



Community Safety



Media Monitor

Late February 2021

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 and Justice

Majority of legal profession would support move to proven/not proven verdict

A majority of the legal profession in Scotland would choose a verdict system of proven and not proven, research from the Open University (OU) has found.

This was the preferred option over the current three-verdict system of guilty, not guilty and not proven or just guilty and not guilty. - <https://www.holyrood.com/news/view/majority-of-legal-profession-would-support-move-to-binary-proven-not-proven-verdict-system>

Cwmbran lockdown killer got 'unduly lenient' jail term, say MPs

A group of MPs are calling for the case of a man who killed his wife in lockdown to be reviewed because of its "unduly lenient" five year sentence.

Labour's Harriet Harman, Jess Phillips and Alex Davies-Jones have all written to the attorney general to look at Anthony Williams' case. Williams, 70, was jailed for the manslaughter of his wife Ruth, 67, at their home in Cwmbran, Torfaen. - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-56122903>

Forget being hard or soft on crime – be smart instead – Iain Smith

If we truly want to reduce offending within our communities in Scotland then we must move beyond tokenistic, meaningless terms like being "hard" or "soft" on crime. We need to be cleverer.

'Smart Justice' offers a chance to stand back from the crime (the "what") and focus on the person committing the crime (the "who"). At present the focus on the crime and its punishment leads to a revolving door of imprisonment. This is not only futile, it is expensive. Keeping someone in prison costs on average £35,000 per year. - <https://reformscotland.com/2021/02/forget-being-hard-or-soft-on-crime-be-smart-instead-iain-smith/>

Poverty/Inequality

People living in deprived areas more likely to get Covid fine

Professor Susan McVie, of the University of Edinburgh, found those living in the 10% least well-off Scottish neighbourhoods were 11.2 times more likely to receive a fine than those in the 10% least deprived.

Her findings were published in a paper on Monday used by the Independent Advisory Group on Police Use of Temporary Powers Relating to the Coronavirus Crisis. - <https://www.scotsman.com/health/coronavirus/coronavirus-in-scotland-people-living-in-deprived-areas-more-likely-to-get-covid-fine-3144612>

Rent controls 'must be part of national recovery from pandemic', Scottish Parliament hears

The Scottish Parliament's housing committee will hear this morning that rent increases during the pandemic prove the need for rent controls.

Living Rent, a union representing tenants in Scotland, will tell MSPs that the Scottish Government must introduce limits on private rents as part of the national recovery from coronavirus. - <https://www.scottishhousingnews.com/article/rent-controls-must-be-part-of-national-recovery-from-pandemic-scottish-parliament-hears>

Policing

Police should carry drugs overdose antidote, says senior officer

The overdose antidote naloxone should be made available to all police officers in areas where there is a clear need, the police chiefs' drug lead has urged after successful pilot schemes.

North Wales police and Police Scotland are trialling having beat officers carry naloxone nasal sprays that can be used to treat opiate overdoses, and West Midlands police have extended their pilot scheme, with a rollout due to be announced. - <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2021/feb/22/police-should-carry-drugs-overdose-antidote-naloxone-says-senior-officer>

Chief constable says there is a 'powerful case' for police officers to get priority for Covid-19 vaccinations

Chief Constable Iain Livingstone said hundreds of police officers and staff already have benefits from being given "surplus" vaccines - unused jabs which would otherwise have gone to waste.

He said he would continue to make the case to the Scottish Government that Police Scotland officers and staff should be a priority group, once the initial rollout of the vaccine to those aged 50 and above and those with underlying medical conditions has been completed. - <https://www.scotsman.com/health/coronavirus/coronavirus-in-scotland-chief-constable-says-there-is-a-powerful-case-for-police-officers-to-get-priority-for-covid-19-vaccinations-3145506>

New LGBTQ+ Network co-chair ready to share passion for equality and inclusivity

The new co-chair of the National Police LGBTQ+ Network says she will use her position to provide more support others from the community and continue to educate and inspire her police colleagues across the country. Police Constable Amy Tapping, who has 16 years of service at Northumbria Police behind her, says she also relishes the idea of a new challenge, taking her passion for inclusivity and equality to a broader stage. - <https://www.policeprofessional.com/news/new-lgbtq-co-chair-ready-to-share-passion-for-equality-and-inclusivity/>

Covid-19 updates

Drivers urged to take care of their tyres during lockdown

Drivers are being urged to pay particular attention to their tyres during lockdown, as periods of inactivity take their toll on cars' rubber. Road safety charity TyreSafe claims cars lying idle can develop problems with their tyres that will not only cost drivers money, but could also impact safety. - <https://uk.motor1.com/news/489223/take-car-tyres-lockdown-safety/amp/>

Nicola Sturgeon concerned over children's mental health during pandemic

Nicola Sturgeon has voiced concerns about the impact the pandemic is having on the mental health of young people – but insisted the well-being of children is a priority of the Scottish Government. - <https://www.scotsman.com/health/coronavirus/coronavirus-scotland-nicola-sturgeon-concerned-over-childrens-mental-health-during-pandemic-3124003>

'A pandemic of abuses': human rights under attack during Covid, says UN head

The world is facing a “pandemic of human rights abuses”, the UN secretary general António Guterres has said. Authoritarian regimes had imposed drastic curbs on rights and freedoms and had used the virus as a pretext to restrict free speech and stifle dissent.

Writing [exclusively in the Guardian](#), Guterres said the Covid-19 pandemic had rolled back years of progress on human rights, and that abuses had “thrived because poverty, discrimination, the destruction of our natural environment and other human rights failures have created enormous fragilities in our societies”. - <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2021/feb/22/human-rights-in-the-time-of-covid-a-pandemic-of-abuses-says-un-head>

Other Community Safety Stories

Around half of UK men have had unwanted sexual experiences - how to get support

Around half of men in the UK have suffered an unwanted sexual experience, according to new research.

According to the research, which involved a poll of over 1,000 people, around nine per cent identifying as men said they had been assaulted by penetration or raped, while 14 per cent had been pressured or coerced into sexual acts and 21 per cent had taken part in sexual activity with an adult before reaching the age of consent. - <https://www.edinburghnews.scotsman.com/read-this/around-half-of-uk-men-have-had-unwanted-sexual-experiences-how-to-get-support-3139127>

The Coup We Are Not Talking About (opinion)

We can have democracy, or we can have a surveillance society, but we cannot have both. Two decades ago, the American government left democracy's front door open to California's fledgling internet companies, a cozy fire lit in welcome. In the years that followed, a surveillance society flourished in those rooms, a social vision born in the distinct but reciprocal needs of public intelligence agencies and private internet companies, both spellbound by a dream of total information awareness. - <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/29/opinion/sunday/facebook-surveillance-society-technology.html>

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