

Compensation time bar rule to be reviewed

By Marion Scott
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The UK's Victims Commissioner is to examine why child abuse survivors are still being denied criminal injuries despite the change in time bar law in Scotland.



Baroness Newlove

Baroness Newlove is to investigate whether the UK Government's two-year time limit on claims needs to be scrapped.

She said a change in attitudes had encouraged many childhood victims to come forward – only to discover they could not get compensation.

"We owe it to them to make sure they get all the support they need. It would be grossly unfair to deny them access to compensation on the grounds they have been timed out."

Scotland scrapped the time bar on civil compensation cases last year – but the time limit on criminal injuries compensation remains.

Child abuse campaigner David Whelan said: "Victims of historic abuse suffer

such devastating psychological abuse along with sexual and physical abuse, it can take many decades for them to feel safe enough to come forward."

In March The Sunday Post revealed how a Glasgow mum who was sexually abused by Edinburgh paedophile Peter Christensen for five years from the age of four was denied compensation to help rebuild her life.

Her lawyer Cameron Fyfe wrote to Baroness Newlove, asking her to look at the issue.

He said: "I have now received confirmation that the issue will now be looked at."

Reform rumours denied

Tracey Thorn has said it would be a "strange life decision" to reform hit musical duo Everything But The Girl with husband Ben Watt.



The singer and Watt, who married in 2008 after being in a relationship since 1981, formed the group in 1982 but have not worked together since 2000.

Knife attack man serious in hospital

A man has been seriously hurt in a knife attack in Renfrewshire.

The 33-year-old was found in Graham Street, Johnstone, with injuries to his head and face on Friday night.

He is receiving treatment at Glasgow's Queen Elizabeth University Hospital where his condition is described as "serious". Police Scotland have appealed for witnesses

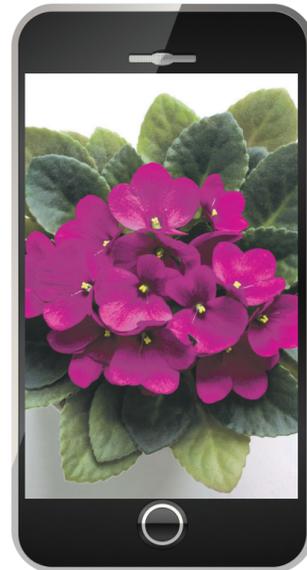
to the assault which happened at around 5.15pm.

Detective Sergeant Michael Lochrie said: "We are trying to establish exactly what happened prior to the assault and believe there may have been a disturbance in Graham Street."

"I'm keen to speak to anyone who was in the area and witnessed any kind of disturbance or unusual activity."

Experts say social media is behind massive Green fingers, selfies, generation going potty

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Plant pics are big on social media

Posting pictures of potted perfection online has helped fuel a surge in the popularity of houseplants.

Experts report a hike in the number of 20-somethings getting green fingers indoors.

After a decade of slumping sales, the number of houseplants sold among the 18-34 age group is growing, according to research.

And indoor foliage is the latest trend to grip social media as hundreds of thousands of Instagram followers flock to popular personalities known as plant influencers — or plantfluencers.

Accounts share pictures of their fiddle leaf fig trees and cheese plants, two of the most fashionable flora on the social networking sites.

Thousands of Instagrammers post pictures of their own plants with hashtags such as #monstermondays and #crazyplantlady.

In only two years, House Plant Club, an account dedicated to interior shrubbery has gathered 450,000 green-fingered followers looking for plant-spiration for their homes.

Paul Thomas is owner of House of Plants, an internet shop focusing on houseplants.

He's witnessed the huge growth in popularity of plants which had fallen out of favour with middle-aged buyers.

"Houseplants were pushed aside by the garden centres and interior designers as they weren't considered trendy any longer, and it was down to fashion," said Paul. "But now our customer is changing from a middle-aged person to a much younger one."

"In the 70s and 80s you used to get the cheese plant, spider plant and mother-in-law's tongue – these were favourites but they fell away.

Among the popular trends at the moment are plants with a trailing or large leaf.

"Take ficus lyrata, or fiddle-leaf fig – I've spent 30 years in horticulture and I've never known a plant to be popular like this," said Paul.

"Now there's a massive resurgence in the pilea peperomioides, known as Chinese money plant. Primarily because it's easy to grow."

Younger people finding it difficult to buy their own home who are stuck in flats without gardens are partially driving the trend, according to Paul.

"We call them the Green Generation," he added. "Younger people care about 'greening' their living space, as well as living things and their environment, so you can see why they want to surround themselves with houseplants."

"We're finding that younger buyers are very interested in growing the plant and caring for them, rather than just having them as an ornament. They want to care for and raise them."

"There's a good UK tradition of personifying your plants, and doing things like naming them and talking to them. It becomes like a pet, rather than an ornament you replace."

However just like other forms of pet, there is a downside, according to Paul.

"A lot of plants retailers name their plants like IKEA, but I think that just dumbs down houseplants," he added. "If you're getting into a plant, get into it and look after it properly."

"There are lots of plants that look fantastic on Instagram but are very difficult to look after. Take the alocasia plant, or elephant ear.

"It looks great but they're a nightmare. They're being sold by retailers as a cool plant but they're hard to care for."

"There's a parallel with certain pedigree dog breeds in that they may look good on your social media account but they're a big responsibility."

"So although we want people to buy them and this trend is very positive, I'd like to remind people that a plant isn't just for Christmas."

The plants become like a pet, rather than an ornament you replace

"In the 80s, things like spider plants were so popular. There were four television programmes running at one time which were focused exclusively on houseplants."

"This was because people wanted a more minimalist style in their homes. But now it's more trendy to be retro instead of minimalist, so plants are coming back."

"Social networking is the reason for the recent craze for houseplants."

"It started off with designer blogs then it moved to Facebook and then Instagram accounts, which began to feature houseplants."

THE EXPERT The best ways to keep your greenery

Agnes Stevenson
SUNDAY POST GARDENS EXPERT

When I moved into my first flat, with just a chair and a bed, I splashed what little cash I had on a giant Yucca and instantly the place felt like home. Houseplants make us feel good. They absorb pollution and act as a mood enhancer, reconnecting us with nature. And because most of them come from hot places and can survive in our centrally-heated homes, there's a plant for every situation.

Succulents

These are very fashionable and with good reason. They don't take up much room and they look great. They do however need lots of light, so a windowsill is best, and never over-water. Soak them thoroughly, allow to drain and then don't water again until the growing medium has been dry for a couple of days.

Stephanotis

Fill your home with the heady perfume of this twining climber. Tie in new shoots as it grows, water when the soil begins to dry out and move it outdoors during the summer before bringing it inside in the autumn.

Swiss Cheese Plant

This classic from the 70s is still one of the best choices for a large room. Keep it out of direct sunlight and make sure that is kept moist but not waterlogged.

African violets

With their dark leaves and pretty flowers, African violets are making a comeback as the centrepiece of many terrariums – indoor gardens in large, glass containers. The atmosphere in a terrarium is permanently moist, so include some small ferns and bright mosses for added interest.

surge in 20-somethings getting into indoor gardening and a new for plants



Sunday Post writer Megan McEachern with some of her beloved plants

I always had some small plants but my love for them has just grown and grown – Sunday Post writer Megan McEachern

Growing up, my house was always full of plants and flowers.

My mum was really into flower arranging and our garden was her and my dad's pride and joy. I grew up on the Isle of Arran and lived in front of a wood, so when I moved to Glasgow, I guess it felt a bit weird not to be surrounded by plants and nature. I always had some small plants dotted about but more recently, my love for greenery has grown.

I think it's about how they look, and it's nice to share fun pictures of them decorated on social media like Instagram or Pinterest.

For me they immediately make a room look quirkier and the difference in sizes and shapes really appeals to me. I'm not one for starkness. I really like the cluttered, higgledy-piggledy look, which is what a lot of plants can bring to a room. There's also an element of calm that foliage can add to a space, and the therapeutic nature of tending to them and watering them is something I really enjoy.

On a more scientific front, they're also a natural air purifier, and can really help with making your home feel clean and airy and full of oxygen.

However, I do think I need to refrain from buying any more before our living room starts feeling less like a lounge and more like a botanic garden.

Talks to be held over fireworks incidents

Fireworks usage and how to make them safer for communities is to be discussed as part of a new government consultation.

It comes following incidents around bonfire night, which saw a three-year-old girl being injured and a seven-year-old boy having his fingers blown off.

Community safety minister Ash Denham said the consultation would help to improve the government's understanding of the use and regulation of fireworks in Scotland.

Potential outcomes include extra regulation on the sale of the products, with evidence set to inform the minister's discussions with Westminster on legislation.

Ms Denham said: "Many people enjoy attending fireworks displays but I am very aware from conversations with members of the public and emergency service workers that there is 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 to 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 on the impact of fireworks and action we could take."



DJ Suzie McGuire

DJ Suzie's comeback

Radio presenter Suzie McGuire will return to the air after a four-year break from radio.

The mum-of-four has joined Nation Radio, Scotland's newest station, and will present the breakfast show tomorrow from 6am-11am.

She said: "I've got a dozen alarm clocks all over the house to make sure I don't sleep in."

The high-profile presenter spent almost two decades at the top before her marriage to accountant Derek Mitchell ended in violence.