



Safety NET-works

May 2020

www.safercommunitiesScotland.org

Implications for Road Safety from Covid 19

by Hannah Dickson, Development Manager

The Covid19 pandemic has seen the biggest change in travel patterns in recent memory with UK and Scottish Government guidance on only taking essential journeys (by any mode) supported by emergency legislation giving Police forces additional powers to advise and enforce where necessary.



At the Scottish Community Safety Network we've been interested in the impact that the pandemic has had on road safety. We're also keen to explore what the opportunities are to create better road safety outcomes post-pandemic, learning from the pattern of active travel, and collision and injury data during this time as inspiration to "build back better".

Travel patterns and road safety during lockdown

These changes in travel patterns – in particular the fall in car journeys and rise in cycling (and likely walking though we don't have data) – coupled with the significant decreases in air pollution have sparked conversations and campaigns to break car dependency, redesign cities and urban spaces and build a new greener future.

There have been rapid improvements in active travel and probably in road safety outcomes (future statistical releases on road traffic collisions will give a more definite picture on the safety impact) but this doesn't mean that road safety is of no concern during the pandemic....

To read this article in full, please download the PDF document [here](#).

Focus on Domestic Abuse

Sadly, the Covid 19 crisis has seen reports of large increases in domestic violence and killings of women by men across the world.

We've made this a major focus of our recent newsletters and work, including regular partner meetings to discuss issues as they arise in communities across Scotland.

Womens Aid Produce Guidance for Social Landlords



Scottish Womens Aid has produced a new guidance document on domestic abuse for social landlords which you can access [here](#).

You can read much more on recent domestic abuse updates on **pages 4-5**.

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We continue to work very closely with a range of partners during the Covid 19 crisis to identify and bring resource to emerging issues. In particular we are working with our partners on the Building Safer Communities Executive Group on Unintentional Harm, as well as focussing on domestic violence.

Hate Crime and Equalities Event Update

Our hate crime and equalities event is now scheduled for October 28, but this will continue to be subject to change or restrictions depending on developments in the intermittent period.

Hate Crime Rises during Covid 19 pandemic

Hate crimes against Chinese people in the UK have soared during the coronavirus outbreak, new police figures have revealed.

At least 267 offences were recorded in the first three months of 2020 during the **COVID-19** crisis - including assaults, robberies, harassment and criminal damage.

Victims described being punched, spat at and coughed on in the street as well as being verbally abused about **coronavirus** after the first case was reported in China.

Question of the Month

Our Question of the Month for April was around working from home. Very many of us have been forced to switch to full time home working during the Covid 19 pandemic, and we know this has raised some practical issues, including around home safety, as well as some possible emotional issues. So we asked:

How are you finding working from home?

- 8% of respondents said 'Easy'
- 71% of respondents said 'OK'
- 21% of respondents said 'Difficult'

Thanks to all of those who took part in our poll!

Question of the Month

May 2020

Our Question of the Month for May looks ahead to life after Covid 19. In so many ways and in so many areas of life, the current crisis has provided opportunities for learning and thinking differently, as well as for partnership working and new ways of working.

With that in mind, we're asking:

Are you feeling hopeful for a better 'new normal' in community safety issues post Covid 19?

Take part in our poll [here](#).

60 seconds with...Lesley Rudd, Chief Executive of Electrical Safety First



Lesley Rudd became Chief Executive of leading UK charity, Electrical Safety First (ESF), at the beginning of this year. In this introductory Q&A, she explains how the charity is supporting people during lockdown – and some of the pioneering work it is undertaking in Scotland.



You previously headed-up the Sustainable Energy Association. What instigated your move to an electrical safety charity?

I am passionate about sustainability and safety, which developed when I worked in Scotland's oil and gas industry. I was a member of an industry safety network and was always impressed by the way commercial rivalries were put aside, with people sharing best practice and collaborating fully, when there had been a major incident. So Electrical Safety First seemed a natural fit – encompassing my interest in safety and sustainable energy and having collaborative working at its core. In the 21st century, electrical safety must have a 360-degree approach, so we work with Government, Industry, consumer protection organisations, and a host of key stakeholders, such as the SCSN, to protect people from electrical risk.

How has COVID-19 affected the work of ESF and are there any basic electrical safety issues to be aware of during this time?

Thankfully, we can continue working from home – and we are very aware that we are extremely fortunate in being able to do so.

But we were concerned about the increase in electrical risk homeworking can bring. Currently, 74% of all domestic fires in Scotland arise from electricity, with most caused by electrical products. And, inevitably, homeworking requires the use of several of them, from laptops and tablets, to phones and heaters.

Our research discovered over three quarters of Scots currently working from home, are doing so for the first time, due to COVID-19. And 38% of them have more appliances plugged into extension leads than usual, often unaware that overloading sockets is a fire risk. Most of us aren't used to ensuring our workstations have no electrical hazards, so ESF has run a major media campaign, to offer some top safety tips. For example, not daisy-chaining extension leads and ensuring you charging devices are on non-flammable surfaces. There's lots more information and tools to help people keep safe, on our website:

www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk

What are the priorities for Electrical Safety First in Scotland?

The key issues are home and product safety. With our [Inequality Street campaign](#), ESF led the charge for regular electrical checks in Scotland's private rented sector, which came into force in 2015. We are now focusing on extending this safety essential to mixed-tenure blocks and the owner-occupied sector. The probability of fire spread is exacerbated in high density housing, especially in multi-story apartments or blocks of flats. And many homeowners are older and vulnerable people, yet there is no requirement for regular checks in this tenure. We want a uniform set of safety measures, across all tenures, to ensure consistent electrical safety.

ESF is also reviewing electrical safety in short-term lets, as the sector's rapid growth gives rise to concerns. Last year, a Scottish Government report showed 'whole house' Airbnb listings alone, almost tripled in twelve months. We believe short term lets should meet the Scottish Government's Repairing Standard, which requires five yearly electrical checks.

Read the interview with Lesley in full on our website [here](#).



CrimeStoppers Domestic Violence Campaign

As more people are isolated during the Coronavirus pandemic, the charity Crimestoppers Scotland is launching a new campaign across the country appealing for information from people who are aware of Domestic Abuse happening to friends, family, work colleagues or neighbours.

Domestic Abuse can be physical, psychological, emotional, sexual or financial.

Often neighbours, family and friends may be suspicious, but are reluctant to get involved because of embarrassment, split loyalties or fear of revenge.

In 2017-2018 there were 59,541 incidents of domestic abuse recorded by Police Scotland. Women made up 82% of the victims.

As an independent charity who has helped millions of people over the years, Crimestoppers is asking those with concerns to pass on what they know whilst staying 100% anonymous. Always.

Angela Parker, National Manager for charity Crimestoppers Scotland said:

"With the Covid-19 pandemic forcing people to stay in their homes, our fear is that rates of domestic violence will rise.

This is a serious crime that leaves victims feeling trapped, alone and powerless. They are often too scared or vulnerable to seek help or speak out."

Coronavirus sees rise in requests to reveal partners abusive pasts

The coronavirus lockdown has sparked a surge in requests from people wanting to know if their partner has an abusive past, police figures show.

The Disclosure Scheme for Domestic Abuse in Scotland gives people the right to ask police about the history of their partners.

The legislation also gives police the power to tell someone if they think they may be at risk.

There has been an 18% rise in requests to reveal past abuse since lockdown.

Read this story in full on the BBC website [here](#).

Need someone to talk to about abuse?
Lockdown doesn't mean staying where you are!
Let us help you get to safety?



CONTACT US
ON
07706754817
fb/NoFeartCIC
Twitter @nofeartcic
email info@nofeart.org

Talk to us confidentially and we can do all we can to help. We are in touch with many organisations working together to make it safe for you and your children at this difficult time. We are here for you and can work safely with you!

Please contact us when it's safe to do so!

National Domestic Abuse Helpline

0808 2000 247

Scottish Domestic Abuse Helpline

0800 027 1234

You can read the latest NoFeart Newsletter in full [here](#).

Covid 19 and the role of evidence in policymaking

By Mariah Kelly, Business Support Assistant (Events)



Last year, I wrote an essay on 'evidence-based policy' for my MSc Health Policy programme. This focused on the political nature and application of evidence and argued that this phrase doesn't accurately represent the policymaking process. For several years, SCSN have also been interested in the role of knowledge and evidence in policy and practice. COVID-19 has made this topic especially pertinent for us all, and I've been struck by the number of [government references](#) to following 'the science' and the 'evidence'.

The UK government's rhetoric is part of a broader consensus that policies should always be 'evidence-based'. On the surface, this is perfectly rational and desirable: who doesn't want objective, effective policy responses? In reality, however, this is neither possible nor necessarily preferable. The UK's coronavirus response has claimed to follow 'the science' throughout, but this obscures the reality that evidence comes in many, often conflicting, forms, and is usually filtered through a political lens.

The first question we should ask about the strategy of following 'the science' is: what science? Scientists don't tend to agree on everything, and there are many different scientific disciplines to choose from. And even if there is a broad consensus on quantitative research evidence, an effective policy response should not necessarily prioritise this above qualitative data or social science. For instance, a pandemic response strategy can follow epidemiological science but it will not be effective if individuals, communities and societies cannot or will not behave in the ways

that policymakers hope. Because people are involved, policymaking needs to be attentive not only to biomedical and/or quantitative science but to social science, and to the needs of communities themselves. When these conflict with each other, some types of evidence inevitably get prioritised.

Although government rhetoric has not made this clear, certain kinds of evidence have been prioritised throughout the COVID-19 response. The UK Government used a behavioural science theory to justify the decision not to 'lockdown' until 23rd March. It was argued that to 'lockdown' too early would lead to '[behavioural fatigue](#)': the idea that public adherence to quarantines might wane over time. Whilst this appears logical, the science followed here was far from uncontested at the time. More than 600 UK behavioural scientists signed an [open letter](#) to the government to express their concern about perceived government inaction. They argued that not enough is known about the concept of 'behavioural fatigue' for COVID-19 policy responses to be built around this hypothesis. How can policymakers ever purport to follow 'the science', then, when we consider that scientific evidence, like all evidence, is not unified, stable, objective or universally agreed upon?

Claiming to follow 'the science' can be used as a way of deflecting political accountability when policies go wrong. Being 'led by the science' obscures the fact that deciding which science to follow is a fundamentally political exercise. Policymakers and politicians sometimes follow (or even commission) the kind of evidence that supports their existing ideological preferences, a process some have referred to as 'policy-based evidence' [\[1\]](#). This makes it all the more clear why the type of 'evidence' used in policy responses must be scrutinised. To do this, policymakers must be transparent about the precise evidence that is being followed.

Read this article in full and view references [here](#).

Fearless & Barnardos Child Harm & Neglect campaign launched



Fearless.org has joined forces with Barnardos to launch a new campaign aimed at raising awareness of child harm and neglect, with tips on how to spot it and information on how to report it anonymously.

What are the signs of harm and neglect?

The child or young person might:

1. Seem unclean or hungry.
2. Be left alone at home for long periods of time.
3. Have unexplained bruises or injuries. Seem withdrawn or depressed.
4. Live with parents/carers who are often drunk or under the influence of drugs
5. Confide in you that they are being hurt or forced to do things against their will.

Fearless.org. has a unique part of their website where you can report instances of child harm and neglect completely anonymously as it does not record your IP address.

Click [here](#) to anonymously report your suspicions of child harm or neglect.

You can view and/or share their campaign video using [this link](#).

Healthy Ageing and Covid 19

[Ageing Well virtual talks with the Open University](#)

Join VHS and the Open University on Thursday 7 May 11.30am - 1.00pm for the first in a series of joint online events exploring ageing, health and wellbeing. This talk will be led by [Dr Jitka Vseteckova from the OU](#) with input from VHS member Nicola Hanssen, CEO of Roar - Connections for Life. In this series, we are exploring how important it is, over our lifespan, to maintain a well-balanced nutrition and hydration as well as regular physical and social activity in older age, also known as the 'Five Pillars of Ageing Well'. This first talk will cover basic biomedical and psycho-social aspects of ageing and age-related conditions such as bone health and frailty. What will the impact of Covid-19 be for ageing well? [Book a place at Ageing Well](#)

[Health Inequalities Cross Party Group: discuss the impact of COVID](#)

The Health Inequalities Cross Party Group will be hosting an online Zoom meeting on the 14 May for the Health Inequalities Cross Party Group to discuss the impact of Covid-19 on health inequalities in Scotland. The meeting will be chaired by Anas Sarwar MSP, Co-Convenor of the group. Register [here](#).

Older People's Stay Healthy Lockdown Guide Published

A [guide](#) to help older people in Greater Manchester stay healthy at home during the COVID-19 lockdown has been published by academics at The University of Manchester.

Called 'Keeping Well At Home', the team have been working with the Ageing Hub at Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) so the resource can reach homes across the region.

The printed booklet is specifically aimed at older people, many of whom have no access to the internet, and draws on evidence based research from the University's Healthy Ageing Research Group.

The resource is Manchester focussed, but an example of good practice that can be replicated.

New Research: Alcohol Consumption During Lockdown

Alcohol Change UK has published new [research](#) conducted by Opinium which has shown a mixed picture of how lockdown is affecting alcohol consumption in the UK.

Around 1 in 3 respondents reported that they had reduced or stopped any alcohol consumption since lockdown began. However, around 21% of respondents said that their alcohol intake had increased, suggesting around 8.6million UK adults are drinking more frequently during lockdown.

Those already drinking the least have cut down most substantially, although worryingly, at the other end of the scale, 1 in 5 daily drinkers reported having further increased how much they were drinking.

Increases in alcohol consumption will have specific impacts during the Covid 19 crisis with alcohol likely to exacerbate mental health or anxiety problems, as well as weakening the immune system and leaving people more vulnerable to infections or complications, including from Covid 19. Indeed, [research](#) has shown that alcohol increases the risk of several lung diseases.

Increased alcohol use may also be compounding or playing a role in increased reports worldwide of domestic violence during lockdown, with alcohol [strongly linked](#) to domestic violence incidents.

Aside from domestic violence, increased alcohol consumption also has implications for areas of community safety including increased risk of unintentional harm, especially in the home - with a greater likelihood of accidents and house fires.

Safer Drinking During Lockdown



- To keep health risks from alcohol to a low level it is safest not to drink more than 14 units a week on a regular basis.
- If you regularly drink as much as 14 units per week, it is best to spread your drinking evenly over 3 or more days.
- If you wish to cut down the amount you drink, a good way to help achieve this is to have several drink free days each week.
- You might also try switching to a lower strength alcoholic drink, use smaller glass sizes & put down your drink between sips

Scottish Drugs Forum Webinars



As part of its response to the current COVID-19 pandemic, Scottish Drugs Forum is hosting a series of free webinars.

The SDF webinars will address crucial aspects of the support of people with drug problems and the delivery of effective services that provide treatment and support, reduce harm and protect people from COVID-19.

Anxiety Increases During First Days of Lockdown

Almost half of people in Great Britain asked about their well-being reported high levels of anxiety in the days surrounding the lockdown.

Businesses were closed on 23 March 2020, to help halt the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19).

Data has shown that between 20 and 30 March, there was a sharp decline in happiness levels and a marked increase in anxiety levels.

You can read this story in full on the ONS website [here](#).



Neighbourhood Watch SCOTLAND

As the weeks role on the NWS team continue to work from home. Although we have access to our computer based systems, continued issues with internet providers adds to the frustration of being away from the office. So onwards and upwards to the new normal where we can have a mug of tea, a good old fashioned moan, put the world to rights and then get back on with the day's jobs.

With the stopping of all face to face interaction, the NWS team have been making every effort to let all our administrators, coordinators and partners who continue to post ALERTS know how important they are to us and their communities. It has never been so important to get trusted, relevant messages out to our communities on issues of crime, safety and resilience.

The benefit of being seen as a trusted source of information is that we have seen more than 700 new sign ups for ALERT in April and this continues to build with in excess of 200 sign ups in the first week of May. Interestingly over 20 communities across the country have registered to establish their own Neighbourhood Watches in the past week.

For NWS the interest in the opportunities to individuals and communities to come together and support each other is heartening. The effort we are all making gives us hope that as we move forward, the connections made and work being done in these uncertain times will result in stronger, well connected and resilient communities across Scotland.

To sign up or get involved, head to www.neighbourhoodwatchscotland.co.uk

Fly Tipping Increases in some areas

Some councils continue to report increases in fly-tipping. The local authority in Dumfries and Galloway said rubble, furniture, garden waste and oil drums had been found dumped during lockdown. Although, the Scottish Borders council said it had not seen any noticeable increase in fly-tipping

Concerns for Disabled People

GDA has found that 40% of disabled people surveyed are worried about food, medication or money. They are also concerns about loneliness/isolation and inability to access services. Only 37% of disabled people reported to have home broadband or IT, and many lack the confidence or skills to use it.



Latest Home Safety Updates and News



Latest RoSPA Home Safety Journal Published



In this issue, RoSPA report on the launch of a timely campaign, Accident Free, Avoid A&E, which highlights tried-and-tested advice, information and practical resources to help you keep yourselves and your loved ones accident free while confined at home, leaving our hard working NHS staff free to care for those with coronavirus.

Elsewhere, there are updates from RoSPA Northern Ireland and Scotland, information about new webinars designed to help health and safety professionals deal with the challenges presented by social distancing and an interview with RoSPA trustee Dr Julian Redhead, who outlines the importance of the Safer by Design framework.

The journal is hosted online and you can access it [here](#).

RoSPA welcomes your feedback and any suggestions for future content. Please send these to acoleman@rospa.com, mentioning "Home Safety Journal" in the subject line. For information about advertising in the journal, please call 07500 010893.

More information about the benefits of RoSPA Membership is available at www.rospa.com/joinrospa. You can also contact their Membership Department on 0121 248 2051 or membership@rospa.com

And, for general public health and home safety enquiries, please contact 0121 248 2506.

Child Safety Week 2020

[Child Safety Week 2020](#) aims to cut through the noise, to be the voice of reason on child safety for families, so that safety makes sense to them.

Working together, we can help families know what they really need to do to protect their children and how to do it – and where the things they're already doing are good enough.

Child Safety Week 2020 gives you everything you need to do this. In addition it provides a platform for visibly profiling the work you do for and with families.

You can register to support Child Safety Week and get free resources [here](#).

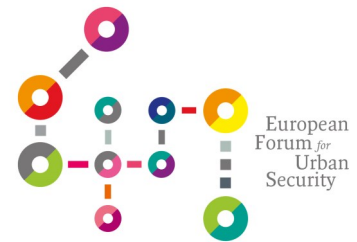


In other news...

news

Efus Network Web Conferences

Since the beginning of April, Efus invites you every Tuesday and Thursday at 2pm (1pm BST) for **a series of webconferences on urban security topics linked to the Covid 19 crisis**. Moderated by their team with contributions of one or more local actors and experts, these online debates are an opportunity to share your experiences in an informal setting. Many have joined during the first sessions and are invited to further these discussions in the coming weeks around the following topics :



- What is the impact of the crisis on unaccompanied minors, as victims and/or perpetrators of violence? - 7 May 2020
- Is European cooperation still relevant? - 12 May 2020
- How does the extremist threat evolve in the pandemic? - 14 May 2020
- How to adapt and manage public spaces after lockdown? - 19 May 2020
- How to adapt the end of lock down to the specific needs of popular neighbourhoods? - 22 May 2020
- Using technologies to control the pandemic: Could privacy also be a victim of covid19? - 26 May 2020

You can register to take part in Efus Web Conferences [here](#).

Emergency Hardship Fund for Sex Workers

Umbrella Lane, a charity for sex workers in Scotland, has set up an emergency hardship fund for sex workers based in Scotland during the Covid 19 crisis. Other organisations have set up similar funds and you can find out more by contacting Umbrella Lane. Find out more [here](#).

Human Trafficking and Exploitation Newsletter

The most recent edition of the Scottish Government Human Trafficking and Exploitation newsletter is now available on their website. You can access all of the latest news and updates, as well as previous newsletters, on their website [here](#).

Survey: Your Police 2020-2021

Police Scotland are conducting a survey for you to give your views and opinions, particularly during these challenging times, but also beyond, on priorities for your communities. The survey is completely anonymous and will take no longer than 10 minutes to complete and can be accessed [here](#).





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