Consultation on hate crime launched

The Scottish Government is calling on the public to help shape consolidated and modernised hate crime legislation in a consultation.

‘One Scotland: Hate Has No Home Here’ follows on from Lord Bracadale’s review of existing hate crime legislation in Scotland which included recommendations that additional statutory aggravations should be created for age and gender.

The consultation calls for views on a number of issues including how best to tackle gender based prejudice and misogyny. The issue of sectarianism will also be considered with the consultation seeking views on how this could be tackled through law based, on the findings of the Working Group on Defining Sectarianism in Scots Law.

The public responses will inform the development of a hate crime bill which will be laid before Holyrood later in this session of Parliament.

Cabinet Secretary for Justice Humza Yousaf said:
“Hate crime and prejudice are completely unacceptable and we are absolutely committed to tackling them. Following Lord Bracadale’s review we now want to hear the nation’s view on what our hate crime law should look like.

“The public’s voice is absolutely crucial in this process and we are determined to take this opportunity to shape our legislation so that it is fit for 21st century Scotland.

“We know that legislation in itself is not enough to build the inclusive Scotland we want and aspire to, but having robust law in place is vital so that it is clear to all that this kind of behaviour is not acceptable in society.”

Cabinet Secretary for Communities Aileen Campbell said:
“Hate crime and prejudice have a hugely damaging effect on victims, their families and communities and there is absolutely no place for it in Scotland.

“Scotland’s diversity is our strength and I’m proud that our nation is becoming an increasingly open and inclusive place to live. However, we also recognise that intolerance and prejudice remain and that more needs to be done.

“We are absolutely committed to modernising our hate crime legislation and I look forward to considering all responses to our consultation. I am confident that together we can build a stronger, more connected Scotland.”

The Lord Advocate, James Wolffe, QC said: “Crime motivated by hatred is not only a wrong against the individual, but it is an affront to our collective values as a community, creating division and fear.

“This is why we treat hate crime so seriously and why, as Scotland’s independent public prosecution service, the Crown Office & Procurator Fiscal Service, will continue to do so.

“We are committed to tackling hate crime.”

The hate crime legislation consultation ‘One Scotland: Hate Has No Home Here’ is now open and will run until 24 February 2019.

The consultation will also consider the findings of the Working Group on Defining Sectarianism in Scots Law report. The Working Group’s report was published today.

Consultation on use of fireworks announced

Community Safety Minister Ash Denham announced plans for a consultation on the use and regulation of fireworks in Scotland. Fireworks are often associated with celebration and can be a route for bringing communities together but if used inappropriately or without respect for others fireworks can cause distress or even physical injury to people and animals. The consultation will inform any actions that the Scottish Government could take to reduce the negative impact of firework use.

Actions could include increased restrictions on where and when fireworks can be used; improved access to advice and support to reduce the anti-social impact of fireworks; and new national guidance to support local partner agencies.

Evidence will also influence Ms Denham’s ongoing discussions with UK Government about legislation governing the sale of fireworks, which is currently reserved.

Ms Denham said: "Many people enjoying attending fireworks displays but I am very aware from conversations with members of the public and emergency service workers that there is a growing concern about the use and sale of fireworks to individuals. The hard work of the police and fire services to tackle dangerous and anti-social behaviour helped reduce the number of bonfire night incidents this year. However, there were still a number of concerning reports and I am keen to hear the public’s views."

Keeping Kids Safe in Dundee

Young families in Dundee were among the first to receive RoSPA’s Keeping Kids Safe packs during Family Safety Week earlier this year.

One child under the age of five is killed in an accident every week, and accidents remain the biggest killer of children and young people up to the age of 19, with the disadvantaged most at risk.

As part of the Scottish Government’s Building Safer Communities ambition and in partnership with Home-Start Dundee, Dundee City Council, the packs, which contain accident prevention advice, information and resources for families with under-fives, were handed out to those most vulnerable to life-changing accidents.

Helen Halls, RoSPA’s campaign project manager, said: “Many people feel comfortable and let their guards down in their own homes, which is why that’s where the majority of really serious accidents happen – ending up in a trip to the hospital or worse.

“Young children are particularly vulnerable as they are starting to explore the world, but don’t yet have an appreciation of its risks and dangers. Yet there are lots of small things we can do to protect ourselves and our loved ones, which is what we wanted to promote this Family Safety Week.”

Estelle Mitchell of Home-Start Dundee said: “Since the launch of the packs parents and carers have been encouraged to update their individual safety knowledge within the home. Further to this, a group of parents and carers have now attended a basic first aid course supplied by British Red Cross.

The parents and carers were asked to evaluate the packs, looking at the benefits within the home using equipment from the pack. “One item that stood out the most was the use of the serving spoon with the printing on the handle (Cut small food into quarters),” said Estelle. “Young parents in particular found it a very useful reminder at feeding times. The pack has opened up many of discussions within group sessions about how and where do you store products within the home. It has made significant changes within family homes creating safer spaces, awareness of how harm can be avoided and how to look out for dangers and hazards all around you.”

“As Home-Start’s main focus is a home visiting service, we have continued to distribute the packs with our volunteers to new families in Dundee. Our volunteers have also received basic first aid training by British Red Cross as we decided it would be best for families and volunteers to be trained by the same service to keep constancy within the level of training.” To find out more about Family Safety Week, see www.rospa.com/fsw, or keep an eye out for #fsw on Twitter, or RoSPA’s Facebook page.
Older people are being helped to understand how their housing choices will impact on their lives as they age.

A refreshed joint strategy between the Scottish Government and COSLA, which champions independent living for older people within their community, has been launched.

Announcing ‘Age, Home and Community’ at a meeting in Edinburgh with members from Age Scotland network groups, Housing Minister Kevin Stewart said:

“When we published our original joint strategy seven years ago, we set out a vision to make housing and related support work well for older people.

“Alongside COSLA and partners in the health, housing and third sectors, we have reviewed and updated our action plan to better reflect the needs and aspirations of older people – addressing the issues of isolation and loneliness while improving access to suitable housing.

“Having the right advice, the right home and the right support will enable older people to live independently for as long as they choose to do so. Our new joint strategy will support that vision.”

Cllr Elena Whitham COSLA Community Wellbeing Spokesperson said:

“I welcome the publication of Age, Home and Community – the next phase today. The mid-point review of the strategy showed there is much to celebrate and case studies showed older people have benefited and improved their ability to live independently as safely at home.

“That said there is still work to be done to make living safely and independently at home a reality for many more aging people across Scotland. Today’s publication sets out the approach we will take to housing and older people – namely providing the right advice, house and support to allow older people to live the way they choose.

“The publication also set out how our older peoples housing strategy connects to other policies that affect outcomes for our aging population – this is especially welcome given the cross-cutting nature of issues and work ongoing in a number of related areas such as dementia, social isolation and loneliness.”

The updated document – Age, Home and Community – refreshes a strategy first published in 2011, reflecting changing needs, demands and demographics.

The launch meeting was attended by representatives of COSLA, older people from Age Scotland network groups and members of the Age, Home and Community Monitoring and Advisory Group.

---

**Unintentional Harm—call for good practice examples!**

Good progress is being made to develop a national web-based tool to gather and share projects and initiatives from across Scotland that support the reduction of unintentional harm. The BSC team are working with a system developer (Whitespace) and a user day was held on 23 October to allow local partners and users to shape the development of the system.

Community Safety Partnerships and wider partners are now invited to submit examples of local practice to be included as practical examples. The team expects to launch the tool in early 2019.

If you have any examples of good practice to share, or for more information, please contact Hollie Gibson email: hollie.gibson@gov.scot
Two new team members joined the weekend night shift at the University Hospital Crosshouse in November, aiming to help stop the revolving door of violent injury. In their bright pink t-shirts Navigators Jack Sutton and Helen Castle are easy to spot. Their job is to offer support to anyone admitted to the hospital’s emergency department as a result of violence. Whether patients have been subjected to an assault, domestic abuse or self-directed violence such as drug and alcohol misuse, Jack and Helen can offer assistance during that “reachable moment” when a patient may be open to accepting support.

Jack, who has a background in community and youth work, said: “Often people want to find a way out of violent lifestyles but may feel trapped. Our job is to connect with patients both inside and outside the hospital and support them towards a healthier and happier life.”

Navigators to help stop the revolving door of violent injury

Navigators can help calm patients in crisis to allow medical treatment to be provided. Where it is needed they aim to create a connection which allows them to provide ongoing assistance beyond the emergency room with everything from addiction to housing issues.

Navigator was piloted successfully at Glasgow Royal Infirmary in 2016 and since then has been rolled out to The Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh and Queen Elizabeth University Hospital Glasgow.

You can find out more about Navigator at actiononviolence.org or follow them on Twitter @NavigatorsScot or Facebook @navigatorscotland

Adverse Childhood Experiences in the spotlight

The Scottish Community Safety Network and The ALLIANCE hosted a screening of the film: ‘Resilience: The Biology of Stress and the Science of Hope’ which was followed by an expert panel discussion and an opportunity to hear more about the current activity on adverse childhood experiences.

The screening of the hour-long ground-breaking film took place at the Citadel Youth Centre, in Leith, Edinburgh. The film looks at the links between Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and poorer life outcomes. The panel (pictured above) was chaired by Lorraine Gilles, Chief Officer, Scottish Community Safety Network and other members included:

Chief Superintendent Paul Main, Police Scotland; Colette Mason, Community Links Practitioner, Alliance Scotland; Amanda Coulthard, Performance and Strategy Manager, West Dunbartonshire Council; Karen McDonnell, Head of RoSPA and Andy Thomas, Deputy Manager, Citadel Youth Centre.

The screening was supported by Building Safer Communities at the Scottish Government, RoSPA, LinkUp and Citadel Youth Centre. Following the film, the panel discussed how trauma awareness shapes respective members’ approach to their work. Ch Supt Paul Main outlined work Police Scotland was leading on in Ayrshire to become ACEs aware, with schools, health and addiction partners. He also emphasised the impact that trauma has on his team, who often have to deal with some very distressing situations and how ACEs has helped to raise awareness and support.

Questions from the audience raised issues about connectivity, victimisation, and how, as partners, ACEs awareness can be rolled out across the country. The need to “start where we are and do what we can”, connect effectively with partners, understand your local community and the use of consistent language were all key points. It was also agreed that, whatever approach was used, people should never be made to feel “less than”. It was suggested that there are benefits to simply raising awareness about trauma. It was important to recognise that intervention can happen at any stage of life which will help break the cycle and that “any intervention is a good intervention”.

Your BSC Bulletin

We hope you have found this edition of the monthly BSC Bulletin useful and informative.

We would be delighted if you would get in touch with any feedback or ideas for future content.

Please contact Wendy: wendy.mcinnes@gov.scot

Follow us on Twitter: @theBSCprogramme