

Week in review

This week's round-up includes news of greater public awareness of human trafficking in Scotland, the latest independent assurance on police call-handling improvements, and the appointment of a new independent inspector for the country's prisons.

Growing public awareness of human trafficking

LOCATIONS WHERE
VICTIMS OF HUMAN
TRAFFICKING HAVE BEEN
IDENTIFIED IN SCOTLAND



A survey published this week highlighted growing public awareness of human trafficking in Scotland with an increasing number of Scots being prepared to report related suspicious activity to police.

A total of 87% of people questioned said they would be prepared to report any suspicions of human trafficking to Police Scotland. This is up from 80% in 2017 and follows a significant [Scottish Government campaign](#) to raise awareness of trafficking, launched last summer.

Other survey findings include an increased awareness that trafficking activity can take place in areas such as farming and the beauty industry – and that it isn't simply related to prostitution or drug trafficking.

[Justice Secretary Michael Matheson commented](#): “Such appalling abuses of human rights must stop and we are continuing to make Scotland a hostile environment for traffickers, including giving Police Scotland the power to ban suspects from a range of activities.”

Read more about what the Scottish Government is doing to help tackle trafficking and ensure victims get the help they need – and find links to further information and details of how to report concerns – on the [main Scottish Government website](#).

Victims' voices sought on sexual crimes

Research into the experiences of rape and sexual assault victim-survivors are to help ensure the interests of victims are at the heart of the criminal justice system, the Justice Secretary announced this week.

The Scottish Centre for Crime and Justice Research (SCCJR) has been appointed to help identify and understand the range of factors that affect whether individuals who experience rape and sexual assault choose to engage with the criminal justice process. Researchers will also consider how the system can support victims to give their evidence in the best way.

Mr Matheson said: "Listening to the views of survivors of rape and sexual assault is so important and I am humbled by the courage of those who are prepared to speak out where the system is not delivering for their needs. Going through the justice process can be a daunting experience and I am determined that we do more so that all stages are victim-centred and trauma-informed."

The research team will be led by Dr Oona Brooks-Hay, lecturer in Criminology at SCCJR, University of Glasgow. Their findings are due to be published in early 2019 – contributing to Ministers' key agenda of strengthening support for victims of crime.

In [March Mr Matheson announced £1.7 million funding to extend the National Advocacy Project](#) – delivered by Rape Crisis Scotland (RCS) to support victims – to allow extra advocacy workers to be recruited in areas of most demand and provide additional capacity for RCS to support and co-ordinate the service nationally.

Read more about the new research project on the [main Scottish Government website](#).

It's important we hear directly from rape survivors about their experience of the justice process, good & bad, in order to improve how support is provided throughout the process.

<https://t.co/XlSGZY4ihL>

– Michael Matheson MSP (@MathesonMichael) [May 23, 2018](#)

Police call handling



In Parliament on Tuesday the Justice Secretary welcomed an independent report, published that morning by HM Inspectorate of Constabulary for Scotland detailing improvements to police call handling.

The report, [published by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary](#), follows an independent review of police call handling systems directed by Mr Matheson in 2015.

HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary Gillian Imery said: "Throughout a challenging period of intensive change and development, the management and staff in Contact, Command and Control (C3) division in Police Scotland have continued to be strongly committed to providing a good service to the public. A number of key milestones have been achieved, staff morale and confidence has improved and performance has stabilised. However there are still some areas where further progress is required."

Watch Michael Matheson's statement to Parliament responding to the HMICS report on the [Scottish Parliament's YouTube channel](#).

Parliament debates Restorative Justice



Also on Tuesday, Minister for Community Safety & Legal Affairs Annabelle Ewing outlined plans to support the local delivery of restorative justice by consulting later this year on new

regulations, under victims and witnesses legislation.

The Government published a [restorative justice guidance document](#) last year and has recently surveyed local authorities to better understand how RJ is currently being delivered.

Restorative justice (RJ) is a process of independent, facilitated contact which supports constructive dialogue between a victim and the person responsible – or alleged to be responsible – for the harm caused. RJ gives victims the chance to explain the impact the crime has had on their lives. This has the potential to help some victims by giving them a voice within a safe and supportive setting and giving them a sense of closure.

Ms Ewing told MSPs: “Restorative justice can provide victims with the chance to have their voices heard and their questions answered. It can also help to tackle the likelihood of someone being drawn into further offending. It is a particularly powerful tool when it is used to address the behaviour of young people, who can learn so much from a dialogue with those who have been harmed by their actions. That can lead them to a route out of crime and away from the revolving door of the justice system. However, we are keen that the main benefit is felt by the victims of crime, giving them an opportunity to communicate the impact on their lives and to regain some control.”

Employers’ new bid to provide second chances



This week saw the launch of a new business-led partnership aimed at unlocking the potential of people with criminal convictions.

And estimated one in three men and some one in ten women in Scotland are estimated to have a criminal conviction.

[Release Scotland](#) has been set up by employers who have seen the benefits of recruiting people with convictions, with the new network providing a one-stop shop for other businesses in Scotland seeking advice and help to do the same themselves.

The Scottish Chambers of Commerce, Virgin Trains, Greggs, Timpson and Reed Global are among those behind the new initiative, which was formally launched at the Parliament this week.

Finance Secretary Derek Mackay, who addressed the launch on behalf of the

Scottish Government, emphasised ministers' commitment to helping more men and women with a criminal record to turn their lives around and gain employment.

"There are clear social and economic benefits to helping people with convictions move on and play a positive role in helping Scotland's economy flourish. Through the '[Scotland Works for You](#)' initiative, we aim to help people with convictions attain the benefits that work brings for reducing reoffending and also, for employers, in finding loyal and dedicated staff."

Visit the [Release Scotland website](#) to find out more about the initiative, including advice, employer testimonies and individual case studies – or follow [@releasescotland on Twitter](#).

New Prisons Inspection chief



This week saw Wendy Sinclair-Gieben announced as the new HM Chief Inspector of Prisons for Scotland – the first woman appointed to the role.

Ms Sinclair-Gieben – succeeding David Strang, who has served in the role since 2013 – has a background in justice in the UK and Australia, including terms as a prison governor and managing a reintegration facility.

Ms Sinclair-Gieben said: "I am delighted to be appointed to this exciting post. I see this role as a culmination of a long and rewarding career in Justice and I particularly look forward to building on my predecessor's significant achievements in the future."

[Mr Matheson commented](#): "Wendy Sinclair-Gieben brings a wealth of experience in the justice sector, a deep understanding of prisons and the wider justice context, and a commitment to a public sector ethos. I look forward to working with her."

Read more about the role of HM Chief Inspector of Prisons for Scotland on the [Inspectorate website](#).

And finally...

Keep an eye out this coming Monday for BBC1's [Countryfile Diaries](#), which will feature the excellent [Dementia Dog](#) project, working with the Scottish Prison Service and students at HM Prison Castle Huntly. On Tuesday Minister for Mental Health Maureen Watt visited Castle Huntly to see first-hand the project, which is Scotland's first prison-based assistance dog training programme.

Tune in to BBC1 Countryfile Diaries on Monday 28th May [@9am](#) for an insight into the innovative partnership with our students at HMP Castle Huntly [@dementiadog](#) [@DogsForGoodUK](#) [@PawsforProgress](#) [@fifecollege](#) [pic.twitter.com/w71dpvwBUz](#)

– ScotsPrisonService (@scottishprisons) [May 25, 2018](#)

The post [Week in review](#) appeared first on [Justice and Safety](#).

[GDPR – a change to data protection law](#)

The General Data Protection Regulations comes into force on May 25, 2018, giving individuals more control over their personal data, and ensuring that organisations collect and process that information properly and securely. To find out more about GDPR, visit the [Information Commissioner's website](#).

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The post [GDPR – a change to data protection law](#) appeared first on [Justice and Safety](#).

Justice and Safety 2018-05-18 18:14:55

Ministers have had another busy week dealing with and meeting with key partners across a range of justice system and public safety issues – from launching a consultation on a major review of family law, to seeing first-hand an innovative scheme to help steer young people away from the risk of being drawn into serious organisation crime.

Child rights at heart of family law review



Minister for Legal Affairs [Annabelle Ewing](#) [launched a public consultation](#) about the law involving children of separated parents, and on the law around parental responsibilities and rights. This will inform the key themes to be included in a new family justice modernisation strategy.

Ms Ewing said: “We know that family breakdown can be very upsetting for children and it is our responsibility to ensure that the family justice system is supportive and does not contribute to their distress. That means putting the best interests of the child first in every case, and feedback from this consultation will help us to identify where changes are needed.”

Read more and give your views on the [Scottish Government consultation pages](#) – or access a separate set of [child-friendly questions](#). And please pass on to others who may have an interest so they can make their views known.

Police training to strengthen response to domestic abuse

National charity [SafeLives](#) was this week appointed by Police Scotland to [train 14,000 officers](#) in identifying controlling behaviours to support the introduction of the new Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act.

Controlling and coercive behaviours are a significant factor of domestic abuse and the new legislation – due for implementation early next year – will help police and prosecutors to better-target perpetrators of such abuse.

Justice Secretary Michael Matheson said: “We are committed to ensuring our law enforcement agencies have the powers and resources necessary to tackle crime and keep communities safe. That is why we have provided £825,000 funding to Police Scotland to develop and deliver high-quality bespoke training which will help them to identify some of the more insidious and damaging behaviours that perpetrators use to control their partner or ex-partner which are covered within the new offence.”

Information and advice for anyone experiencing domestic abuse can be found on the [MyGov.Scot website](#).

Our CEO [@SuzanneEJacob](#) on the announcement that we will be working with our partners to deliver [#domesticabuse](#) training across the whole of [@policescotland](#) Together we truly can improve the response so more people get the right support at the right time
<https://t.co/y4jtxtszRv> pic.twitter.com/sDG7MVHHpb

– SafeLives (@safelives_) [May 15, 2018](#)

Tackling Serious Organised Crime

On Wednesday the Justice Secretary joined representatives of Action for Children, Glasgow City Council and the Big Lottery Fund as those three partners announced a funding package to support a unique project that is helping to divert young people in Glasgow away from serious organised crime (SOC).

Delivered in partnership with Police Scotland, the SOC early intervention service is the only project of its kind in the UK, and works with young people across the city aged between 12 and 18. A recent review found 71% of young people who have used the service were kept out of secure care for at least six months during involvement with the programme – including a number deemed “high risk” of entering secure care by the children’s panel. And two-thirds of those involved have made demonstrable improvements in their offending behaviour.

Action for Children’s Chief Executive Paul Carberry said: “Today’s funding announcement for our ‘Serious Organised Crime Intervention Service’ is a very important step in the continued efforts in Scotland to tackle serious organised crime. We are grateful to work in collaboration with partner agencies to tackle these types of crime, which blights communities across the city.”

Action for Children is a key partner in the work of Scotland’s [Serious Organised Crime Taskforce](#), with Mr Carberry chairing its ‘Divert’ strand.

Mr Matheson commended the partners for securing continued funding for the project, including an expansion of services to support families. He said: “This is a valuable project that is making a real difference to the lives of

young people by diverting them from involvement in a range of criminal activity that could have a seriously detrimental effect on the rest of their lives.”

Video: Watch [@MathesonMichael](#) talk about the [@Actn4ChildrScot](#) serious organised crime intervention service after meeting young people assisted by the project [@GlasgowCC](#) [@BIGScotland](#) [@GCHSCP](#) [@policescotland](#) pic.twitter.com/cmkgil6xta

– ScotGov Justice (@ScotGovJustice) [May 16, 2018](#)

Cashback on the big screen

An innovative scheme that’s helping young people in North Ayrshire to gain new skills and confidence for the workplace ahead of leaving school, and supported through funding from the government’s Cashback for Communities initiative, featured on a BBC UK-wide broadcast, *Ill-Gotten Gains*, this week.

Pupils at Greenwood Academy in Dreghorn worked with staff to secure funding from the Princes Trust’s Development Awards in order to set up a school-based business, Lovilicious, providing nail care to staff and pupils.

The Development Awards, which received more than £1 million [Cashback](#) funding drawn from seized criminal assets – are designed to provide grants for young people aged 13 -24, mainly in disadvantaged areas, who are ready for positive destinations but who struggle to access education, employment or training because of a financial barrier that prevents them gaining the resources or skills they need.

You can watch the episode featuring the Greenwood Academy project for a limited time on [BBC iPlayer](#) – just after 34 minutes.

For further information about the Development Awards in Scotland visit the [Princes Trust website](#).

Women in custody



[Images for a proposed Community Custody](#)

[Unit](#) (CCU) for women in Dundee at the former Our Lady’s Primary School site in the city were unveiled this week during a public ‘drop-in’ information event for local residents, businesses and elected representatives. The CCU is part of a wider transformation of Scotland’s female custodial estate, by the

[Scottish Prison Service](#).

The Justice Secretary announced plans in 2015 to transform the female custodial estate, with a smaller national prison for around 80 women on the site of Cornton Vale and a number of CCUs – the first two of which will be in Dundee and in Maryhill, Glasgow, due for completion by the end of 2020.

Crimestoppers

Finally, a quick shout-out to our friends at the CRIMESTOPPERS charity who have launched their [new website](#).

The charity, which receives Scottish Government funding to support its work in Scotland, helps people to give information about crimes or suspected criminality anonymously.

The website also includes tips on how to keep your family and business safe from harm. You can also contact CRIMESTOPPERS by phone on 0800 555 111.

Check out our brand new shiny website! <https://t.co/C0dwSl8pm1pic.twitter.com/Ekgc8eSa0z>

– Scotland Crimestoppers (@CrimestopSCOT) [May 17, 2018](#)

The post appeared first on [Justice and Safety](#).