



May 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

Humza Yousaf thanks Daily Record's youth violence campaign and pledges £2m to tackle epidemic

Humza Yousaf has thanked the Daily Record for its [youth violence campaign](#) as the Scottish Government pledges to invest £2m to protect young people in Scotland. The First Minister said he will commit to working with the Record as part of its [Our Kids ... Our Future](#) campaign, which calls for ring-fence funding to make sure every community has a place for teenagers to go.

The campaign also demands that social media giants enforce policies on [tackling harmful content](#) after a series of horrific attacks on kids were shared online, as well as asking every adult in Scotland to play a role in making sure children are safe from violence. - Read more [here](#).

Community Payback Orders for offenders help to transform areas across Fife

Areas across Fife have been transformed thanks to those carrying out unpaid work via Community Payback Orders. One of those areas that has seen rejuvenation is Dunc's View in Cardenden. A memorial was opened at a popular beauty spot near Station Road, Cardenden in memory of community champion Willie Duncan in 2021. The project has been highlighted as part of the annual CPO report 2021-22 which has been published by Community Justice Scotland. - Read more [here](#).

This crackdown on antisocial behaviour puts us at the mercy of certain twitchers (Comment)

What happens when the human instinct to hunt down wrongdoers is encouraged to bloom and spread beyond the bounds of an ordinary justice system – the sort with clear rules about right and wrong – and which crimes might be more serious than others? You don't have to look far for an example. The wild west of social media has produced exactly this sort of pseudo law and order system – now known as “cancel culture”. The experiment has not, to put it mildly, worked well. - Read more [here](#).

UK families tell of threats and police warnings over children playing in street

Families are facing threats and police warnings for letting their children play in the street, Guardian readers have reported, leaving parents afraid to let their children spend time outside.

Liz Swift thought a basketball hoop on wheels pushed to the corner of her street on sunny afternoons would be a great way to keep her 13-year-old active. But the local authority did not agree. The family received letters from Waltham Forest council warning them that children playing in the street were "causing a nuisance to neighbours". - Read more [here](#).

Police step up patrols after Lothian Buses targeted by youths and windows smashed

Police in Midlothian have taken to social media to address the ongoing issue with anti-social behaviour involving youths targeting Lothian Buses in the area.

Edinburgh Live previously reported how police were called to a 'large scale disturbance' onboard a bus just outside Dalkeith last weekend. Just days later, the window of a bus was smashed by youths who gathered in the Gore Avenue area of Gorebridge. - Read more [here](#).

Thousands of people like me are locked up with no fixed release date all because of New Labour's political arms race (Comment)

Nearly seven years ago, in May 2016, the former home secretary Kenneth Clarke [told BBC Radio 4's Today programme](#) there was an "absurd" prison sentence currently in operation in Britain that meant thousands of those subject to it had absolutely no idea when, if ever, they would be released. The situation, he said, was "ridiculous." It still is.

He was talking about the imprisonment for public protection sentence, better known simply as IPP, which has plagued the British legal and penal landscape for the past two decades. It was first introduced by the Labour home secretary David Blunkett through a white paper entitled [Justice for All](#) and was intended to "ensure that dangerous, violent and sexual offenders stay in custody for as long as they present a risk to the public". - Read more [here](#).

County lines: Gangs are 'exploiting children as young as 12 in Kent'

Children as young as 12 are being recruited by county lines gangs to sell drugs in Kent, police have said.

Criminals are sending young people from areas including London to deal crack cocaine and heroin to users in the county. [BBC Radio Kent](#) was given access to one of the three County Lines and Gangs Teams who target those supplying drugs in the county. Kent Police said it has almost halved the number of active county line gangs. - Read more [here](#).

Instagram account takes a stand to tell stories of island sexual abuse

For more than two years, Chloe Wooldrage has been publishing people's anonymous experiences of sexual assault in Orkney. She wanted to challenge the notion that these crimes do not happen in rural island communities. Her campaign began in December 2020 with an Instagram post called Story 1. It highlighted the experience of someone who had intimate pictures shared around school without their consent. From there, more than 100 stories of abuse, assault, and rape in Orkney have been published on the account, called Tak a Stand. - Read more [here](#).

Violence Against Women & Girls

Humza Yousaf 'unequivocally' backs buffer zone legislation

HUMZA Yousaf has given his "unequivocal" backing to plans to create buffer zones outside abortion clinics. - Read more [here](#).

Barrister hits out at government response to report into domestic killers

A barrister who led a review into how domestic killers are sentenced said she is "disappointed" her report has not been adopted in full. Clare Wade recommended 17 reforms she said were needed to ensure justice for victims of abuse in serious cases. The government is proceeding with some of them initially, including longer sentences for killers with a history of coercive control or extreme violence. - Read more [here](#).

Andrew Tate: Group trying 'different approach' with teenagers

A group says a "different approach" is needed to tackle conversations about controversial influencer Andrew Tate with teenagers. Bold Voices goes into schools and colleges delivering workshops to tackle gender-based inequality and violence. Founder Natasha Eeles says her team has noticed male teenagers struggling to name positive male mentors. She said simply labelling Tate as "bad" was not helpful and could alienate young people. - Read more [here](#).

Policing

New figures show police counters down a quarter since creation of national force

Communities are "frustrated" as the number of front desks at police stations across the country has fallen by a quarter since the force's creation a decade ago, a Liberal Democrat MSP has said. Figures obtained by the party using freedom of information (FOI) requests reveal the number of police counters has fallen from 340 in 2013 - the year of Police Scotland's inception - to 253 in 2023. - Read more [here](#).

NHS strain sees police first to mental health call-outs

Police officers have become the "first line of response" for mental [health](#) incidents as new figures reveal a growing number of call-outs amid strain on NHS and ambulance services. Information published by Police [Scotland](#) shows the force dealt with 23,259 "mental health related" incidents last year – a near doubling from just 12,775 in 2017. Year-on-year rises have been logged despite an overall fall in all types of incidents since 2019. But while mental health call-outs have soared, the actual number of crimes recorded as being "mental health related" was just 656 last year – sparking warnings of "systemic failures in other public and emergency services" which are all being "pushed beyond breaking point". - Read more [here](#).

Police shouldn't handle mental health calls. Reform is critical for public safety. (Comment) - USA

"Mental illness should not be [your ticket to death](#)."

That is [what Caroline Ouko said](#) after watching [video footage of her son's death](#) while in police custody. Irvo Otieno, a 28-year-old aspiring musician, was reportedly suffering from a mental health crisis when he was placed under an emergency custody order. But like many others before him, Otieno did not receive the appropriate help from the criminal justice system. Instead, that system cost him his life. - Read more [here](#).

Craig Naylor: Every time there's a failure by a police service, it affects public trust

In the decade since its creation, Police Scotland has never been far from the headlines. Born out of financial imperative, the national force came into being following the merger of eight regional forces.

And it wasn't long before the new force found itself embroiled in controversy. Its first chief constable, Sir Stephen House, left after call handling errors meant it took officers three days to respond to a crash on the A9 which caused the deaths of Lamara Bell, 25, and John Yuill, 28. - Read more [here](#).

Police Scotland: the UK's second-largest force is also grappling with misogyny and racism

A damning report published in March found the UK's largest police force rife with ill-treatment of women, ethnic minorities and LGBTQ+ officers. Louise Casey found London's Metropolitan Police to be "institutionally racist, misogynistic and homophobic", and recommended radical reform – or breaking up the Met.

Police Scotland, the UK's second-largest force, may not face a crisis in public trust and confidence of the same scale. But it is not immune to the Casey review's findings. Scottish policing has a history of complacency concerning equality, diversity and inclusion. - Read more [here](#).

Cyber Security

Criminal Records Service still disrupted 4 weeks after hack

The body that manages criminal records in the UK is still facing disruption nearly a month after a cyber-attack.

The Acro Criminal Records Office provides records to police, exchanges them internationally and processes certificates for people wishing to work with children or gain emigration visas. It took its website and application portal offline, when the hack was detected, on 21 March. - Read more [here](#).

Cyber attack: Data from charities stolen in ransomware attack

Hackers have stolen data from charities and community organisations in a cyber attack on a Londonderry-based IT company.

Evide manages data for about 140 organisations across the island of Ireland and the UK, including groups that work with victims of sexual crime. It was targeted in a ransomware attack last month. - Read more [here](#).

From pope's jacket to napalm recipes: how worrying is AI's rapid growth?

When the boss of Google admits to [losing sleep](#) over the negative potential of artificial intelligence, perhaps it is time to get worried.

Sundar Pichai told the CBS programme 60 Minutes this month that AI could be "very harmful" if deployed wrongly, and was developing fast. "So does that keep me up at night? Absolutely," he said. Pichai should know. Google has [launched Bard](#), a chatbot to rival the ChatGPT phenomenon, and its parent, Alphabet, owns the world-leading DeepMind, a UK-based AI company. - Read more [here](#).

Hate Crime/Equalities

100,000 people sign petition telling Tories not to amend Equality Act

A PETITION to maintain the Equality Act in its current form has gathered over 100,000 signatures after the UK Government announced they would amend protections for transgender people.— Read more [here](#).

LGBT+ groups welcome decision to take UK to court over gender reform

THE Scottish Government's decision to take the UK Government to court over its blocking of gender reform legislation has been welcomed by [LGBT+](#) organisations. - Read more [here](#).

Abused gay men don't see they are victims - study

Gay and bisexual men are being abused by romantic partners but face multiple barriers to support, according to recent studies.

Research from Glasgow Caledonian University found that one in four men experienced violence in same-sex relationships. It heard from victims who shared sometimes harrowing accounts of abuse including physical violence, rape and psychological abuse from both casual and longer-term partners. - Read more [here](#).

Social barriers faced by Roma, Gypsies and Travellers laid bare in equality survey

The barriers which Roma, Gypsy and Traveller people face in modern Britain have been laid bare in unprecedented survey data, which reveals extremely high levels of racial assault, poor health, precarious employment and socioeconomic deprivation.

The figures were recorded as part of the Evidence for Equality National Survey (Evens) of ethnic and religious minorities, which included the largest number of Roma, Gypsy and Traveller participants in any national survey to date. - Read more [here](#).

General Community Safety

Every fire brigade in England plagued by bullying and harassment claims, report finds

Every fire brigade in England is plagued with bullying, harassment and discrimination complaints, a damning report has found, and officials have called for drastic measures to clean up the service.

Inspectors urged bosses to carry out background checks on every firefighter, with those who fail being sacked, after long-awaited findings shone a light on "deeply troubling" behaviour in the emergency service. - Read more [here](#).

Major charities call on government to reverse Cabinet downgrading of older people's issues

Sixteen major charities and organisations supporting older people are appealing to First Minister Humza Yousaf to reverse the downgrading of the role of Minister for Older People. They have written an open letter to the new First Minister spelling out why they are "extremely disappointed and disheartened" that the Cabinet role no longer has older people as its main focus. - Read more [here](#).

Climate Crisis Corner



Antarctic ocean currents heading for collapse - report

Rapidly melting Antarctic ice is causing a dramatic slowdown in deep ocean currents and could have a disastrous effect on the climate, a new report warns.

The deep-water flows which drive ocean currents could decline by 40% by 2050, a team of Australian scientists says. The currents carry vital heat, oxygen, carbon and nutrients around the globe. Previous research suggests a slowdown in the North Atlantic current could cause Europe to become colder. - Read more [here](#).

Biodiversity targets may be slipping out of reach - study

Ambitious targets to halt the decline in nature may already be slipping out of reach, a study suggests. Scientists say the effects of climate change and habitat loss on animal populations have been underestimated. They say bringing back wildlife may take longer than expected and that unless we act now global biodiversity targets will be out of reach. - Read more [here](#).

Cycling Scotland: 'Revolution' promised with new Scot Gov strategy

A new blueprint which could bring about a "revolution in everyday cycling" is being published by the Scottish Government – with ministers also pledging to invest more cash in active travel. Patrick Harvie said the budget for active travel is due to rise from almost £200 million this year to £320 million – or 10% of the overall transport budget – by 2024-25. - Read more [here](#).

Climate emergency is the biggest health crisis of our time – bigger than Covid (Comment)

The latest Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report is a grim, yet unsurprising, reminder of the catastrophic effect global heating is having on our planet. The message from leading climate scientists is clear: [action is needed now](#). Not tomorrow, not next year, not by the end of the decade.

Even drastic carbon reduction today that limits temperature increases to the 1.5C agreed in Paris will alter the world we live in for ever. The IPCC concludes that every fraction of a degree more will edge us towards tipping points that will leave deep scars on our planet. - Read more [here](#).

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