



COMMUNITY SAFETY MEDIA MONITOR



January 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

Risky online behaviour 'almost normalised' among young people, says study

Risky and criminal online behaviour is in danger of becoming normalised among a generation of young people across Europe, according to EU-funded research that found one in four 16- to 19-year-olds have trolled someone online and one in three have engaged in digital piracy.

An EU-funded study found evidence of widespread criminal, risky and delinquent behaviour among the 16-19 age group in nine European countries including the UK. - Read more [here](#).

Ministers studying plans for UK child-specific terrorism orders

New legal terrorism orders specifically for children should be brought in to tackle the growing numbers being arrested, the official adviser on terrorism law has told the government. Ministers are studying plans that would result in children being compelled to accept help or face jail, devised by Jonathan Hall KC, the independent reviewer of terrorism legislation.

The move comes as the number of children arrested [has increased](#), mainly for lower-level terrorism offences, such as sharing propaganda or downloading material. - Read more [here](#).

Scotland looks to end incarceration of under-18s in YOIs

The Scottish Government is seeking to stop people under the age of 18 being placed in young offender institutions (YOIs) with a new bill.

The Children (Care and Justice) (Scotland) Bill will make changes to existing law so only those aged between 18 and 21 will be placed in YOIs, either as a result of being on -remand or after conviction. Instead, children under the age of 18 will be placed in secure accommodation if they are on remand or have been found guilty of a crime. - Read more [here](#).

Huge backlog in offenders doing community payback in Scotland

The backlog of unpaid work that offenders in Scotland need to carry out has risen to more than 700,000 hours, figures obtained by the BBC show. Sheriffs can sentence offenders to unpaid work for a wide range of offences as an alternative to prison.

But Covid restrictions meant many offenders were unable to complete their community payback hours. More than 250,000 hours of unpaid work were written off but backlogs have returned to almost the same level. - Read more [here](#).

German new year riots prompt calls for firework ban

A night of new year rioting and attacks on emergency services in Berlin and other cities has shocked Germans and prompted calls for a ban on fireworks and firecrackers. Forty-one police officers were hurt in the capital alone and there were dozens of attacks on firefighters. Mayor Franziska Giffey has called a youth summit, condemning the violence as "absolutely unacceptable". Several figures highlighted the migrant background of many of the youths.

But the Berlin mayor insisted the issue was more to do with the social environment in which young Berliners had grown up: "We're not talking about immigration labels but about what went wrong in the social flashpoints." - Read more [here](#).

Plans for new £100m HMP Glasgow submitted ahead of opening in 2026

Masterplans for the £100 million HMP Glasgow at the former Provan Gas Works have been submitted, set to replace Victorian-era [HMP Barlinnie](#) when it opens in 2026. Designed by architect Holmes Miller, the 54-acre site sits on [Royston Road](#) in the north east of the city. The plans lead on from the initial application, which was approved by [Glasgow City Council](#) in August 2020. - Read more [here](#).

Alcohol and Other Drugs

Drug consumption rooms workaround update requested from Crown Office

MSPs have called for an update on the progress of plans to create safe drug consumption rooms in Scotland.

Audrey Nicoll, the convener of Holyrood's criminal justice committee, has written to the Crown Agent John Logue, asking for an update on the Crown Office's plans to draw up plans to circumvent UK drug laws and create a safe drug consumption room. The Crown Office is currently working on making a case to the Lord Advocate which would effectively allow police not to prosecute those using drug consumption rooms. - Read more [here](#).

Even England's police want to decriminalise hard drugs. Why won't our posturing politicians listen (Comment)

The best social reform starts on the frontline. The news that the National Police Chiefs' Council has decided to [effectively decriminalise](#) cannabis and cocaine in England is, for drugs reformers, sensational. It intends to extend nationwide the warning and treatment schemes that have already been piloted in Durham and Thames Valley. Instead of prosecuting users of hard drugs such as heroin, cocaine and ecstasy, officers will recommend addiction services (dealers, and those who refuse to cooperate, will still be prosecuted). So far, these schemes have been hugely effective in stopping reoffending and saving police time. This move flatly challenges the home secretary, Suella Braverman, who told the recent Tory conference she intended to take a [hardline approach](#) to drug offences. - Read more [here](#).

Naloxone saves lives 'even when police thought the person was dead'

A life-saving treatment for drug overdoses has saved as many as 100 lives, even in cases where officers were "convinced the casualty was dead", police have said.

Nearly 4000 Naloxone kits have been issued so far north of the Border, with Police Scotland set to eventually equip 12,500 officers with the drug which helps treat opioid-related overdoses. Officers across Scotland have now given Naloxone to people suffering life-threatening situations which could have been likened to an overdose of a opioid drug such as heroin. - Read more [here](#).

Prisoners helping each other to prevent drug overdoses when released

Prisoners are helping one another prevent drug deaths when they are released by giving potentially life-saving Naloxone training and drug advice.

People leaving jail are highly vulnerable to overdose in the days and weeks after release and many have died as a result. At HMP Low Moss, just north of Glasgow, four men are peer mentors - delivering the training with the NHS. - Read more [here](#).

Burgers and coats: county lines gangs exploit hardship to recruit UK kids

Criminals are using burgers and warm coats to recruit hungry, cold children into "[county lines](#)" gangs in towns and cities across the UK, experts are warning.

Headteachers across the country say that the [cost of living crisis](#) is leading to increasing numbers of pupils being groomed by sophisticated gangs to run drugs from one city to other parts of the country. With cuts to youth support and other public services in local areas, and problems recruiting enough school support staff due to low pay, many say they are fighting a losing battle to keep vulnerable children safe outside school. - Read more [here](#).

Cost of Living Crisis/Poverty

The world's in a 'polycrisis' — and these countries want to quash it by looking beyond GDP

For a small but growing network of countries, the world's go-to metric of economic health is no longer fit for purpose. Mostly led by women, Finland, Iceland, Scotland, Wales and New Zealand are all members of the [Wellbeing Economy Governments partnership](#). The coalition, which is expected to expand in the coming months, aims to transform economies around the world to deliver shared well-being for people and the planet by 2040. - Read more [here](#).

Poorer Scots spending one-third of their lives in ill health: NRS data

PEOPLE in Scotland's most deprived communities spend more than a third of their life in poor health, according to the latest figures. Data from National Records of Scotland (NRS) shows the number of years females expect to spend in good health was almost 25 years lower for the most deprived areas compared to the least deprived. The difference was even greater for males at 26 years. - Read more [here](#).

Disabled people among hardest hit by cost of living crisis, finds study

Disabled people in the UK are much more likely to struggle to heat their homes and cut back on food this winter, according to a report highlighting "massive" income gaps amid the cost of living squeeze. Research from the Resolution Foundation found people with disabilities had an available amount to spend that was about 44% lower than that of other working-age adults, exposing them hugely to the rising cost of essentials. - Read more [here](#).

Violence Against Women & Girls

Sexual choking is now so common that many young people don't think it even requires consent. That's a problem (Comment)

When I was 19 I was at a birthday event. We were playing a drinking game and one of the questions was "what's the kinkiest thing you like to do during sex?". My friend, who was 17, replied: "It's not really that kinky, but I guess choking". The conversation carried on as if nothing out of the ordinary had just been said. I remember feeling self-conscious about my sexuality, wondering if I was a "prude", if the consensus was that choking was "not really that kinky". - Read more [here](#).

Do we really need more proof that sex work should be decriminalised? (Comment)

As food banks fail to keep up with demand, and families cannot afford to put money on the meter, more people, particularly women, are [turning to sex work](#). These women are not being pushed into prostitution by abusers, traffickers or pimps, but by the wilful neglect of the state. At the same time, those who were already undertaking sex work are reporting that they feel pressure to take greater risks, or offer services they usually wouldn't.

One of us is an MP, the other a brothel worker, and we're united in wanting to address this dire situation with solutions rooted in evidence, not moralism – solutions that sex workers themselves support. - Read more [here](#).

A moral panic that should have been spiked (Comment)

Do you remember the epidemic of needle-spiking in nightclubs? Women across the country shared their experiences of blacking out whilst partying, then waking up with small bruises and supposed puncture marks on their arms. Nobody had been kidnapped, of course, and there certainly didn't seem to be any examples of sexual assault resulting from the spikings. But when so many thousands of girls were sharing the same stories on Tiktok, and the British press were interviewing alleged victims on primetime television, it had to be true. - Read more [here](#).

Hate Crime/Equalities

Hate Crime Bill enforcement in Scotland delayed until at least 2024 as police concerns scupper enforcement

The SNP's Hate Crime Bill will not be enforced until early 2024 at the earliest, more than three years after it was passed by MSPs, ministers have been forced to admit. Setbacks around the rollout of Police Scotland's new case management system is the central reason behind the failure to commence enforcement of the Bill, with the IT project's completion delayed by six months until the end of this year, letters between the Scottish Government and the force obtained by The Scotsman confirm. - Read more [here](#).

Gender debate used as 'proxy' for transgender discrimination

A UN expert has told MSPs that the debate surrounding gender reform in Scotland has been used by some as a "proxy" to promote discrimination against transgender people and question the legitimacy of their very existence.

Victor Madrigal-Borloz, the United Nations independent expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, was giving evidence to the Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice committee at Holyrood on Monday night when he made the comments. - Read more [here](#).

Climate Crisis Corner



2022 will be warmest year ever for UK, Met Office says

The Met Office has said 2022 will be the warmest year on record for the UK.

According to provisional figures, every month was hotter than average, with the exception of December when the UK experienced a notable cold snap. The year's average temperature will likely beat the previous all-time high of 9.88C, set in 2014.

The exact mean temperature is set to be confirmed in the new year but the Met office said the consistent heat this year had been noteworthy. - Read more [here](#).

There's no such thing as 'freak' weather any more – and 2023 already looks like a disaster movie (Comment)

The 2004 film *The Day After Tomorrow* was based on the idea that the main north Atlantic Ocean current could slow and then reverse, superstorms would flash-freeze the northern hemisphere and a new ice age would abruptly descend. It was [dismissed](#) as "profoundly silly", "a [ludicrous popcorn thriller](#)" informed by "[lousy science](#)", and some scientists [argued](#) it depicted meteorological phenomena "as occurring over days, instead of decades or centuries". Storm Elliott, the "bomb cyclone" that hit the US over the holidays, should have made some of those critics uncomfortable. - Read more [here](#).

Photos show shocking overnight flooding on Scotland's railways

SHOCKING images have revealed the extent of flooding on a number of Scotland's railways, forcing some lines to be temporarily closed. ScotRail tweeted a picture on Friday morning showing the extent of the flooding on the line between Dalmuir, Helensburgh and Balloch. - Read more [here](#).

Climate change prompts £2m lottery funding for Bude

A coastal town in Cornwall has been awarded nearly £2m in funding to help it prepare for climate change. Bude and 10 surrounding parishes received the grant from the National Lottery's climate action fund. The county is likely to see some of the UK's highest future sea level increases, [Cornwall Council has said](#). - Read more [here](#).

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