

**The Cross Party Group on Accident Prevention and Safety
Awareness**

Wednesday 8th November 2017

**6.00 pm till 8.00 pm Committee Room 4, the Scottish Parliament.
(Tea, coffee, shortbread available from 6.00 pm)**

Focus on: Fire Safety

Minutes

1. Welcome:
(Convener)

Clare Adamson MSP

Clare Adamson, MSP, welcomed everyone to the meeting. She gave special thanks to Kevin Stewart, Minister for Local Government and Housing. She also thanked David Stewart, MSP for attending.

Ms Adamson expressed her thanks to Caledonia Public Affairs Limited for covering the catering costs for the evening. Condolences were given to Councillor Brian Topping - a long term supporter of accident prevention - who lost his mother recently.

Ms Adamson noted her delight to have recently attended Govan Fire Station with Ron Ewing and the First Minister to support the Smokey Paws Campaign.

2. a. Presentation: Kevin Stewart MSP, Minister for Local Government and Housing “Update on the Ministerial Working Group on Building and Fire Safety”

Ms Adamson introduced Kevin Stewart, the Minister for Local Government and Housing. Mr Stewart has responsibility for building standards, business improvement districts, community planning, homelessness, housing, local government, planning and regeneration. Mr Stewart sits on the Ministerial Working Group on Building and Fire Safety along with Annabelle Ewing MSP, Minister for Community Safety and Legal affairs and Angela Constance MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Communities, Social Security and Equalities.

Mr Stewart thanked Ms Adamson for the opportunity to attend the CPG and talk about the Ministerial Working Group on Building and Fire Safety. The group was originally set up in the aftermath of the Grenfell Tower fire in London to oversee a review of building and fire safety and to ensure all lessons learned from Grenfell are applied in Scotland.

Mr Stewart discussed cladding and Aluminium Composite Material (ACM) - a major contributing factor in the rapid spread of the Grenfell fire. In the events following the tragedy, a number of steps were taken in Scotland to assure the safety of tenants in high rise buildings. Mr Stewart thanked the Local Authorities, Housing Associations and other stakeholders that responded quickly to requests for information in regards to the use of ACM in Scotland's domestic buildings. Mr Stewart also thanked the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service for immediately prioritising home fire safety visits and assurance visits in all high rise domestic buildings across Scotland.

Mr Stewart noted that the Ministerial Working Group on Building and Fire Safety was conscious that ensuring fire safety would not be considered a 'one off' and would continue to be a priority for Scotland. The group will look to enhance and strengthen building regulations, compliance and fire safety. Mr Stewart went onto note that just last week,

two leaders were appointed to chair two working groups to take forward the issue. Professor Jonathon Cole would chair the group on enforcement and compliance of building regulations. Dr Paul Stollard will chair the review of fire safety in building standards. It is anticipated that their reports will be published in the spring of 2018.

The Ministerial Working Group on Building and Fire Safety is also holding a consultation on fire and smoke alarms and whether the same standard should be applied across all housing – private, social, new build and owner-occupied. Mr Stewart urged all members of the CPG to respond to this consultation.

See <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2017/09/8183>

The Group will be considering the fitting and retrofitting of sprinklers and other suppression systems. They will also be gathering information and intelligence to determine whether ACM cladding has been fitted in domestic high rise buildings. The presence of ACM cladding will not necessarily mean that the building is unsafe but the extensive use of it will determine this.

Mr Stewart noted that the Grenfell Tower fire is a very complicated issue and the ACM cladding was only one factor. As other factors emerge from the Public Enquiry in England, recommendations will be put in place in Scotland. Mr Stewart ended by confirming that the Scottish Government and Scottish Ministers are taking the issue of fire safety extremely seriously.

Ms Adamson thanked Mr Stewart for his presentation and invited questions. Stuart McMillan, MSP, entered the meeting and Ms Adamson thanked him for attending.

Brian Topping thanked the Minister and noted that it was comforting that the Ministers were looking at this issue in

such depth. Brian asked if the work would concentrate only on high risk domestic buildings or if would be across all buildings?

Mr Stewart replied that initially the Ministerial Group will look at high rise domestic buildings but this would open up to other areas of housing, schools and hospitals. He also noted that he had recently been to Scottish Fire and Rescue Head Quarters at Cambuslang as was pleased to see that conversations around suppression systems had already started with wider stakeholders. Mr Stewart thanked all partners and stakeholders who are involved and in particular, local authorities.

Euan Robson noted that at the present time anyone can set themselves up as a fire risk assessor regardless of whether they have a qualification or not. He asked if the Scottish Government will make qualifications a requirement to assure fire risk assessor competence.

Mr Stewart replied that he would continue to look at this and that they would take on board such comments. Dr Stollard and Professor Cole's reviews will hopefully show these issues and actions can then be taken from there.

Alastair Ross reiterated that Scotland is further ahead than England in building standards and that this is also the case with sprinklers in schools. He noted that it is important to keep up these standards across Scotland.

Mr Stewart responded that this issue is indeed being looked at in some depth by the Ministerial Working Group on Building and Fire Safety. He noted that he is also in communication with Alok Sharma, Minister of State for Housing and Planning and would be kept aware of any developments following Grenfell. Mr Stewart noted that one of the good things in Scotland is a result of the 2003

Buildings (Scotland) Act which allows changes to be made through the use of secondary legislation. This flexibility allows Building Standards in the Government to adapt standards on an annual basis. Prior to Grenfell Tower, steps were being taken to prioritise Building Standards in the Scottish Government. Mr Stewart noted that now was the time for a change in attitude and investment as the tragedy has shown us one of the most important areas for concentration.

Mark Ruskell, MSP entered the room and was welcomed by Ms Adamson.

Christopher Bell noted that the conversation has focussed mostly on buildings and cladding but that the source of ignition has not been addressed. There is an ongoing review around the product that caused the ignition at Grenfell and this will have a massive impact upon trading standards.

Mr Stewart agreed that this indeed was important and although the Ministerial Working Group on Building and Fire Safety was looking at building regulations, there was a need to put pressure on other groups and organisations to deal with such issues.

John Robertson expressed his concern with North Lanarkshire Council who have three different rules for high rise housing in regards to staffing. He argued that there should be one consistent rule.

Mr Stewart noted that this was a local authority matter and out of his control as Minister. He noted that within his own constituency there is no general rule and most high rise towers have little or no staff. The decision is left to the local authority but he urged tenants and tenants' groups to engage with their local authorities so actions can be taken accordingly.

Ms Adamson thanked John, who is from her constituency, for his question and noted there have been other issues such as dust levels in waste chutes which could be considered at a future CPG.

Ron Ewing noted that as a fire safety consultant and registered fire risk assessor, he has completed a number of assessments on high rise towers and was shocked to find that around 95% of buildings should never have passed building control because of fire stopping issues. Ron noted that this issue needs to be addressed.

Mr Stewart responded that the fire stopping issue featured in Professor Coles [Independent Inquiry into the Construction of Edinburgh Schools](#). Since this report, Local Authorities have looked at all the buildings they are responsible for and in most cases, things are ok. Mr Stewart noted, that although building control is extremely important, everyone has a responsibility – local authorities, builders, contractors, - to ensure a housing project is completed safely. Mr Stewart expressed that the issue is not about passing the blame but about getting it right in every sector which is delivering housing in Scotland.

Mr Stewart asked for any other questions or comments to be sent to his email address ministerlgh@gov.scot

Ms Adamson thanked Mr Stewart for attending and for his presentation. She also took the opportunity to thank her staff for their hard work and support for this CPG.

b. Presentation: Daniel Doherty, BAFSA Sprinkler Reliability and Effectiveness

Ms Adamson introduced Daniel Doherty who worked for 31 years in the Fire Service and prior to retiring was the head of

the former Strathclyde Fire and Rescue's Fire Safety Enforcement and Fire Engineering departments. Daniel continues to work in the world of Fire Safety Consultancy with clients such as Automatic Fire Sprinkler Association.

Daniel spoke about what sprinkler systems do and their effectiveness as well as the Scottish Standard for Sprinklers systems. Daniel's presentation will be made available on the RoSPA website at <http://www.rospace.com/about/around-the-uk/scotland/cross-party-group> in due course.

Ms Adamson invited questions.

Alastair Ross reiterated the Scottish Standard that warehouses over 14,000 square feet should have sprinklers systems fitted. He noted that he would like to see that brought down to 2000 square feet to help overcome potential financial loss to businesses.

Daniel responded that in some places in Europe, it is as low as 1000 square feet. He agreed that as well as human life, the impact on business can be highly significant for the community.

c. Presentation: Denise Christie, FBU. The FBU and STUC's position on the need for sprinklers to be retro fitted in properties

Ms Adamson introduced Denise Christie who, prior to the FBU, had been a fire fighter for over 20 years. She is the FBU lead official on Grenfell in Scotland.

Denise began her presentation by recalling the details of the Grenfell Tower Fire. She noted that the 14 June 2017 would be marked in British history as a day of an appalling loss of lives with some remarkable accounts of heroism and humanity.

Grenfell Tower, situated in one of the richest boroughs in one of the richest countries in the world, resulted in tragedy with emergency service staff going to a fire that should never have happened. Putting their own lives at risk, the services- in such difficult circumstances- were unable to save everyone.

Denise went on to explain that there was failure from central UK Government and the local authorities as responsibility was soon abdicated by those who should have been ensuring the safety and wellbeing of the people in the area. What the rest of the UK did see was a remarkable community come out and help feed and shelter survivors.

Denise noted that this tragic fire should not have happened in a country which has laws, regulations and expertise. The question has to be asked why it then happened. Political decisions made by Government officials and local authorities, along with the deregulation of fire safety, the elimination of fire safety research, the lowering of national standards, housing seen as a commodity to make money and fire service budget cuts all contributed to the tragedy.

Denise went onto explain that she gave information to the STUC and the first question asked was around whether fire safety building regulations minimised a fire starting and gave people enough time to escape. The second question centred around non-combustible cladding. England currently used "limited combustible" cladding where as in Scotland, only non-combustible cladding can be used. However, it was questioned whether all cladding had been properly researched and tested to ensure it is non-combustible.

Denise noted that although it was encouraging to hear that the Ministerial Working Group on Building and Fire Safety would be considering these questions, there are other materials which could cause similar issues.

She noted that although there is a cost in taking out combustible materials, safety should be the top priority. The FBU has been campaigning for the Scottish regulations regarding non-combustible materials to become regulation in England but there needs to be research, testing and guarantees that the materials which claim to be non-combustible are in fact non-combustible.

Following Grenfell Tower, the London Fire Brigade carried out cladding inspections on all residential blocks and revealed serious failures in at least five high risk blocks. This shed light on an issue with fire risk assessments and inadequate supervision for those who failed to bring up issues within the assessments (such as cladding). There could be similar issues and concerns in Scotland but this would be unknown until a review is carried out.

With continued budget cuts, the FBU believes the way forward is to improve fire risk assessments and create more jobs to allow these reviews and audits to happen. Denise explained that the FBU is not just concerned with cladding as this is only one building technique that has increased fire risk. Any material on the market needs to have been studied and tested effectively.

Denise finished by noting that if sprinkler systems had been fitted in Grenfell Tower, the fire would never have reached the scale it did. She urged the Scottish Government to follow in Wales' footsteps and ensure that all new primary dwelling buildings are fitted with sprinkler systems.

In summary: The FBU highlights the needs for: more fire safety inspecting officer posts; continued fire research; necessary changes to Building Standards re installation of sprinkler systems and local authorities sprinkler systems programmes in all housing stock, and: that the FBU should be

included on the Ministerial Working Group to give clear and concise views to the Scottish Government.

Ms Adamson thanked Denise for her presentation and invited questions.

Christopher Bell asked whether it was thought that there have been too many assumptions that audits and reviews happen in the background.

Denise answered by agreeing and suggesting that Grenfell Tower happened for a number of reasons such as the deregulation of fire safety, budgets cuts, lowering of standards etc. For Scotland the issue is to ensure that non-combustible materials have been checked and tested.

d. Presentation: David McGown, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, Working across boundaries to improve wider safe and well outcomes

Ms Adamson introduced Assistant Chief Officer David McGown from the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service. In addition to his role with the Fire and Rescue Service, David leads on Phase 2 of the Building Safer Communities programme which looks to reduce the incidents of unintentional harm and injury across Scotland. He is also a member of Road Safety Scotland's Strategic Partnership Group and is a Board member of the Scottish Business Resilience Centre.

Mr McGown presented on the current situation of fire in Scotland as well as widening out the discussion to include Building Safer Communities and unintentional harm. Mr McGown's presentation can be accessed at <http://www.rospa.com/about/around-the-uk/scotland/cross-party-group> in due course.

Ms Adamson invited questions on the presentation.

Jim Tassell noted that there has been lots of discussion on the installation of sprinklers and suppression systems but little about the extremely important issue of maintenance.

Daniel Doherty responded by agreeing with this point and noting that everything does indeed need maintained.

Martin Hunt took the opportunity to highlight the Blueproof product which is maintenance free and effective in a fire. Blueproof is about to receive the British Standard and CE marking.

Brian Topping asked a general question and noted that many of those who attend have been campaigning for safety for a number of years but wondered if there was something collective that could be done to ensure that all properties (not just high rise domestic buildings) are looked at in detail.

Ms Adamson agreed and suggested that every organisation respond to the Minister's Consultation as this would be an effective action.

Ron Ewing suggested that builders should take more responsibility for the issue as opposed to looking solely at cost cutting. Assistant Chief Officer, David McGown responded that as he sits on Ministerial working group, he is aware that this issue is being looked at. One of the working groups that is looking at compliance and enforcement will also be looking at verification and the whole building process sign off.

It was noted that the Ministerial Working Group is looking at all the evidence around sprinklers including maintenance. They are also in contact with colleagues in the Welsh Government to see what is happening there.

Ms Adamson thanked everyone for their questions and asked Denise Christie if she could send on the main points of her presentation to the Secretary.

3. Present and Apologies

Ms Adamson advised that a list of those present and apologies submitted had been collated by the Secretary and would be attached as an Appendix to the Minutes of the Meeting (See Appendix One).

Ms Adamson reminded all those present to sign the Sederunt as it was important to keep accurate records of those attending. Elizabeth Lumsden reiterated this.

4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting (14th June 2017 – circulated previously)

- a. Accuracy: The Minutes were agreed as an accurate record of proceedings, proposed by: Brian Topping, and seconded by: Martin Hunt.
- b. Matters Arising:

Ms Adamson noted that Mark Ruskell, MSP is looking to go ahead with his Members Bill on 20 mph zones.

Ms Adamson also noted that Andy Cathro would be grateful for comment or endorsement on the LOcHER project as indicated in the email previously circulated to members.

5. Secretary's Report

Elizabeth Lumsden tabled the Secretary's Report and highlighted that RoSPA has a new chief executive – Mr Errol Taylor who has indicated RoSPA's continued support to this Group. She also thanked all those who had responded to RoSPA's centenary event invitation which will be held at the Hub on November 30th.

Elizabeth also reminded everyone to send any campaign dates for the Campaign Calendar which is being created.

She also noted that RoSPA and Ms Adamson were invited to speak with a delegation from Macedonia on how to run a CPG.

The Secretary's Report is attached as Appendix Two.

6. Headlines

Elizabeth Lumsden noted that the Headlines newsletter is attached as Appendix Three. She also introduced and thanked Lisa Stewart from COBIS and urged everyone to read the newsletter report.

7. Reflection from previous meeting

Ms Adamson asked Andrew Fraser to give a short update on Intelligent Speed Adaption which was covered at the last meeting.

Andrew explained that there are still around 200 fatalities a year due to road accidents. With a result of cuts and less progress in road engineering, fatalities have remained constant. Intelligent Speed Adaption systems could save up to 20% of fatalities (or 36 a year) which is a massive decrease from the current numbers. In 2009, ISA was fairly

high up on the Government's priorities but that this has now fallen. Andrew urged the need to improve matters before another tragedy. Work was supposed to begin in 2014 but has never started. Andrew urged for the need for support of digital mapping development and ISA, especially at Government level.

Andrew noted that he had a short powerpoint presentation. Ms Adamson asked for this to be sent to the secretary. This will be made available at <http://www.rosipa.com/about/around-the-uk/scotland/cross-party-group>.

Ms Adamson also noted that she would write to the Scottish Government on behalf of the CPG to ask what progress had been made in regards to ISA.

8. Date of next meetings: Wednesday 17th January 2018. This will be a joint meeting with the Cross Party group on Older People, Age and Aging. (The following meeting will be held on Wednesday 21st March. UPDATE: topic will be occupational safety.)

Ms Adamson thanked the speakers and everyone who attended. She asked whether the group would be comfortable for her to send a note of support to the community of Grenfell Tower. The group agreed.

Brian Topping also noted his appreciation to Ms Adamson and also RoSPA for their work. He wished everyone an enjoyable and safe Christmas.

Appendix One

Cross Party Group on Accident Prevention and Safety Awareness

Wednesday 8th November, 2017

PRESENT

MSPs

Clare Adamson	Convenor
Stuart McMillan	
Mark Ruskell	
David Stewart	
Kevin Stewart	Minister for Local Government

Attendees

Allister Atkinson	Bluerad
Robert Atkinson	Healthy Working Lives
Michael Avril	Water Safety Scotland
Christopher Bell	SCOTTS
Jean Brown	Aberlour Child Care Trust
Andy Cathro	Scotland Colleges H & S Development Network Group
Craig Childs	KBS Controls
Denise Christie	FBU
Brian Connell	NWS
Scott Darroch	Gas Safe Register
John Devine	NG Homes
Daniel Doherty	BAFSA
Hannah Dickson	SCSN
Daniel Docherty	BAFSA
Jim Dorman	St Andrews First Aid
Ron Ewing	Smoke Paws
Sharon Fabre	Barnardo's
Andrew Fraser	Falkirk Council
Margaret Fraser	NG Homes
Sheena Harper	RLSS UK
Bill Harley	Safer Communities, Fife
Lynn Hill	Safer Communities, Fife
Martin Hunt	Tartan Silk
Kathy Jenkins	Scottish Hazards
John Johnston	TechnipFMC
Caroline Lawrie	SGN

Alastair MacGregor	SSERC
Kenny Macdermid	RLSS (UK)
David McGown	SFRS
Neil McNicol	John McNicol Ltd
Becs Miller	RNLI
Lesley Nish	NHS GGC
John Robertson	Safety Advocate
Euan Robson	Caledonia Public Affairs Ltd
Alastair Ross	ABI
Dave Roy	Kingdom Housing
Devin Scobie	Caledonia Public Affairs Ltd
Stuart Stevens	SFRS
Lisa Stewart	COBIS
Brian Topping	Safety Advocate
Alan Walkinshaw	TechnipFMC

In attendance

Elizabeth Lumsden	RoSPA, Secretariat
Carlene McAvoy	RoSPA, Minute Secretary
Kate Barclay	Clare Adamson's office
Lis Bardell	Clare Adamson's office
Nicola McManus	Clare Adamson's office

Scottish Government

Michelle Harrity
Gordon Paterson
Linda White

Apologies

Sandy Allan	RoSPA
Barry Baker	HSE
David Birrell	Safety Advocate
Vince Bowles	Scottish Autism
Russell Brownlie	Safety Advocate
Claire Burnett	RCPCH
June Cairns	HSE
Jane Campbell Morrison	AALS
Janet Castro	AAS
Douglas Connell	IOSH Scotland
Fiona Craig	SWITCH
Frank Creighton	Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar
Emilia Crighton	NHS GGC
Margaret Dekker	SCID
Jennifer Fingland	Cycling Scotland

Dave Forrester	SELECT
Fiona Hodgson	SNIPEF
Ruth Johnston	Health Scotland
Angus MacDonald	MSP
Wayne Mackay	ESF
Sylvia McKay	Hopscotch Nursery
Laura McDermott	Dundee City Council
Wendy McGarrity	Key Housing and Community Supports
Cherie Morgan	Play Scotland
Graham Palmer	Morgan Sindell
Bob Rajan	Safety Groups UK
Norman Stevenson	Safety Groups UK/Scottish Chamber of Safety
Allan Thomson	Central Training Services
Robert Thomson	Care and Repair Scotland
Caroline Wilson	The Risk Factory
Liz Young	Napier University
Lynn Young	Scottish Government

The Cross Party Group on Accident Prevention and Safety Awareness

Wednesday 8th November, 2017

6.00 pm till 8.00 pm Committee Room 4, the Scottish Parliament.

Secretary's Report

Members: Welcome to the members who have recently joined this CPG - these include Alastair Ross of the ABI and Lisa Stewart, NHS National Services in Scotland.

Consultant Haytham Kubba of NHS GG&C, who delivered a presentation on the dangers of liquid laundry capsules at one of the very first meetings of this group, has now moved to live and work in Australia and sends his best wishes to the Group.

Austin Baird is no longer the Chair of IOSH in Scotland so will not be attending the CPG. Austin wished the Group every success in the future. A replacement from IOSH Scotland is being sought. Update: Jim Tassell attended the meeting.

Susan Frame of the ISD has moved on from her previous role and Barbara Graham has taken over as contact for NHS National Services Scotland.

RoSPA – new CEO: RoSPA has a new CEO – Mr Errol Taylor (previously Deputy CEO) took over the role in July and Errol has confirmed his continued support from RoSPA staff to this CPG.

RoSPA Centenary Event: Thanks to everyone who responded to the invitation to attend the RoSPA's event at The Hub on Wednesday 30th November. We look forward to seeing those of you who can make it there.

Over drinks and canapés, the occasion will provide a wonderful opportunity to look back and celebrate the work of RoSPA and our many valued partners across Scotland and also to look ahead together to the challenges that remain within accident prevention. Clare Adamson MSP, convenor of the Cross Party Group on Accident Prevention and Safety Awareness, will welcome guests to the event and there will be a display of RoSPA's renowned vintage safety posters, which were at the forefront of communication design in Britain during the last century. We are delighted that the Minister for Community Safety and Legal Affairs, Annabelle Ewing, MSP, will also be in attendance.

To ensure our centenary leaves a legacy, we're pleased to have launched the Brighter Beginnings Appeal to enable us to distribute Keeping Kids Safe packs full of accident prevention tips and tools to help give little ones across the UK, including Scotland, a safer start. You can find out more about Brighter Beginnings at www.rospace.com/brighter-beginnings.

Campaign Calendar: Thanks to those who contributed to the request to forward details of local/national safety-related events. Please forward any further contributions as dates are set.

Elizabeth Lumsden

Secretary

The Cross Party Group on Accident Prevention and Safety Awareness

Wednesday 8th November 2017

6.00 pm till 8.00 pm Committee Room 4, the Scottish Parliament.

HEADLINES

Thanks to those who contributed the following information:

COBIS



The National Managed Clinical Network for Care of Burns in Scotland (COBIS) was launched in April 2007. The mission of the network is to ensure that patients who suffer serious burn injury in Scotland:

- Are treated at an appropriate centre
- Are transported safely and expeditiously to that centre
- Receive a high standard of care irrespective of where they live

The purpose of the network is to enhance the delivery of care to patients (adults and children) who have suffered a severe burn injury. The network aims to:

- Optimise the level of support for patients – adults and children – as well as their families and carers
- Initiate and maintain training and educational events to meet the skill requirements of those involved in the treatment and care of burned patients
- Ensure that there is a comprehensive plan in place in Scotland to deal with large numbers of burn victims, which may arise from an adverse event resulting in multiple casualties
- Establish and maintain a database of complex burn injury in Scotland
- Set up mechanisms to regularly audit outcome of burn treatment against nationally agreed standards of care

- Maintain a website to provide guidance and access to national protocols for those managing burn injuries in Scotland, as well as patients and carers, which will also be accessible to the general public for information purposes.



From Lisa Stewart

COBIS

ScORSA Workshop



Kingdom Group has underscored its commitment to improving road safety awareness among staff by attending a workshop to reduce risk on the roads.

Health and safety officer, Dave Roy, and property maintenance manager, Andy Walls, took part in the Scottish Occupational Road Safety Alliance (ScORSA) Managing Occupational Road Risk Workshop in Perth.

The seminar focused on the Management of Road Risk (MORR) and the event was designed to support Organisations with responsibility for the management, implementation/monitoring and delivery of MORR policy.

Dave said: “The Kingdom Group already has robust driver risk assessments, procedures and safe systems of work in place for our staff who drive on company business. We attend these events as part of our continual improvement processes and are always keen to share best practice and look for new ideas.”

Andy added: "We promote road safety at work through tool box talks and presentations from our partners at Police Scotland Road Safety team and Fife Camera Partnership and will continue to do this in the future."

Kingdom is also supporting this year's *BRAKE – Road Safety Week* which takes place in November, as an opportunity to bring together businesses, individuals and community organisations to focus on the deadly menace of speed. This year's BRAKE theme will raise awareness of the growing concern of speed on our roads, whether major routes, urban areas, or rural roads. Kingdom will be sponsoring a road safety banner for the event.

Sandy Allan, ScORSA's administrator, said: "The Scottish Occupational Road Safety Alliance (ScORSA) was created through an association of several key public bodies and other like minded organisations with a common goal, to make driving for work safer for all. We do this by providing small to medium sized enterprises with free information and advice to help them reduce the risks to their employees and other road users.

"The Kingdom Group plays a key role in supporting our work and it is great to see them involved in promoting Occupational Road Safety and assisting other organisations through our workshops. At ScORSA every day is a school day, whether your organisation is large or small, we can all learn from each other to keep our drivers safe."

ScORSA was created to raise awareness of managing occupational road risk and to promote occupational road safety within Scotland through promoting the positive benefits of risk management. ScORSA brings together employers, local authorities, emergency services, safety organisations, professional and trade associations.

From Dave Roy, Kingdom Housing

Festive Security / Safety Advice

The dark evenings, the winter months and festive period offer opportunities for crime. Make sure you take some simple precautions to protect your home and property. NWS have listed some security advice, safety advice and general good practice to follow:

Home

Set a timer switch to turn your lights on when it gets dark - unlit houses are an indication that no one is at home.

Make sure your front door is well lit

Consider dusk to dawn security lighting to illuminate your home during the hours of darkness.

Lock your doors, patios and downstairs windows - even when you are in. Double check them again before you go to bed.

If you have a home security alarm, make sure it is fully serviced, set it when you go out and also when you go to bed.

Don't leave car keys, ID cards or valuables near windows, doors or letterboxes, where burglars can reach through to steal them.

Lock your garden gates and side entrances. Don't leave tools lying around in the garden which could be used to break into your home.

Keep your shed and outbuildings securely locked with good quality locks

Keep hedges and shrubs in your front garden maintained so as not to provide cover to potential intruders.

Mark your property and valuables with a forensic security product such as SmartWater www.smartwater.com

Check that your insurance policy is updated and valid

Keep a register and photo of all valuable items

Look out for your neighbours and ask them to keep an eye on your home when you are out for long periods or on holiday

Fraud / Scams / Online

If paying for goods online this Christmas, ensure that the site is secure by checking for the padlock in the address bar of your web browser

If you are buying mobile devices for children this Christmas, make sure you have installed security software and Parental Control Software

Make sure you have adequate anti-virus protection on your computer and keep the software updated.

Be careful of clicking on links or web pages especially links of unsolicited emails

Be wary of cold calls. If in doubt just hang up and never give out personal or financial information.

Never let someone you don't know into your house. If you are not sure, don't answer the door

Festive Tips

Keep presents away from windows where they can be seen by people passing by.

Don't leave purchased items on view in your vehicle when out Christmas shopping

Do not leave empty packaging on the drive that could identify recent expensive presents – bin it.

Keep your wallet, purse and belongings close to hand – Zip pockets will keep a wallet or purse safe, keeping your handbag and present bags close to hand in your line of visibility will also increase their safety

Vehicle

If possible park your vehicle in a garage or on a driveway overnight and check the doors are locked before leaving it.

Don't leave any valuables in your car - even if you know the bag on the front seat is empty, a thief may still try their luck, leaving you with a broken window to deal with.

Remove your sat nav and its holder from the car - don't leave it in the glove box as that's the first place a thief will look - and make sure you wipe away any suction marks.

Don't leave tools or equipment in your vehicle over night

Don't leave your car insecure and unattended when defrosting windscreen

When out and about always park in safe, secure and well lit areas. Look for car parks with the safer parking scheme Park Mark www.parkmark.co.uk

Winter driving tips

Ensure you check your fuel, oil and water levels, check electrics and make sure your tyres have sufficient tread before setting out.

Check your lights and brakes are working effectively, including the handbrake and the fog lamps.

Ensure your heaters are working and you have added antifreeze to your radiator and windscreen washers.

Be prepared by having an emergency kit in your vehicle, which should include ice-scraper, de-icer, warm clothes and blankets, torch, boots, first aid kit, jump leads, a spade, a road atlas and sunglasses (for the winter glare).

Check the forecast for the day. The morning trip to work might be clear skies and frost, but the changeable British weather means those clouds can roll in and the next thing you know you're driving home in snow. Be ready for all eventualities.

Check weather and travel conditions before and during your journey and make sure you leave extra time to clear your windscreen properly before setting off.

Try to stick to main roads that have been gritted, wherever possible.

Consider whether your journey is essential or travel at a different time. In winter, the weather can change quickly so always be prepared for bad weather.

Leave plenty of time for your journey so you can take it easy on your trip.

Leave ample room between you and the vehicle in front to allow for wet, slippery surfaces.

If in doubt, don't go out. If the journey is not essential then leave it for a day when the conditions are better.

Even when roads have been treated with salt, ice can still form, particularly on bends or under overhanging trees.

Cycling during winter

Invest in some good quality winter clothing, as getting cold and wet doesn't make for a good riding experience, plus it could also affect your riding ability. Ensuring you have the right clothing for winter cycling will help you keep warm and dry. Hi-viz clothing is very effective at making you visible at night. Add reflective items to body parts that move, i.e. shoes with reflective strips, reflective wrist bands and gloves

If wearing a back pack or rucksack ensure it has reflective strips or areas for greater visibility

Wear a rear light on your back pack or your helmet for extra visibility. The additional height of the light will be at eye level for most motorists

Ensure the batteries in your lights are always in full working order and not running low

Keep warm, keep well

If you are over 65 or have a health condition or reduced mobility, you should ideally heat your home to at least 18C. It is also a good idea to try to keep your bedroom at this temperature throughout the night if possible too

Festive Personal Safety

Try and keep within a group – Keeping with a number of people won't leave you vulnerable to the types of crimes that are aimed towards individuals and will mean that other people can also keep an eye on you and vice versa. Safety in numbers means always stick together and don't leave any members of your group behind at any time.

Drink in moderation – It is easier said than done however when you drink more alcohol than usual you can lose your inhibitions and act out of character which in itself could present you with a dangerous situation. Keeping your wits about you will decrease the risk of crime. Always take your drink wherever you go to prevent the chances of it being spiked and keep an eye on anybody offering to buy you a drink to ensure it is not tampered with.

Book a Taxi or a lift – Organising a lift home or booking a taxi before going out over Christmas will ensure that you get home safely and are not putting yourself in a position where you do not recognise the hire company, driver or area especially if you are out-of-town. Always try and share transport with others.

Keep in the spotlight – If you cannot stay in a group for whatever reason for the whole night or day always try to stick to public areas so that people are aware of you and don't walk down unlit areas that can leave you susceptible to danger.

From Neighbourhood Watch Scotland Team

Don't Drink and Drown Campaign

Don't Drink and Drown is a national campaign that warns drinkers to steer clear of walking by or entering water when under the influence of alcohol.

UK Research indicates that around a quarter of all adult drowning victims have alcohol in their bloodstream.

There's lots of ways to get involved through hosting an event or sharing social media messages. If you can support this campaign please contact kennymacdermid@rlss.org.uk

From Kenny Macdermid RLSS