



COMMUNITY SAFETY MEDIA MONITOR



March 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 and Justice

'Our Kids...Our Future' Daily Record calls for action to help curb epidemic of youth violence

The Daily Record's articles on a series of [horrific attacks on young people](#) has sparked a fresh debate on how to end this cycle of violence

Fuelled by a desire for [online clicks](#), some teenagers are filming themselves taking part in scarcely believable acts of aggression. - Read more [here](#).

Why locking up youth offenders fails to reduce crime – and what we should be doing instead (Comment)

Youth crime is currently a huge talking point across Queensland where this week the government will introduce new laws announced after the [alleged murder of mum-of-two Emma Lovell](#) at her Brisbane home on Boxing Day. At a Toowoomba crime forum last week, [residents told harrowing stories](#) of pensioners being mugged at ATMs, youths roaming the streets with machetes and children too scared to leave home.

Community outrage in the face of these kinds of shocking crimes is very real and very understandable. The anger is turbo-charged by [media reports](#) that teenage burglars and car thieves are boasting about their exploits on social media, magnifying the anguish felt by victims and their families. - Read more [here](#).

Shamima Begum: As a child victim of sexual exploitation, she should be allowed back into the UK (Comment)

Shamima Begum was 15 years old when she left her London home and boarded a plane with two schoolfriends bound for Turkey in 2015. Grainy security pictures of Begum and her companions as they made their way through Gatwick Airport show three British Asian girls, dressed casually in trousers, their hair covered with scarves. Nothing out of the ordinary. They could have been on a school trip or on a weekend break. - Read more [here](#).

I'm a counter-terrorism expert, and I fear Suella Braverman's new plan to stop attacks may well increase them (Opinion)

I first called for an independent review of Prevent in 2016 because I wanted people to see the importance of the counter-terrorism strategy and support it - especially the project's author and owner, the government. Now it's here, [the review](#), led by William Shawcross, is voluminous: but that does not always mean thorough. I would support much of it; but I do have some concerns.

I am concerned about how we got to this point. The government's choice of Shawcross alienated groups who were vital to the consultation. As a result, their voices will have been lost and their response now may be defensive, and cynical. It's an important document, but will it be widely read among these essential stakeholders? I suspect not. - Read more [here](#).

Road Safety

Pedestrians 'should wear fluorescent clothing' following fatal crashes

Pedestrians have been urged by police to wear reflective or fluorescent clothing after a spate of collisions which have caused the deaths of eight people in two weeks.

Police Scotland said that pedestrians are considered "vulnerable road users" and urged them to "ensure they are not putting themselves at risk" as they travel on foot. The force also urged motorists to "drive with care". - Read more [here](#).

Plans for city wide 20mph speed limit gets cash boost from council

A city-wide 20mph speed limit is to be rolled out across Glasgow, under plans by the council. The plan, to cut accidents and improve air quality, is moving forward with extra cash allocated to get it in place in the coming years. Currently, just 15% of the city has a maximum speed of 20 mph, including the city centre, some residential areas and streets around schools. The plan is that by 2030 the remaining streets totalling around 1000 miles of road will be 20mph. - Read more [here](#).

Equalities/Hate Crime

Brianna Ghey 'was bullied for years for being trans' before she was killed

Friends of murdered transgender teen Brianna Ghey have revealed she was bullied for years because of her gender identity.

The 16-year-old, from Birchwood in Warrington, Cheshire, [was found injured on a path in Linear Park](#), Culcheth. Just days before she posted a [TikTok](#) video revealing she had been excluded from school, it has been claimed. [Two teenagers, a 15-year-old boy and girl, both from the area](#), have since been arrested on suspicion of murder. - Read more [here](#).

Birmingham LGBT centre attacked with homophobic abuse

Birmingham LGBT Centre has been attacked with homophobic abuse, the third time it has been subjected to criminal damage in recent years.

Last week staff arrived at the centre to find the words "dirty bastards" scratched on to the front door. The message cannot be removed unless the door is replaced. Staff have covered it with a rainbow flag until that happens.—Read more [here](#).

Blanket ban on trans women in female prisons would be a travesty, but those who pose risk to women should be excluded (Comment)

For the last couple of weeks, a debate about trans people and prisons has dominated Scottish news. It was sparked in large part by the [widely reported case of Isla Bryson](#) – convicted of two rapes, who was briefly held in segregation in Cornton Vale, the women's prison, while a risk assessment was made about which estate she would be placed in. Unsurprisingly, given her crimes, that risk assessment resulted in her being housed in the male estate. - Read more [here](#).

Black people seven times more likely to die after police restraint in Britain, figures show

Black people are seven times more likely to die than white people following restraint by police, new analysis of official data reveals. The racial disproportionality is higher than previously made public and was unearthed by [Inquest](#), a charity that helps bereaved families after contact with the police or state. It is contained in a report released on Monday called I Can't Breathe: [Race](#), Death and British Policing. - Read more [here](#).

Policing

Police Scotland Chief Constable Ian Livingstone to retire from role this summer

Police Scotland Chief Constable Sir Iain Livingstone has announced he is stepping down after nearly six years in the top job. Sir Iain told a meeting of the Scottish Police Authority (SPA) on Thursday: "I have decided to retire from the office of chief constable later this year. I will retire from policing in the summer."

A serving police officer since 1992 when he joined the-then Lothian and Borders force, Sir Iain rose to the top of the Scotland-wide force as interim chief in September 2017, before being appointed chief constable in August 2018. - Read more [here](#).

Nearly 50 police officers leave the force during complaints cases

Forty-seven police officers in Scotland have resigned or retired during misconduct proceedings against them since 2019, the BBC can reveal. If an officer leaves Police Scotland, misconduct proceedings are automatically scrapped. The figure was revealed after a freedom of information (FOI) request by [BBC Newsnight](#). Last year, the Scottish government said it would change the rules to allow hearings to continue. - Read more [here](#).

Scottish Police Authority reviews sex misconduct claims

MOST sexual misconduct claims against police officers in Scotland were made while staff were on duty, a new report has revealed. Some 410 allegations were made between January 2017 and October 2021, including allegations of sexual assault (30%), inappropriate comments (17%), and inappropriate messaging (13%), according to the Scottish Police Authority (SPA). A total of 63% of these occurred while staff were on duty, the report outlined. - Read more [here](#).

Police should be given power to charge suspects, say senior officers in England

The police, rather than independent prosecution lawyers, should have the power to charge suspects in most cases, three senior police chiefs have said, as they warned of a deepening crisis in the justice system. The controversial change is being called for by the chief constables of the West Midlands, [Greater Manchester](#) and West Yorkshire forces, respectively the second, third and fourth biggest in England after the Met, the Guardian has learned. - Read more [here](#).

Police officer numbers increase slightly

The number of Police Scotland officers saw a small increase towards the end of 2022, after falling sharply over the previous 12 months. Quarterly figures show that full-time equivalent officer numbers reached 16,644 at the end of December, an increase of 74 from the previous quarter. It means that Police Scotland's officer numbers are 2.8% lower than the end of 2021. - Read more [here](#).

Alcohol and Other Drugs

TD claims politicians take illegal drugs as Government establishes Citizen's Assembly on substance use

A TD has claimed politicians take drugs as the Government this morning agreed to establish a Citizen's Assembly on drug use. Cabinet signed off on a long-awaited Citizens Assembly on drug use, which will consider law, policy and operational changes that could be made by the State on the impacts of drugs on society. Labour TD Aodhán Ó Ríordáin said people in the media, politics as well as gardaí and nurses, take drugs. - Read more [here](#).

Jess Phillips and Iain Duncan Smith lead calls to criminalise 'cuckooing'

"Cuckooing" in the homes of vulnerable people by drug gangs should become a criminal offence, according to a call from the Centre for Social Justice (CSJ) thinktank which has gathered cross-party backing. Labour MP Jess Phillips and the former Conservative leader [Iain Duncan Smith](#) are leading calls for the practice – which was spotlighted in the BBC series Happy Valley – to be criminalised as part of an overhaul of the 2015 Modern Slavery Act. - Read more [here](#).

Illegal tobacco offered to a third of child smokers

About a third of children who smoke have been offered illegal tobacco, new research has found. The Action on Smoking and Health Wales (Ash) study comes as the charity launches a campaign to tackle the sale of illegal tobacco to children. More than 1,000 11 to 16-year-olds in Wales took part in the survey - the biggest of its kind in the UK. Suzanne Cass, of Ash, said about 80% of people who start smoking have their first cigarette before the age of 18. - Read more [here](#).

General Community Safety

Homelessness: Rough sleeping up more than a quarter in a year

The number of people sleeping rough in England rose by more than a quarter last year, official statistics suggest. On a single night in autumn, 3,069 people slept outside, 26% more than in 2021, says the Department of Levelling Up, Communities and Housing. The rise follows four years of decreases in rough sleeping, partly due to initiatives during the pandemic. - Read more [here](#).

'Making the digital streets safe': Calls for greater protection for women online

Social media platforms would be required to follow regulatory guidelines protecting women and girls from online abuse under an amendment to the [online safety bill](#) tabled this week.

The proposed change would require Ofcom, the communications watchdog, to issue a code of practice on preventing violence against women and girls that social media platforms would have to follow when implementing their duties under the bill. - Read more [here](#).

Climate Crisis Corner



Rising seas threaten 'mass exodus on a biblical scale', UN chief warns

An increase in the pace at which sea levels are rising threatens "a mass exodus of entire populations on a biblical scale", the UN secretary general has warned. The climate crisis is causing sea levels to rise faster than for 3,000 years, bringing a "torrent of trouble" to almost a billion people, from London to Los Angeles and Bangkok to Buenos Aires, António Guterres said on Tuesday. Some nations could cease to exist, drowned under the waves, he said. - Read more [here](#).

World risks descending into a climate 'doom loop', warn thinktanks

The world is at risk of descending into a climate "doom loop", a thinktank report has warned. It said simply coping with the escalating impacts of the climate crisis could draw resources and focus away from the efforts to slash carbon emissions, making the situation even worse. - Read more [here](#).

Today's climate activist 'criminals' are tomorrow's heroes: silencing them in court is immoral (Comment)

To tell "the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth": this is the oath defendants in an English court must take. But when David Nixon sought to do so, he was sent to jail. Nixon, who had taken part in an [Insulate Britain](#) protest blocking a junction in the City of London, was on trial for causing a public nuisance, a charge that carries a [maximum sentence of life imprisonment](#). - Read more [here](#).

It's inequality that kills': Naomi Klein on the future of climate justice

Naomi Klein published her first book on the climate crisis, *This Changes Everything*, almost a decade ago. She was one of the organisers and authors of Canada's Leap manifesto, a blueprint for a rapid and justice-based transition off fossil fuels. In 2021, she joined the University of British Columbia as professor of climate justice in the Department of Geography and co-director of Canada's first [Centre for Climate Justice](#). - Read more [here](#).

Malawi benefits from Scotland's climate fund - President Chakwera

Malawi's President Lazarus Chakwera says a Scottish fund for poor countries hit by climate change should be a prototype for the whole world. - Read more [here](#).

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