



Celebrating
25 YEARS
1997-2022

COMMUNITY SAFETY MEDIA MONITOR



September 2022

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.

Alcohol & Other Drugs

Rise in women dying from drugs in Scotland as male deaths fall

Women face additional barriers when it comes to drug misuse that the Scottish Government must address, according to the chief executive of Scottish Families Affected by Alcohol and Drugs. In 2021, there were 397 drug misuse deaths of females, an increase of 31 from 2020, according to the latest figures published by National Records of Scotland.

There were 933 drug misuse deaths of males, a decrease of 40 from 2020 and a total of 1,330 people lost their lives to drug misuse in Scotland in 2021. - Read more [here](#).

Angela Constance 'determined every penny' will make difference in drugs crisis

SCOTLAND'S drugs policy minister has said she is "determined that every penny" of the £250 million to be spent on Scotland's drugs crisis during the parliament's term "will make a difference". Angela Constance spoke out ahead of International Overdose Awareness Day on Wednesday, during which she will take part in the Know Your Route walk in Kilmarnock, organised by the East Ayrshire Recovery Network. - Read more [here](#).

County Lines: Cost of living crisis used by gangs to lure new recruits

County lines is the name given to drug-dealing networks connecting urban and rural areas, using phone lines, across the UK. Former gang members and those trying to support them claim the rising cost of living is being used by organised criminals to exploit those struggling to make ends meet. - Read more [here](#).

Alcohol-related deaths in Scotland climb to highest level since 2008

Almost 24 people died a week from alcohol-related causes in Scotland last year, according to figures published by National Records of Scotland (NRS). The total number of deaths (1,245 people) caused by alcohol in 2021 was 5 per cent up on the previous year and the highest number since 2008. - Read more [here](#).

Crime & Justice

I have spent 25 years treating serious sexual offenders – this is what I've learned (Comment Piece)

Sexual offenders can be deceitful and cruel. But they may also be ashamed and desperate to change. Helping them is the only way to prevent more victims

I've got a list of questions I'd like to ask you about your sexual offending against children, if that's OK," I say. "You might find some of them ... " I pause, unable to find the words, " ... a bit detailed and personal." The grizzled old man sitting in front of me nods, but does not make eye contact. I don't know who is dreading the interview most, him or me. - Read more [here](#).

Huge rise in self-generated child sexual abuse content online, report finds

Incidents of children aged between seven and 10 being manipulated into recording abuse of themselves have surged by two-thirds over the past six months, according to a global report.

Almost 20,000 reports of self-generated child sexual abuse content were seen by the [Internet](#) Watch Foundation (IWF) in the first six months of this year, compared with just under 12,000 for the same period this year. - Read more [here](#).

Image-based sex abuse cases in Scotland double in five years

Analysis produced Scotland's justice and social affairs magazine 1919 has shown that police recorded 912 incidents last year where someone had either disclosed or threatened to disclose an intimate image – a rate of more than 17 a week. - Read more [here](#).

Thousands of Scots die premature deaths every year for environmental reasons - pollution crime has no borders

Every year in Scotland 2500 people die premature deaths as a result of air pollution. It's a staggering loss of life than can and should be prevented. Globally there are nine million deaths a year (or one in six adults) due to environmental reasons. But there are other environmental issues the authorities are having to tussle with. And they impact on us all. Illegal pollution is hugely profitable, with devastating consequences for communities and the environment. - Read more [here](#).

New women's community custody unit to open in Dundee

A new women's community custody unit, described as the first of its kind in the UK, will open in Dundee next week. The Bella Centre, based in the city's Hilltown area, will house 16 low-risk offenders. The centre, which does not have high perimeter walls or barred windows, features shared house-style accommodation. The Scottish Prison Service said it marked a significant step-change in the way women were supported in custody. - Read more [here](#).

Revealed: UK children being ensnared by 'far-right ecosystem' online

An insidious "far-right ecosystem" is targeting children in an attempt to radicalise them online, with experts warning that progressively younger school pupils are becoming ensnared in extremist ideologies, a Guardian investigation has found.

Teachers, police officers, academics and community leaders said there was evidence that long periods of unsupervised online access, compounded during Covid lockdowns, were resulting in children and young people across the UK encountering far-right groups in greater numbers than before. - Read more [here](#).

Policing

Police officer numbers in Scotland hit lowest level since 2008 amid claims of force crisis

Official statistics show there were 16,610 full-time equivalent (FTE) officers as of June 30, a fall of 679 in the past year alone. This is the lowest number since the creation of the single national force and is the equivalent of almost two officers leaving a day over the past 12 months. In the past three months, the number of FTE officers has fallen by 195. - Read more [here](#).

Potential police recruits should not be barred over minor convictions in their youth – Tom Wood

That gauche teenage time when hormones rage. When we reject, on principle, our parents' views and values. When we have the strongest opinions, without a smidgin of knowledge to base them on. A time when we first fall desperately in love, and when heartbreaks are felt so deeply. A time when some are drawn to bad company and veer off the beaten track to fall foul of the justice system. There but for fortune go many of us. - Read more [here](#).

UK policing and border control infiltrated by war mentality, says report

Policing, border control and surveillance have become increasingly militarised in the UK and infiltrated by a "war mentality", according to a report.

It says there is an increasingly blurred line between the police and the military and that key areas including counter-terrorism, anti-protest policing, border control and the policing of gangs have adopted a war mentality. The report from [Campaign Against Arms Trade](#) (CAAT) and the [Network for Police Monitoring](#) (Netpol) describes the hyper-militarisation of British policing agencies as "deeply troubling". - Read more [here](#).

Hate Crime/Equalities

Reports of LGBT hate crimes rise by more than 50% in West

Reports of LGBT hate crimes have risen by more than 50% in the West in two years. Figures from three police forces reveal a total increase from 712 reported incidents in 2019, to 1,109 in 2021. One force said the numbers could relate to an improved "trust and confidence" in reporting. Steffi Barnett, who presents an LGBT radio show in Bristol, said current attitudes towards transgender people were "vociferous" and "horrible". - Read more [here](#).

UK helpline launched for east and south-east Asian victims of racism

A free nationwide 24-hour helpline offering support for east and south-east Asian victims of racism and other forms of hate in the UK has been launched. The [On Your Side helpline](#) will be run by specialist advisers to provide tailored and culturally sensitive support. Longer-term support from a trained casework advocate will be offered, with case workers helping people understand their rights and direct them to specialist support services. - Read more [here](#).

Ankle tags and 24/7 surveillance – this is how the UK treats new migrants (Comment Piece)

Imagine arriving in the UK to seek asylum today. You are confused, terrified and traumatised by the events that led you to leave your home country. Your journey here likely involved breathtaking risks and unimaginable abuse. You probably found out the hard way that for you there is no such thing as what the government calls a "[safe route](#)" for refugees to the UK. - Read more [here](#).

Poverty/Inequality

Covid: People in deprived areas more than twice as likely to get fines

People living in the most deprived areas of Scotland were 2.6 times more likely to receive a fine during Covid lockdowns, figures show. More than 20,000 people got police fixed penalty notices during 2020/21 for breaking Covid restriction rules. Three quarters of all fines were given to people under the age of 30, according to a University of Edinburgh study. And more than one in four were handed out in the 10% most deprived areas. - Read more [here](#).

A generation of Britons face long-term illness from being cold and poor this winter - Sir Michael Marmot (Comment Piece)

[All I want is a room somewhere](#)./ Far away from the cold night air .../warm face, warm hands, warm feet. Oh, wouldn't it be lovely. To Eliza Doolittle's lament we can add, not just "lovely", but healthy, too. George Bernard Shaw, whose play Pygmalion was the source for the film My Fair Lady, was writing about Edwardian London. Yet cold and poor is the reality facing [66% of the population](#) this winter in 21st-century Britain. - Read more [here](#).

Parents of under-18s hardest hit by energy price rise

ALMOST one in four UK adults plan to never turn their heating on this winter due to the soaring price of energy, new research has revealed. Polling commissioned by the Liberal Democrats and released this week has found that 23% of adults in the UK intend to go without heating throughout the winter months, with that figure rising to 27% amongst parents with children under the age of 18. 69% plan to turn their heating on less this winter. - Read more [here](#).

General Community Safety

SAMH, NHS Grampian and Police Scotland unite as mental health concerns grow

A trio of North-east organisations have come together to urge anyone having suicidal thoughts to reach out for help and for those worried about someone to act. SAMH (Scottish Association for Mental Health), [NHS Grampian](#) Public Health and [Police Scotland](#) made the plea as concerns grow about the impact of the last two years on people's mental health. - Read more [here](#).

UK's people trafficking referrals at record high, Home Office data shows

The number of referrals for people trafficking has increased by a third in the last year, according to [Home Office](#) data, with nine out of 10 suspected cases accepted to be victims. The number of referrals for the period April to June 2022 was 4,171 – the highest number recorded since the national referral mechanism (NRM) was introduced in 2009. This is the government's system for potential victims of trafficking to access support and have their cases investigated. - Read more [here](#).

Ministers in the dock over removal of Grenfell-style cladding in Scotland

Scottish ministers have been accused of "dragging their heels" in replacing Grenfell-style cladding as the bulk of the removal work is earmarked for 2025. The Scottish Government's spending review pledged £180 million over three years to remove the potentially harmful insulation. However, the vast majority of funds – £100 million – will be allocated in 2025/26, while a £30 million budget will start in 2023/24, increasing to £50 million in 2024/25. - Read more [here](#).

Climate Crisis Corner



Climate endgame: risk of human extinction 'dangerously underexplored'

The risk of global societal collapse or human extinction has been "dangerously underexplored", climate scientists have warned in an analysis. They call such a catastrophe the "climate endgame". Though it had a small chance of occurring, given the uncertainties in future emissions and the climate system, cataclysmic scenarios could not be ruled out, they said. The international team of experts argue the world needs to start preparing for the possibility of the climate endgame. "Analysing the mechanisms for these extreme consequences could help galvanise action, improve resilience, and inform policy," they said. - Read more [here](#).

Major sea-level rise caused by melting of Greenland ice cap is 'now inevitable'

Major sea-level rise from the melting of the [Greenland](#) ice cap is now inevitable, scientists have found, even if the fossil fuel burning that is driving the climate crisis were to end overnight. The research shows the global heating to date will cause an absolute minimum sea-level rise of 27cm (10.6in) from Greenland alone as 110tn tonnes of ice melt. With continued carbon emissions, the melting of other ice caps and thermal expansion of the ocean, a multi-metre sea-level rise appears likely. - Read more [here](#).

'Woefully inadequate': Experts savage Scots Gov environmental masterplan to stop breaching international law

SCOTTISH ministers have come under fire as it emerged they are continuing to breach international law by failing to put in place coherent measures to protect the nation's precious [environment](#), landscape and wildlife. Last year, an analysis to the United Nations economic commission for Europe confirmed that [Scotland](#) is continuing to fail to put in place proper legal processes to properly protect the nation's natural environment, wildlife and air and water quality. - Read more [here](#).

Ignore the culture warriors – low traffic neighbourhoods don't close streets, they liberate them (Comment Piece)

It reminds me of the [school board controversies](#) in the United States. A small group of furious men, whipped up by the media and opportunist politicians, are seeking to turn quiet, practical attempts to protect local people into full-blown culture wars. The further from reality their beliefs diverge, the readier they are to resort to vandalism and violence. - Read more [here](#).

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