

Cross-Party Group on Accident Prevention and Safety Awareness

Tuesday 8 November 18:00-20:00

(Scottish Parliament)

Minute

Present

MSPs

Clare Adamson (SNP)

Emma Harper (SNP)

Mark Ruskell (Scottish Greens)

Invited guests

Karter Kane Electrical Safety First

David MacKenzie SCOTSS

Chris Bell SCOTSS

Paul Bannister North Lanarkshire Council

Non-MSP Group Members

Andy Cathro Safety Advocate

Kevin Chase SCSN

Fred Cullum IOSH Scotland

Lorraine Duncan Clare Adamson's Office

Bill Harley Fife Safer Communities

Sheena Harper (online)	Safety Advocate
Geraldine Hearne (online)	OPSS
Lynn Hill	Fife Safer Communities
Kathy Jenkins	Scottish Hazards
Caroline Lawrie	SGN
Elizabeth Lumsden	Secretary (RoSPA)
Michelle McKenna	CPIN
Morag McNicol	John McNicol & Co (Electrical Engineers) Ltd
Neil McNicol	John McNicol & Co (Electrical Engineers) Ltd
Cherie Morgan	Play Scotland
Bruce Nisbet	Minutes (RoSPA)
Katrina Phillips	CAPT
Alan Purves	SSERC
Judith Robertson	Craigie High School, Dundee
Norman Stevenson	SGUK
Alistair Taylor	Clare Adamson's Office
Brian Topping	Safety Advocate

Apologies

Robert Atkinson	Public Health Scotland
Michael Avril	Water Safety Scotland
Miles Briggs	MSP
Katy Clark	MSP
Hannah Dale	Division of Health Psychology in Scotland
Laura Erskine	RNLI
Gena Falconer	Highland Council
Mark Lilley	Safety Advocate

Cllr Helen Loughran	North Lanarkshire Council
Theresa McLaughlin	ENABLE
Jan Miller	UWS
Lesley Nish	NHSGGC
Louise Richardson	ABSAFE
Duncan Spiers	Christopher's Life Saving Campaign
Carol Wood	NASUWT

1 Welcome

The deputy convener of the CPG, Emma Harper MSP, welcomed everyone to the meeting in the Parliament for our first in person meeting since the pandemic. Clare Adamson MSP and Mark Ruskell MSP were also present. The theme for the meeting was Product Safety. MS Adamson declared an interest in tonight's meeting as she is Vice-Chair of SSERC.

2 Minutes of Last Meeting

The minutes of the last meeting on 7 June were proposed as accurate by Brian Topping and seconded by Fred Cullum.

3 Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

4 Headlines

Liz Lumsden spoke to Headlines newsletter. Sections of note were: The supply of and risks associated with Counterfeit Goods, the naming of the rope used in Christopher's Life Saving Campaign, the work of Fife Council, Safer Communities and in particular highlighting the dangers of Button Batteries, and Craigie High School, Dundee winning a UK wide safety award. Please see Appendix A for the full copy.

5 Presentations

(Presentations from all meetings are available on the RoSPA website at <https://www.rospa.com/about/around-the-uk/scotland/cross-party-group>)

Karter Kane, Electrical Safety First

Karter's presentation was entitled '*Don't be Electricked*'. Karter is the new Policy and Public Affairs Advisor for Scotland and Northern Ireland. She updated the Group on the charity's latest campaign to raise awareness about the risks of shopping on online marketplaces.

David McKenzie, SCOTTS

David is the Chair of SCOTSS (Society of Chief Officers of Trading Standards in Scotland) and he gave the Group an Overview and forward look on the position of the Trading Standards sector in Scotland.

Chris Bell, SCOTTS

Chris is the SCOTSS Product Safety Lead Officer and a Team Leader for City of Edinburgh Council Trading Standards. Chris gave an update on recent product safety work across Scotland.

Paul Bannister, North Lanarkshire Council

Paul is the Protective Services Manager at North Lanarkshire Council and shared a *North Lanarkshire product safety focus*.

6 Question and answer session

Brian Topping asked what actions are in place to ensure that any funds recovered from Trading Standards operations against importers and sellers of counterfeit / sub-standard goods can be recycled back into Trading Standards. Chris Bell said that there is an ongoing review into current capabilities to do this and that this would potentially be included. This was confirmed by Geraldine Hearne who said that Ministerial approval for the publication of the review was currently being sought.

Kathy Jenkins asked if there was partnership working being undertaken between Trading Standards and other agencies given the reducing level of Trading Standards staffing and the subsequent impact on the ability to carry out resource intensive operations. Paul Bannister and Chris Bell confirmed that there was a central database for recording product safety issues and as such Trading Standards worked with other agencies in a supportive and lead capacity.

Kathy Jenkins asked if the advice from energy companies to charge electrical items during the night was consistent with keeping people safe from the risk of harm, particularly related to e-scooters and the charging of lithium ion batteries. Paul Bannister said that the SFRS advice was to only use or charge electrical equipment during the hours which a person is awake in the household.

Clare Adamson asked if there is data available to show that areas of highest SMID population areas were more at risk of harm from counterfeit / sub-standard electrical equipment and was there data to show the injuries sustained. Chris Bell and David MacKenzie said that they are looking at this but the data available is unable to give an accurate picture. Geraldine Hearne agreed with the lack of accurate data and Paul Bannister said that GDPR was being used to not share the data. Emma Harper said that she would look at taking the issue of the NHS data recording and sharing to the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee. Kathy Jenkins said that A&E data holds the key to accurate data recording to get the full picture. Clare Adamson spoke about the sub-group of this CPG that looked at this issue but it had last done so several years ago and it could be time to revisit this. Clare will look into this. Chris Bell spoke of the challenges identifying a single product that is causing injury and attendance at A&E departments. Geraldine said that RoSPA was working on a project in London that was looking at this but wasn't fully aware of the project. Liz Lumsden undertook to provide an update. Emma Harper said that as part of the scrutiny into the National Care Bill data collection would be looked at by the Health Committee.

Chris Bell asked Karter Kane if she would share the information about the about the 60+ projects that she referenced in her presentations. Karter agreed to look into this and share information with Chris Bell.

7 AOCB

Clare Adamson thanked Emma Harper for chairing the meeting and also thanked Liz Lumsden for her and RoSPA's role in getting the Button Battery leaflet into the Scottish Government baby box. Clare Adamson thanked those involved in the organisation and delivery of the Water Safety day at the Helix Park in Falkirk.

Clare Adamson undertook to take the technical matters of divergence from EU law to the CEEAC Committee.

8 Date of the next meeting

The next meeting will be held on 7 February in person at the Scottish Parliament

Brian Topping gave a vote of thanks to the Convenor.



Counterfeit Goods: Impacts on Consumers and the Economy
Colin Mathieson, Spokesperson for Advice Direct Scotland

We all like to feel like we are getting value-for-money on anything we purchase, but sometimes a bargain can leave us feeling cheaper than expected when it turns out to be a counterfeit, sub-standard imitation of the real thing.

Questions are raised about the multiple perspectives involved in the operation of the movement of these illegal products and how societal roles and conforming to pressures contribute to the damage being done to individuals and the economy overall.

The pandemic saw a shift in the way UK consumers carry out their day-to-day business, with many former technophobes (including myself) finding the joy of next-day delivery and internet banking. Prior to coronavirus, I never entertained banking apps or contactless technology, electing instead to receive paper statements and utilise telephone banking to carry out remote business.

But alas, sometimes circumstances push us to change our thinking about products and services, encouraging us to broaden our horizons, try and trust new things, in my case switching about 80% of my own consumer activity to online methods.

According to BRC/KPMG Retail Sales Monitor¹, non-food sales in 2021 were 15.6% ahead of the previous year – a period that included the height of the pandemic, when many of us were reliant on delivery services and online retailers.

As the consumer has moved further towards online services, so too have the trading operations of suppliers of counterfeit and substandard goods who previously plied their wares from fold-up tables in marketplaces and on street corners.

This movement online has not only further anonymised the process for the sellers of these goods but has also served to raise questions about why consumers will resort to buying from unauthorised and risky suppliers.

Why do people knowingly choose counterfeit goods?

Two researchers from the Beijing Technology and Business University investigated the relationship between group motivation, ego, and unethical behavioural intention

from a broader perspective, looking at the potential driving factors for being complicit in these often-illegal activities².

Their findings indicate the collective adoption of a 'no-harm, no-foul' mindset in which the consumer does not explicitly see the impact of their involvement in the criminal activity, and as a result, are more likely to participate. However, many are also likely to be involved in the purchasing of counterfeit and sub-standard products without even being aware of the situation.

With additional pressures from society to conform to standards of beauty and through the perpetual bombardment of images which extol the false image of perfection via social media channels and through popular culture, it is inevitable that those within society without the resources to achieve these ideals through legitimate means turn to alternatives to do so.

Fashion and beauty trends evolve over time, as do expectations for the consumer to adapt to them, and it seems that little can be done to alter this. However, questions need to be asked regarding the damage that can be caused by purchasing 'knock-off' goods online, even under the guise of 'just saving money'.

Online Shopping Fraud

According to the Consumer Harm Report (2021), published by the National Trading Standards (NTS) for the UK, National Trading Standards Teams dealt with over £51m in consumer and business detriment in 2021/21³. Their consumer protection work highlighted the many unsettling situations in which people are misled, defrauded, and bullied by criminals, and how this can be particularly troubling for targeted, vulnerable people with long-term and debilitating health conditions, or older people living alone.

Earlier research from the Anti-Counterfeiting Forum⁴ estimates that the proliferation of counterfeit goods has resulted in a cost of £30bn (or the equivalent of 14,800 jobs) for the UK economy. Even more startling, according to The Anti-Counterfeiting Group, the 2018 EU Customs Report⁵ estimates that of all counterfeit border seizures, 34% had the potential to harm consumers.

Increased Seizure of Counterfeit Goods

In 2018, the seizure on counterfeit goods increased by 9% on previous annual figures and may suggest two possibilities – that border control teams are becoming increasingly effective at the identification and seizure of such items, or alternatively, that those dealing in fake goods are taking increased risks with regards to public safety.

The 'no harm, no foul' mentality surrounding counterfeit culture still puts consumers at genuine risk. Many do not even realise that they have purchased counterfeit goods, thereby unwittingly putting their loved ones and themselves at risk.

Risks of Counterfeit Goods

Counterfeit goods can pose serious risks to the health and safety of those purchasing the items, and to others, such as family members, including children that ultimately use these products.

Often untested and produced to a lower-quality standard than legitimate items, there are many potential hazards associated with counterfeit goods –

- Counterfeit fragrances and cosmetics may contain harmful chemicals that may cause skin irritation, burning or even permanent disfigurement if applied to the skin.
- Counterfeit toys and children’s products may contain high levels of chemicals such as boron, and present choking hazards with loose buttons, stuffing, and small parts.
- Counterfeit electrical goods can be made with poor quality components that present fire risks, as well as limiting the lifespan of the products.

What to watch out for

Consumers can avoid unknowingly purchasing counterfeit goods by –

- Only purchasing goods from reputable suppliers and websites.
- Checking the contents of products for unusual ingredients or high levels of dangerous chemicals – if unsure, do not purchase.
- Checking packaging for manufacturer stamps and stickers – if at all unsure, do not purchase / use these products
- Looking for evidence of product testing and the standards / levels to which the products have been tested (usually UK and European Standards – e.g., for cosmetics – ‘Regulations (EC) No. 1223/2009’ or the Kitemark with ‘ISO 9001:2015’ for safety items). Avoid untested and unregulated products.

Supply and Demand

Where there is a demand, inevitably, the supply will follow. Ultimately, questions need to be asked of both the online traders and their motivations, and the changing moral values and societal pressures placed on people, that are potentially increasing the demand for cheaper items from dubious sources. What we can do is limit the damage by avoiding knowingly purchasing counterfeit items. By identifying fraudulent practices and subsequently reporting traders, progress can be made.

If you believe you have been sold counterfeit or substandard products and need more advice on the matter, you can contact [consumeradvice.scot](https://www.consumeradvice.scot).

[consumeradvice.scot](https://www.consumeradvice.scot) is Scotland’s national consumer advice service, launched in April 2019 and funded by the Scottish Government following the devolution of consumer powers. Free advice is available to everyone in Scotland on consumer issues including scams, holidays, utilities, travel, deliveries, insurance, counterfeit goods, and refunds. Consumers can seek support in different ways: by calling

freephone **0808 164 6000** (Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm) and online, through email and web chat at www.consumeradvice.scot.

The service also provides a 'Quick Reporting Tool' for people in Scotland to report scams. This can be accessed through www.scamwatch.scot.

You can follow us on social media – Twitter: @advisedotscot , Instagram: @advice.scot and Facebook: www.facebook.com/advice.scot/, or get ahead by visiting our knowledge centre at www.consumeradvice.scot.

From Colin Mathieson, Advice Direct Scotland

Christopher's Life saving campaign



Duncan Spiers of Christopher Spiers Life Saving Campaign is delighted to advise that the rope the campaign is advocating be installed across Scotland has now been named by the manufacturers, Ibex Marina, as 'In memory of Christopher Spiers'. The campaign also donated one of the ropes along with life belts and a throw bag to Luss

From Duncan Spiers

What is Fife Council, Safer Communities up to?

Fife Cares Spreads the word about Button Battery Dangers



Fife Council, Safer Communities through Fife Cares are working in partnership with RoSPA and the Child Accident Prevention Trust to engage with parents and discuss the dangers of button batteries and the diverse range of products that contain them.

At every child safety visit and any group talks carried out, Home Safety Advisors from Fife Cares are taking time to use the resources supplied by CAPT to start a conversation with parents and relatives about the dangers of button batteries. By showing the poster produced by CAPT and by discussing the range of products which use button batteries and how young children could accidentally access them, they are working to raise awareness of the dangers and hopefully prevent harm.

Feedback from parents has been excellent and has ranged from not knowing about these dangers at all, to being fully aware due to publicity or social media forums. Some parents who were aware of the dangers were not aware however of the range of products which contained such batteries from greetings cards to fidget spinners and car keys.

Quotes received from parents at visits includes

“The information and poster were incredibly useful as I didn't know details about the dangers. It was incredible how many things have them (button batteries) in them even fidget spinners”.

“I never heard of the danger of button batteries and never thought about it. My kids have lots of fidget spinners. I will watch out for that”

Fife Cares - Tips on what to do when things go wrong



Fife Cares have, through child safety visits and educational talks over the last number of years concentrated mostly on prevention of unintentional harm.

Recognising that sometimes things do go wrong they have produced a small booklet with advice on what to do when something happens. It concentrates on the initial stages in an effort to help parents who in times of crisis may not be thinking clearly. They realise that if information is provided before things go wrong then it may just be easier for the adult to recall the information and deal with the situation.

The booklet touches on subjects such as swallowing button batteries, burns and strangulation.

These booklets are provided free of charge at all child safety visits along with a parents' guide on tips to keep your child safe in and around your home.

From Bill Harley

Dundee winners



ESA4 pupils from Craigie High School Dundee created an original and innovative film highlighting the risks to upper limbs, neck and backs whilst carrying out various daily tasks. They developed and distributed a questionnaire which was completed by school staff regarding back pain, lifting heavy goods correctly and any requirements for staff development in this area. They then asked staff volunteers to participate in the film and changed the lyrics of a well-known "Take That" song in order that the risks of MSDs are remembered in a fun, cost effective and innovative way. The pupils included Makaton signing in the film production as a communication aid.

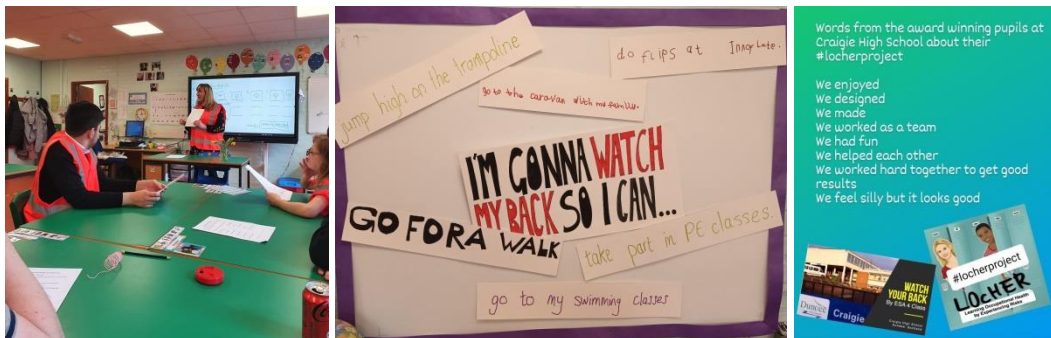
What this group of pupils, who experience a range of profound and complex needs including learning and communication difficulties, have achieved is remarkable. It has resulted in them improving many life skills; team building, confidence, self-awareness and listening skills to name but a few whilst getting the message across of the risk from MSDs in a fun and interactive way.

The project was entered for the Safety Groups UK awards. Of the entries received for the Innovation Awards, the entry from **Craigie High School** was selected to be **Highly Commended** by the judges for its innovation and was the **Overall winner** of the **Scottish Chamber of Safety silver punch bowl** for their **Development through Education Awards** entry.

The SGUK award ceremony will be on 8 November 2022

The link to the film is below

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I9dc-yI6WQA&t=38s>



From Andrew Cathro