (Comment)

Trans prisoners have been in the media a lot lately, with attention focussed on whether trans women should be held in men's or women's prisons. Safety concerns have been raised, particularly around individuals with convictions for sexual offences.

The public is right to be concerned about the safety of prisoners, but the current framing of issues is both misleading and too narrow. We have been led to believe that the greatest threat to women in prison is other trans women, despite evidence that tells us otherwise. - Read more [here](#).

Tackling the 15-minute cities conspiracy means fixing inequality (Comment)

The sea of yellow placards, held aloft in the [protest against Oxford's low -traffic neighbourhoods \(LTNs\)](#) scheme earlier this month, told a story. In the crowd of about [2,000 people](#) who took part, it was clear the demonstration was about much more than traffic reduction.

"The 15-minute WEF ghettos are not about climate, it's tyrannical control," read a placard. "Say NO to the new world order. Say no to 15 mins prison cities. Wake up, people, wake up." - Read more [here](#).

Ministers are staging another Brexit coup – and only the House of Lords can save us (Comment)

The retained EU law bill is an outrageously undemocratic attempt to transfer law-making powers from parliament to Whitehall

The House of Lords may be doomed, so reformers say, but it has a last chance to redeem itself. It is currently being asked to approve a Boris Johnson legacy, the [retained EU law \(revocation and reform\) bill](#). This bill is so outrageously undemocratic that it would have been flushed down the loo by any parliament before the gutless one that Johnson ushered in after the 2019 election. It blandly states that some 3,000 to 4,000 statutes passed by parliament over half a century of Britain's EU membership must now be rewritten by ministers, not parliament, or they will lapse at "sunset" on 31 December this year. - Read more [here](#).

Climate Crisis Corner



Scientists deliver 'final warning' on climate crisis: act now or it's too late

Scientists have delivered a "final warning" on the climate crisis, as rising greenhouse gas emissions push the world to the brink of irrevocable damage that only swift and drastic action can avert.

The comprehensive review of human knowledge of the climate crisis took hundreds of scientists eight years to compile and runs to thousands of pages, but boiled down to one message: act now, or it will be too late. - Read more [here](#).

UN climate report: Scientists release 'survival guide' to avert climate disaster

UN chief Antonio Guterres says a major new report on climate change is a "survival guide for humanity". Clean energy and technology can be exploited to avoid the growing climate disaster, the report says.

But at a meeting in Switzerland to agree their findings, climate scientists warned a key global temperature goal will likely be missed. Their report lays out how rapid cuts to fossil fuels can avert the worst effects of climate change. - Read more [here](#).

UN warns against 'vampiric' global water use

A United Nations report has warned of a looming global water crisis and an "imminent risk" of shortages due to overconsumption and climate change.

The world is "blindly travelling a dangerous path" of "vampiric overconsumption and overdevelopment", the report says. Its publication comes before the first major UN water summit since 1977. - Read more [here](#).

Climate change: Warming could raise UK flood damage bill by 20%

Researchers have produced a detailed "future flood map" of Britain - simulating the impact of flooding as climate change takes its toll.

It has revealed that annual damage caused by flooding could increase by more than a fifth in today's terms over the next century. That could be reduced if pledges to reduce global carbon emissions are met. - Read more [here](#).

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