

Statistical bulletin

Crime in England and Wales: Year ending March 2015

Crime against households and adults, also including data on crime experienced by children, and crimes against businesses and society.



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1 . Main points

- Latest figures from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) showed that, for the offences it covers, there were an estimated 6.8 million incidents of crime against households and resident adults (aged 16 and over). This is a 7% decrease compared with the previous year's survey, and the lowest estimate since the CSEW began in 1981
- The decrease in all CSEW crime was driven by a reduction in the all theft offences category (down 8%). Within this group there were falls in the sub-categories of theft from the person (down 21%) and other theft of personal property (down 22%). However, there was no significant change in other sub-categories such as domestic burglary and vehicle-related theft
- In contrast to the CSEW, there was a 3% increase in police recorded crime compared with the previous year, with 3.8 million offences recorded in the year ending March 2015
- The rise in the police figures was driven by increases in violence against the person offences (up by 23% compared with the previous year). However, this increase is thought to reflect changes in recording practices rather than a rise in violent crime. The CSEW estimate for violent crime showed no change compared with the previous year's survey, following decreases over the past 4 years
- Offences involving knives and sharp instruments increased by 2% in the year ending March 2015. This small rise masked more significant changes at offence level with an increase in assaults (up 13%, from 11,911 to 13,488) and a decrease in robberies (down 14%, from 11,927 to 10,270). In addition, the related category of weapon possession offences also rose by 10% (from 9,050 to 9,951). Such serious offences are not thought to be prone to changes in recording practice
- Sexual offences recorded by the police rose by 37% with the numbers of rapes (29,265) and other sexual offences (58,954) being at the highest level since the introduction of the National Crime Recording Standard in 2002/03. As well as improvements in recording, this is also thought to reflect a greater willingness of victims to come forward to report such crimes. In contrast, the latest estimate from the CSEW showed no significant change in the proportion of adults aged 16-59 who reported being a victim of a sexual assault (including attempted assaults) in the last year (1.7%)
- While other acquisitive crimes recorded by the police continued to decline there was an increase in the volume of fraud offences recorded by Action Fraud (up 9%) largely driven by increases in non-investment fraud (up 15%) – a category which includes frauds related to online shopping and computer software services. This is the first time a year-on-year comparison can be made on a like for like basis. It is difficult to know whether this means actual levels of fraud rose or simply that a greater proportion of victims reported to Action Fraud. However, other sources also show year on year increases, including data supplied to the National Fraud Investigation Bureau from industry sources (up 17%)

2 . Overview

This release provides the latest statistics on crime from the Crime Survey for England and Wales and police recorded crime.

In accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007, statistics based on police recorded crime data have been assessed against the Code of Practice for Official Statistics and found not to meet the required standard for designation as National Statistics. The full assessment report can be found on the [UK Statistics Authority](#) website. Alongside this release, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) have published a [progress update](#) on actions taken in addressing the requirements set out by the Authority. Data from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) continue to be badged as National Statistics.

Further information on the datasets is available in the 'Data sources – coverage and coherence' section and the [CSEW technical report \(839.6 Kb Pdf\)](#) .

The [user guide \(1.36 Mb Pdf\)](#) to crime statistics for England and Wales provides information for those wanting to obtain more detail on crime statistics. This includes information on the datasets used to compile the statistics and is a useful reference guide with explanatory notes regarding updates, issues and classifications.

The [quality and methodology report](#) sets out detailed information about the quality of crime statistics and the roles and responsibilities of the different departments involved in the production and publication of crime statistics.

Last year, revised survey weights and a back-series were produced for the CSEW following the release of the new-2011 Census-based population estimates. For more information see: [Presentational and methodological improvements to National Statistics on the Crime Survey for England and Wales](#).

An [interactive guide](#) provides a general overview of crime statistics.

A [short video](#) provides an introduction to crime statistics, including an overview of the main data sources used to produce the statistics.

3 . Understanding crime statistics

This quarterly release presents the most recent crime statistics from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW; previously known as the British Crime Survey), and police recorded crime. Neither of these sources can provide a picture of total crime.

Crime survey for England and Wales

The CSEW is a face-to-face victimisation survey in which people resident in households in England and Wales are asked about their experiences of a selected number of offences in the 12 months prior to the interview. It covers adults aged 16 and over, and a separate survey is used to cover children aged 10 to 15, but neither cover those living in group residences (such as care homes, student halls of residence and prisons), or crimes against commercial or public sector bodies. For the population and offence types it covers, the CSEW is a valuable source for providing robust estimates on a consistent basis over time.

It is able to capture offences experienced by those interviewed, not just those that have been reported to, and recorded by, the police. It covers a broad range of victim-based crimes experienced by the resident household population. However, there are some serious but relatively low volume offences, such as homicide and sexual offences, which are not included in its main estimates. The survey also currently excludes fraud and cyber crime though there is ongoing development work to address this gap – the update paper '[Extending the CSEW to include fraud and cyber crime \(113.5 Kb Pdf\)](#)' has more information.

Recent research has questioned the 'capping' of counts of repeat victimisation in the production of CSEW estimates. A separate methodological note '[High frequency repeat victimisation in the CSEW](#)' sets out background information on the use of capping and outlines work ONS is doing to review the use of it.

An [infographic looking at the people and crimes covered by the Crime Survey for England and Wales \(CSEW\)](#) was published in October 2014.

Police recorded crime

Police recorded crime figures cover selected offences that have been reported to and recorded by the police. They are supplied by the 43 territorial police forces of England and Wales, plus the British Transport Police, via the Home Office, to the Office for National Statistics (ONS). The coverage of police recorded crime is defined by the Notifiable Offence List (NOL)¹, which includes a broad range of offences, from murder to minor criminal damage, theft and public order offences. The NOL excludes less serious offences that are dealt with exclusively at magistrates' courts.

Police recorded crime is the primary source of sub-national crime statistics and relatively serious, but low volume, crimes that are not well measured by a sample survey. It covers victims (for example, residents of institutions and tourists) and sectors (for example, commercial bodies) excluded from the CSEW sample. While the police recorded crime series covers a wider population and a broader set of offences than the CSEW, crimes that don't come to the attention of the police or are not recorded by them, are not included.

Statistics based on police recorded crime data don't currently meet the required standard for designation as National Statistics (this is explained in the 'Recent assessments of crime statistics and accuracy' section).

We also draw on data from other sources to provide a more comprehensive picture of crime and disorder, including incidents of anti-social behaviour recorded by the police and other transgressions of the law that are dealt with by the courts, but not covered in the recorded crime collection.

Recent assessments of crime statistics and accuracy

Following an [assessment of ONS crime statistics](#) by the UK Statistics Authority, published in January 2014, the statistics based on police recorded crime data have been found not to meet the required standard for designation as National Statistics. Data from the CSEW continue to be designated as National Statistics.

In their report, the UK Statistics Authority set out 16 requirements to be addressed in order for the statistics to meet National Statistics standards. We are working in collaboration with the Home Office Statistics Unit and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) to address these requirements. A summary of progress so far is available on the [crime statistics methodology](#) page.

In light of concerns raised about the quality of police recorded crime data, in November 2014 we launched a user engagement exercise to help expand our knowledge of users' needs. The exercise has now closed and a [summary of responses](#) was published in May 2015. A short summary of the main themes raised by respondents is given in the 'Users of Crime Statistics' section.

As part of the [inquiry by the Public Administration Select Committee \(PASC\)](#) into crime statistics, allegations of under-recording of crime by the police were made. During 2014, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) carried out a national inspection of crime data integrity. The final report [Crime-recording: making the victim count](#), was published on 18 November 2014.

Based on an audit of a large sample of records, HMIC concluded that, across England and Wales as a whole, an estimated 1 in 5 offences (19%) that should have been recorded as crimes were not. The greatest levels of under-recording were seen for violence against the person offences (33%) and sexual offences (26%), however there was considerable variation in the level of under-recording across the different offence types investigated (for example, burglary; 11%) and these are reported on further in the relevant sections.

The audit sample was not large enough to produce compliance rates for individual police forces. However, HMIC inspected the crime recording process in each force and have reported on their findings in [separate crime data integrity force reports](#).

Further information on the accuracy of the statistics is also available in the 'Accuracy of the statistics' section.

Time periods covered

The latest CSEW figures presented in this release are based on interviews conducted between April 2014 and March 2015, measuring experiences of crime in the 12 months before the interview. Therefore, it covers a rolling reference period with, for example, respondents interviewed in April 2014 reporting on crimes experienced between April 2013 and March 2014, and those interviewed in March 2015 reporting on crimes taking place between March 2014 and February 2015. For that reason, the CSEW tends to lag short-term trends.

Recorded crime figures relate to crimes recorded by the police during the year ending March 2015² and, therefore, are not subject to the time lag experienced by the CSEW. Recorded crime figures presented in this release are those notified to the Home Office and that were recorded in the Home Office database on 4 June 2015.

There is a 9 month overlap of the data reported here with the data contained in the previous bulletin; as a result the estimates in successive bulletins are not from independent samples. Therefore, year-on-year comparisons are made with the previous year; that is, the 12 month period ending December 2013 (rather than those published last quarter). To put the latest dataset in context, data are also shown for the year ending March 2010 (around five years ago) and the year ending March 2005 (around ten years ago). Additionally, for the CSEW estimates, data for the year ending December 1995, which was when crime peaked in the CSEW (when the survey was conducted on a calendar year basis), are also included.

Users should be aware that improvements in police recording practices following the recent PASC enquiry that took place during late 2013 and HMIC audits of individual police forces which continued until August 2014 are known to have impacted on recorded crime figures. The scale of the effect on both the 2013-14 data and the 2014-15 data is likely to differ between police forces and be particularly driven by the timing of individual forces' HMIC audit and the timetable by which they introduced any changes.

Notes for understanding crime statistics

1. The Notifiable Offence List includes all indictable and triable-either-way-offences (offences which could be tried at a crown court) and a few additional closely related summary offences (which would be dealt with by magistrates' courts). Appendix 1 of the User Guide has more information on the classifications used for notifiable crimes recorded by the police.
2. Police recorded crime statistics are based on the year in which the offence was recorded, rather than the year in which it was committed. However, such data for any given period will include some historic offences that occurred in a previous year to the one in which it is reported to the police.

4 . Summary

Latest headline figures from the CSEW and police recorded crime

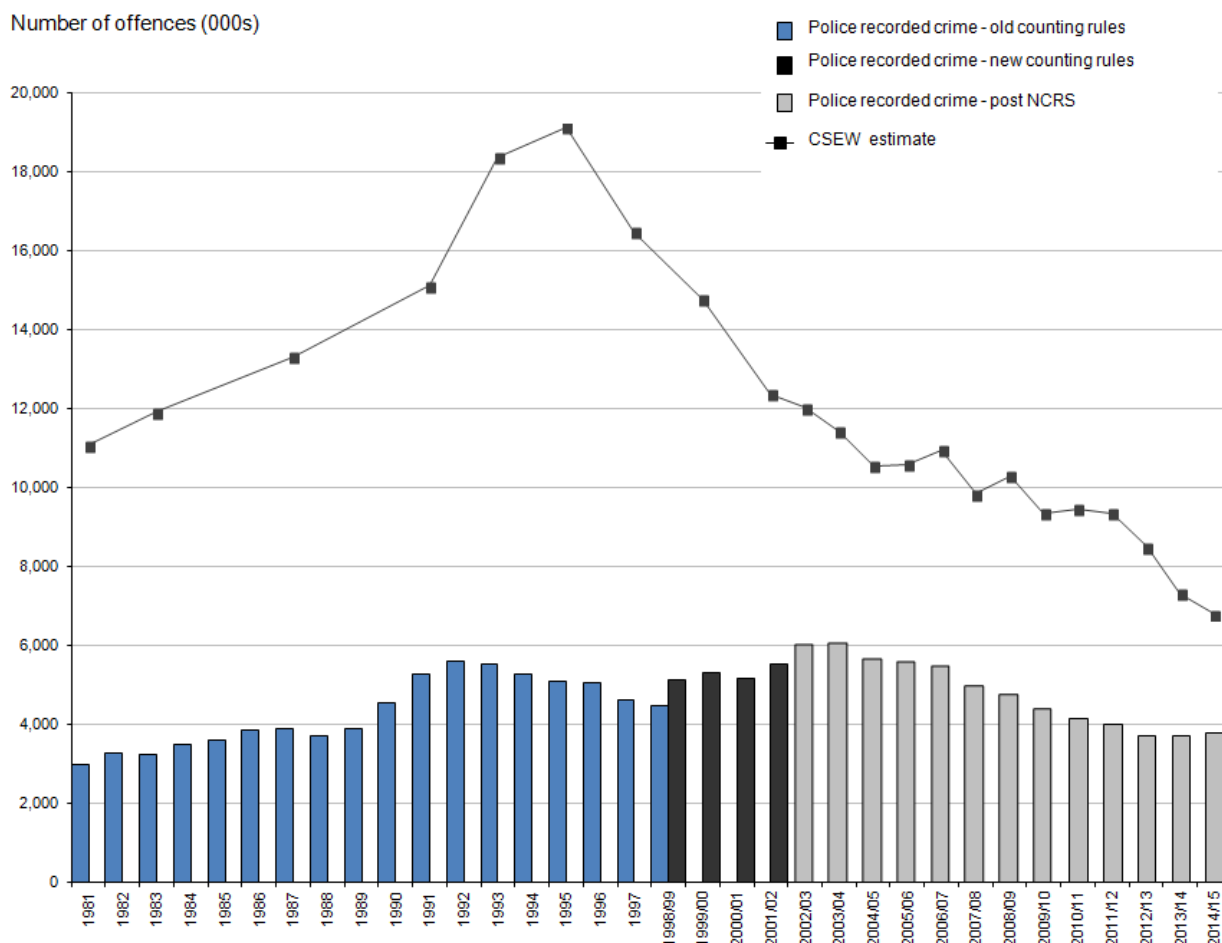
Latest figures from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) show there were an estimated 6.8 million incidents of crime against households and resident adults (aged 16 and over) in England and Wales for the year ending March 2015 (Table 1). This is a 7% decrease from 7.3 million incidents estimated in the previous year's survey and continues the long term downward trend seen since the mid-1990s. The latest estimate is the lowest since the survey began in 1981. The total number of CSEW incidents is 27% lower than the 2009/10 survey estimate and 64% lower than its peak level in 1995.

Crime covered by the CSEW increased steadily from 1981, before peaking in 1995. After peaking, the CSEW showed marked falls up until the 2004/05 survey year. Since then, the underlying trend has continued downwards, but with some fluctuation from year to year (Figure 1).

An [interactive version of Figure 1](#) is also available.

The CSEW covers a broad range of, but not all, victim-based crimes experienced by the resident household population, including those which were not reported to the police. However, there are some serious but relatively low volume offences, such as homicide and sexual offences, which are not included in its headline estimates. The survey also currently excludes fraud and cyber crime though there is ongoing development work to address this gap (the update paper ' [Extending the CSEW to include fraud and cyber crime \(113.5 Kb Pdf\)](#) ' contains more information). This [infographic looking at the people and crimes covered by the Crime Survey for England and Wales \(CSEW\)](#) provides more information on what is and is not included in the CSEW.

Figure 1: Trends in police recorded crime and Crime Survey for England and Wales, year ending December 1981 to year ending March 2015 [1,2]



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics / Police recorded crime, Home Office

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics
2. Prior to the year ending March 2002, CSEW respondents were asked about their experience of crime in the previous calendar year, so year-labels identify the year in which the crime took place. Following the change to continuous interviewing, respondents' experience of crime relates to the full 12 months prior to interview (i.e. a moving reference period). Year-labels for year ending March 2002 identify the CSEW year of interview
3. CSEW data relate to households/adults aged 16 and over
4. Some forces have revised their data and police recorded crime totals may not agree with those previously published

The CSEW time series shown in Figure 1 doesn't include crimes committed against children aged 10 to 15. The survey was extended to include such children from January 2009: data from this module of the survey are not directly comparable with the main survey. The CSEW estimated that 709,000 crimes¹ were experienced by children aged 10 to 15 in the year ending March 2015. Of this number, 53% were categorised as violent crimes² (373,000), while most of the remaining crimes were thefts of personal property (278,000; 39%). Incidents of criminal damage to personal property experienced by children were less common (59,000; 8% of all crimes). The proportions of violent, personal property theft and criminal damage crimes experienced by children aged 10 to 15 are similar to the previous year (55%, 40% and 5% respectively).

Police recorded crime is restricted to offences that have been reported to and recorded by the police, and so doesn't provide a total count of all crimes that take place. The police recorded 3.8 million offences in the year ending March 2015, an increase of 3% compared with the previous year (Table 2)³. Of the 44 forces (including the British Transport Police), 29 showed an annual increase in total recorded crime which was largely driven by rises in the volume of violence against the person offences. This increase in police recorded crime needs to be seen in the context of the renewed focus on the quality of crime recording and the 7% decrease estimated by the CSEW.

Like CSEW crime, police recorded crime also increased during most of the 1980s and then fell each year from 1992 to 1998/99. Expanded coverage of offences in the police recorded crime collection, following changes to the Home Office Counting Rules (HOCR) in 1998, and the introduction of the National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS) in April 2002, saw increases in the number of crimes recorded by the police while the CSEW count fell. Following these changes, trends from both series tracked each other well from 2002/03 until 2006/07. While both series continued to show a downward trend between 2007/08 and 2012/13, the gap between them widened with police recorded crime showing a faster rate of reduction (32% compared with 19% for the CSEW, for a comparable basket of crimes)⁴.

More recently this pattern for the comparable basket of crimes has changed, with overall police recorded crime now showing a small increase over the past year, while CSEW estimates have continued to fall, albeit at a slower rate. However, the changes in overall crime seen in both sources mask different trends for individual types of crime; for example the increases in violence, sexual offences and fraud in police recorded crime and the flattening out of the previous downward trend in violence estimated by the CSEW.

A likely factor behind the changing trend in police recorded crime is the renewed focus on the quality of recording by the police, in light of the inspections of forces by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC), the [Public Administration Select Committee \(PASC\)](#) inquiry into crime statistics, and the [UK Statistics Authority's decision](#) to remove the National Statistics designation. This renewed focus is thought to have led to improved compliance with the NCRS, leading to a greater proportion of crimes reported to the police being recorded.

Police recorded crime data are presented here within a number of broad groupings, victim-based crime, other crimes against society and fraud. **Victim-based crime**⁵ accounted for 83% of all police recorded crime, with 3.2 million offences recorded in the year ending March 2015. This was an increase of 2% compared with the previous year. While there were decreases across many of the police recorded crime categories, these were offset by large increases in both violence against the person offences, which was up by 23% (an additional 144,404 offences), and sexual offences, up by 37% (an additional 23,990 offences).

Other crimes against society⁶ accounted for 11% of all police recorded crime, with 403,878 offences recorded in the year ending March 2015 (an increase of 1% compared with the previous year). Trends in such offences often reflect changes in police activity and workload, rather than levels of criminality. However, anecdotal evidence from forces suggests that some increases in this grouping, such as those seen in public order offences, are being driven by a tightening of recording practices. Public order offences accounted for the largest volume rise and increased by 19%, miscellaneous crimes against society increased by 15%, offences involving possession of weapons by 6%, but drug offences decreased by 14%.

The remaining 6% of recorded crimes were **fraud** offences. There were 230,630 fraud offences recorded by **Action Fraud** in the year ending March 2015 (an increase of 9% on the previous year). This is the first year that these figures are comparable with the previous year, because of the transition to a centralised recording of fraud offences. The 'Total fraud offences recorded by Action Fraud' section has further details.

In addition, fraud data are also collected from industry bodies by the **National Fraud Intelligence Bureau (NFIB)** but are not currently included in the police recorded crime series. In the year ending March 2015, there were 389,718 reports of fraud to the NFIB from industry bodies, the vast majority of which were related to banking and credit industry fraud. A further 1.3 million cases of fraud on UK-issued cards were reported by FFA UK. The 'Fraud' section has more information on these data sources.

Overall level of crime – other sources of crime statistics

Around 2 million incidents of **anti-social behaviour (ASB)** were recorded by the police for the year ending March 2015. These are incidents that were not judged to require recording as a notifiable offence within the Home Office Counting Rules for recorded crime. The number of ASB incidents in the year ending March 2015 decreased by 8% compared with the previous year. However, it should be noted that a [review by HMIC in 2012](#) found that there was a wide variation in the quality of decision making associated with the recording of ASB. As a result, ASB incident data should be interpreted with caution.

In the year ending December 2014 (the latest period for which data are available) there were over 1 million convictions for non-notifiable offences (up 3% from the year ending December 2013), that are not covered in police recorded crime or the CSEW (for example: being drunk and disorderly; committing a speeding offence). There were 29,000 Penalty Notices for Disorder issued in relation to non-notifiable offences ⁷.

The CSEW does not cover crimes against businesses and police recorded crime can only provide a partial picture (as not all offences come to the attention of the police). The [2013 Commercial Victimisation Survey](#) and [2014 Commercial Victimisation Survey](#), respectively, estimated that there were 6.6 million and 4.8 million incidents of crime against business premises⁸ in England and Wales in the three comparable sectors covered by each survey ('Wholesale and retail', 'Accommodation and food' and 'Agriculture, forestry and fishing').

Trends in victim-based crime – CSEW

The CSEW provides coverage of a broad range of victim-based crimes, although there are necessary exclusions from its main estimates, such as homicide and sexual offences. This [infographic](#) has more information on the coverage of the survey.

Estimates of **violent crime** from the CSEW have shown large falls between the 1995 and the 2004/05 survey. Since then the survey shows a general downward trend in violent crime, albeit with some fluctuations (notably in 2010/11), although the year ending March 2015 was flat when compared with the previous twelve months and may indicate a slowing of the previous downward pattern.

CSEW **domestic burglary** follows a similar pattern to that seen for all CSEW crime, peaking in the 1993 survey and then falling steeply until the 2004/05 CSEW. The underlying trend in domestic burglary remained fairly flat between the 2004/05 and 2010/11 surveys before further falls in 2012/13 and 2013/14. As a result estimates of domestic burglary for the year ending March 2015 are 26% lower than those in the 2004/05 survey. However, there has been no change in levels of domestic burglary between the 2013/14 and 2014/15 surveys (the apparent year-on-year rise of 1% was not statistically significant).

The CSEW category of **vehicle-related theft** has shown a consistent downward trend since the mid-1990s. However, as with domestic burglary, there was no change in the level of vehicle-related theft in the last year (the apparent decrease of 1% was not statistically significant). The latest estimates indicate that a vehicle-owning household was around 5-times less likely to become a victim of such crime than in 1995.

The apparent 2% decrease in CSEW **other household theft** compared with the previous year was also not statistically significant. The latest estimates show levels of other household theft slightly lower than those seen in the 2007/08 survey, following a period of year-on-year increases between the 2007/08 and 2011/12 surveys. Peak levels of other household theft were recorded in the mid-1990s and the latest estimate is around half the level seen in 1995.

The CSEW estimates that there were around 741,000 incidents of **other theft of personal property** in the survey year ending March 2015, a decrease of 22% compared with the previous year. The underlying trend was fairly flat between 2004/05 and 2011/12 following marked declines from the mid-1990s; since 2011/12 estimates have decreased with the latest estimate 22% lower compared with the previous year.

Latest CSEW findings for **bicycle theft** show little change in the level of incidents in the year ending March 2015 compared with the previous year (the apparent 2% increase was not statistically significant). Over the long term, incidents of bicycle theft showed a marked decline between 1995 and the 1999 survey, with both small increases and decreases thereafter. Estimates for the year ending March 2015 are now 42% lower than in 1995 but remain similar to the level seen in 1999.

The number of incidents of **criminal damage** estimated by the CSEW showed little change in the year ending March 2015 compared with the previous year (the apparent 8% decrease was not statistically significant). The longer term trend shows a period of increasing incidents of criminal damage between 2003/04 and 2006/07 followed by a marked decline from 2008/09 onwards.

CSEW estimates for **robbery** and **theft from the person** decreased significantly from the previous year (46% and 21% respectively). These estimates (and particularly those for robbery) must be treated with caution and interpreted alongside police recorded crime as short term trends in these crimes are likely to fluctuate when measured by the CSEW due to the small number of victims interviewed in any one year. However, in the year ending March 2015 police recorded robberies and thefts from the person also decreased (by 13% and 20% respectively). Further information on these crimes is provided in the relevant sections of this bulletin.

Table 1: Number of CSEW incidents for year ending March 2015 and percentage change [1]

England and Wales

		Adults aged 16 and over/households			
Offence group ²	Apr '14 to Mar '15 ³ Number of incidents (thousands)	April 2014 to March 2015 compared with:			
		Jan '95 to Dec '95	Apr '04 to Mar '05	Apr '09 to Mar '10	Apr '13 to Mar '14
		% change and significance ⁴			
Violence	1,321	-66 *	-34 *	-22 *	0
with injury	683	-70 *	-41 *	-23 *	8
without injury	638	-59 *	-24 *	-20 *	-8
Robbery	90	-74 *	-64 *	-72 *	-46 *
Theft offences	4,042	-65 *	-30 *	-19 *	-8 *
Theft from the person	451	-34 *	-21 *	-12	-21 *
Other theft of personal property	741	-64 *	-34 *	-26 *	-22 *
Unweighted base - number of adults	33,350				
Domestic burglary	785	-67 *	-26 *	-14 *	1
Domestic burglary in a dwelling	559	-68 *	-25 *	-14 *	-2
Domestic burglary in a non-connected building to a dwelling	225	-66 *	-27 *	-15 *	7
Other household theft	760	-52 *	-10 *	-13 *	-2
Vehicle-related theft	923	-78 *	-50 *	-23 *	-1
Bicycle theft	381	-42 *	-2	-19 *	2
Criminal damage	1,334	-60 *	-46 *	-43 *	-8
Unweighted base - number of households	33,299				
All CSEW crime	6,786	-64 *	-36 *	-27 *	-7 *

Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

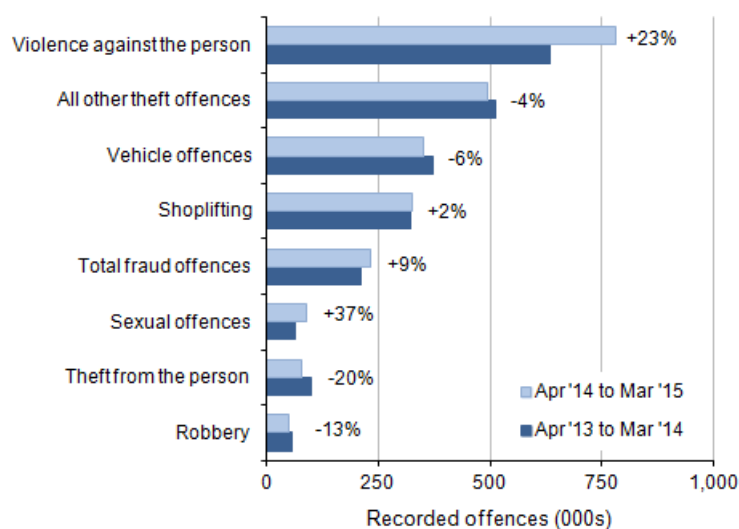
Notes:

1. More detail on further years can be found in Appendix Table A1
2. Section 5 of the User Guide provides more information about the crime types included in this table
3. Base sizes for data since year ending March 2015 are smaller than previous years, due to sample size reductions introduced in April 2012
4. Statistically significant change at the 5% level is indicated by an asterisk

Trends in victim-based crime – police recorded crime

Figure 2 focuses on selected police recorded crime offences with notable changes in the year ending March 2015 compared with the previous year.

Figure 2: Selected victim-based police recorded crime offences in England and Wales: volumes and percentage change between year ending March 2014 and year ending March 2015



Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics.
2. 'All other theft' includes: theft of unattended items, blackmail, theft by an employee, and making off without payment.

There was a 2% increase in **victim-based crimes** in the year ending March 2015 to 3.2 million offences. This is equivalent to 56 recorded offences per 1,000 population (though this shouldn't be read as a victimisation rate as multiple offences could be reported by the same victim) – shown in Table 3.

The 23% increase in **violence against the person** offences recorded by the police is likely to be driven by improved compliance with the NCRS as the CSEW showed no change in estimated levels of violence over the same period. The volume of recorded violence against the person crimes (779,027 offences) equates to approximately 14 offences recorded per 1,000 population in the year ending March 2015. The largest increase in total violence against the person offences was in the **violence without injury** subcategory, which showed an increase of 30% compared with the previous year. The **violence with injury** subcategory showed a smaller increase (16%) over the same period.

In the year ending March 2015 the police recorded 534 **homicides**, 1 more than the previous year⁹. This latest annual count of homicides remains close to the lowest level recorded since 1978 (532 offences). The number of homicides increased from around 300 per year in the early 1960s to over 800 per year in the early years of this century, which was at a faster rate than population growth over that period¹⁰. However, over the past decade the volume of homicides has decreased while the population of England and Wales has continued to grow.

Offences involving firearms (excluding air weapons) have recorded almost no change in the year ending March 2015 compared with the previous year. This has seen a downward trend in previous years, and is over 50% less than it was at its peak in 2005/06. However, the number of offences that involved a knife or sharp instrument showed a small increase (2%) over the past 12 months when compared with the previous year¹¹ and marks the end of the previous general downward trend in these offences. This, however, masked a larger rise in the offence category 'assault with injury and assault with intent to cause serious harm' where a knife or sharp instrument was involved (13%) and a reduction in robberies involving a knife or sharp instrument (14%).

Police recorded **robberies** fell 13% in the year ending March 2015 compared with the previous year, from 57,828 offences to 50,236 offences. This is equivalent to around 1 offence recorded per 1,000 population and is the lowest level since the introduction of the NCRS in 2002/03 (when 110,271 offences were recorded). With the exception of a notable rise in the number of robberies in 2005/06 and 2006/07, there has been a general downward trend in robbery offences since 2002/03. The overall decrease has been driven by a fall in the number of offences recorded by the Metropolitan Police Force (which decreased by 22% to 21,907 offences). As before, robbery offences tended to be concentrated in large urban areas (nearly half were recorded in London).

Sexual offences recorded by the police increased by 37% compared with the previous year, to a total of 88,219 across England and Wales in the year ending March 2015. Within this, the number of offences of rape increased by 41% and the number of other sexual offences increased by 36%. These rises are the largest year-on-year increases since the introduction of the NCRS in 2002/03. These increases are likely to be due to an improvement in crime recording by the police and an increase in the willingness of victims to come forward and report these crimes to the police. Estimates from the 2014/15 CSEW show a similar level of victimisation rates compared with the previous year. In the year ending March 2015, 1.7% of respondents had been victims of sexual assault or attempted sexual assault in the last year, compared with 1.5% in the year ending March 2014; the 'Sexual offences' section has more information.

Previous increases in the number of sexual offences reported to the police were shown to have been related also to a rise in the reporting of historic offences¹² following 'Operation Yewtree', which began in 2012. Feedback from forces indicates that both current and historic offences (those that took place over 12 months before being reported) continued to rise in the year ending March 2015 compared with the previous year. However, the major contribution to this increase is believed to have come from current offences.

Total **theft offences** recorded by the police in the year ending March 2015 showed a 5% decrease compared with the previous year, continuing the year-on-year decrease seen since 2002/03. The majority of the categories in this offence group (burglary, vehicle offences, theft from the person, bicycle theft and 'all other theft offences') showed decreases compared with the previous year. One exception to this was **shoplifting**, which increased by 2% compared with the previous year (from 321,078 offences to 326,464), the highest level since the introduction of the NCRS in 2002/03, although the rate of increase has slowed from the 7% recorded in 2013/14. Vehicle interference has increased by 88% (from 20,367 to 38,229) in the year ending March 2015 compared with the previous year. A change in the guidance within Home Office Counting Rules (HOCR) in April 2014 is likely to have led to offences that previously might have been recorded as attempted theft of, or from, a vehicle or criminal damage to a vehicle now being recorded as vehicle interference when the motive of the offender was not clear.

Theft from the person offences recorded by the police in the year ending March 2015 showed a 20% decrease compared with the previous year. This is a reversal of recent trends, which showed year-on-year increases between 2008/09 and 2012/13. This latest decrease is thought to be associated with improved mobile phone security features. The 'Theft offences - Other theft of property' section has more information.

Fraud offences

Responsibility for recording fraud offences has transferred from individual police forces to Action Fraud. This transfer occurred between April 2011 and March 2013. In the year ending March 2015 there were 230,630 fraud offences recorded by Action Fraud reported to them by victims in England and Wales. This represents a volume increase of 9% compared with the previous year. This is the first time comparable data have been available on a year on year basis, as the transition from police forces to Action Fraud was completed in March 2013 ([Appendix Table A5](#)). Thus, the latest figures suggest that while other acquisitive crimes continue to fall, the level of fraud has increased.

Other industry data also show reported fraud is increasing, with 389,718 reports of fraud to the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau from industry bodies. One of these bodies, FFA UK, also publishes data on the volume of fraud on UK-issued bank cards. In the 2014 calendar year, they reported 1.3 million cases of such fraud; the 'Fraud' section has further information.

However, it is difficult to judge whether or not administrative data reflects changes in actual crime levels or increased reporting from victims. The CSEW data on plastic card fraud shows that, for the year ending March 2015 survey, 4.6% of plastic card owners were victims of card fraud in the last year, a decrease from the year earlier (when 5.1% of card owners were victims). The current level is lower than the peak five years earlier, when 6.4% of card owners were victims.

Table 2: Number of police recorded crimes for year ending March 2015 and percentage change [1,2,3]

Offence group	Apr '14 to Mar '15	April 2014 to March 2015 compared with:		
		Apr '04 to Mar '05	Apr '09 to Mar '10	Apr '13 to Mar '14
Victim-based crime	3,176,760	-37	-16	2
Violence against the person offences	779,027	-8	11	23
Homicide	534	-38	-14	0
Violence with injury ⁴	374,216	-27	-7	16
Violence without injury ⁵	404,277	23	36	30
Sexual offences	88,219	45	66	37
Rape	29,265	109	94	41
Other sexual offences	58,954	26	55	36
Robbery offences	50,236	-45	-33	-13
Robbery of business property	5,754	-27	-30	-1
Robbery of personal property	44,482	-46	-34	-15
Theft offences	1,755,436	-38	-18	-5
Burglary	411,454	-40	-24	-7
Domestic burglary	197,021	-39	-27	-7
Non-domestic burglary	214,433	-40	-21	-7
Vehicle offences	351,452	-57	-29	-6
Theft of a motor vehicle	75,809	-69	-36	1
Theft from a vehicle	237,414	-53	-30	-14
Interfering with a motor vehicle	38,229	-50	1	88
Theft from the person	78,814	-35	-15	-20
Bicycle theft	93,450	-12	-15	-4
Shoplifting	326,464	16	6	2
All other theft offences ⁶	493,802	-40	-16	-4
Criminal damage and arson	503,842	-58	-37	0
Other crimes against society	403,878	-11	-20	1
Drug offences	169,964	17	-28	-14
Trafficking of drugs	27,026	12	-19	-8
Possession of drugs	142,938	18	-29	-15
Possession of weapons offences	21,904	-46	-24	6
Public order offences	159,528	-17	-15	19
Miscellaneous crimes against society	52,482	-30	1	15
Total fraud offences ⁷	230,630	43	215	9
Total recorded crime - All offences including fraud ⁷	3,811,268	-32	-12	3

Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics
2. Police recorded crime statistics based on data from all 44 forces in England and Wales (including the British Transport Police)
3. More detail on further years can be found in Appendix Table A4
4. Includes attempted murder, intentional destruction of viable unborn child, causing death by dangerous driving /careless driving when under the influence of drink or drugs, more serious wounding or other act endangering life (including grievous bodily harm with and without intent), causing death by aggravated vehicle taking and less serious wounding offences
5. Includes threat or conspiracy to murder, harassment, other offences against children and assault without injury (formerly common assault where there is no injury)
6. All other theft offences now includes all 'making off without payment' offences recorded since year ending March 2003. Making off without payment was previously included within the fraud offence group, but following a change in the classification for year ending March 2014, this change has been applied to previous years of data to give a consistent time series
7. Action Fraud have taken over the recording of fraud offences on behalf of individual police forces. The process began in April 2011 and was rolled out to all police forces by March 2013. Due to this change, caution should be applied when comparing data over this transitional period and with earlier years. New offences were introduced under the Fraud Act 2006, which came into force on 15 January 2007

Table 3: Total police recorded crime - rate of offences [1,2,3]

	Apr '04 to Mar '05	Apr '09 to Mar '10	Apr '13 to Mar '14	Apr '14 to Mar '15
Rate per 1,000 population				
Total recorded crime - all offences including fraud	107	79	66	67
Victim-based crime ⁴	95	69	55	56
Other crimes against society	9	9	7	7
Total fraud offences	3	1	4	4

Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics
2. Police recorded crime statistics based on data from all 44 forces in England and Wales (including the British Transport Police)
3. For detailed footnotes and further years see Appendix table A4
4. Victim-based crime now includes all 'making off without payment' offences recorded since the year ending March 2003. Making off without payment was previously included within the fraud offence group, but following a change in the classification for the year ending March 2014, this change has been applied to previous years of data to give a consistent time series

Notes for summary

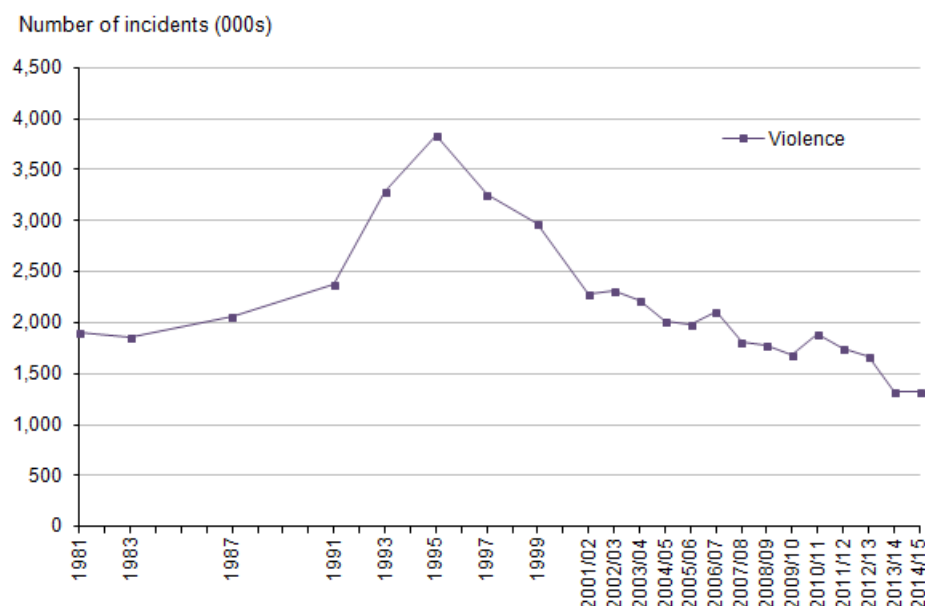
1. The survey of children aged 10 to 15 only covers personal level crime (so excludes household level crime) and, as with the main survey, does not include sexual offences
2. The majority (73%) of violent crimes experienced in the year ending March 2015 resulted in minor or no injury, so in most cases the violence is low level
3. Police recorded crimes are notifiable offences which are all crimes that could possibly be tried by a jury (these include some less serious offences, such as minor theft that would not usually be dealt with in this way) plus a few additional closely related offences, such as assault without injury
4. The methodological note [Analysis of variation in crime trends](#) and Section 4.2 of the [User Guide](#) have more details
5. Victim-based crimes are those offences with a specific identifiable victim. These cover the police recorded crime categories of violence against the person, sexual offences, robbery, theft offences, and criminal damage and arson
6. 'Other crimes against society' cover offences without a direct victim, and includes drug offences, possession of weapon offences, public order offences and miscellaneous crimes against society
7. Non-notifiable offences are offences dealt with exclusively by magistrates' courts or by the police issuing of a Penalty Notice for Disorder or a Fixed Penalty Notice. Along with non-notifiable offences dealt with by the police (such as speeding), these include many offences that may be dealt with by other agencies – for example: prosecutions by TV Licensing; or the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) for vehicle registration offences
8. This is a premises based survey: respondents were asked if the business at their current premises had experienced any of a range of crime types in the 12 months prior to interview and, if so, how many incidents of crime had been experienced.
9. Homicide includes the offences of murder, manslaughter, corporate manslaughter and infanticide. Figures from the Homicide Index for the time period April 2013 to March 2014, which take account of further police investigations and court outcomes, were published in [Focus on: Violent Crime and Sexual Offences, 2013/14](#) on 12 February 2015
10. These figures, taken from the Homicide Index, are less likely to be affected by changes in police recording practices made in 1998 and 2002, so it is possible to examine longer-term trends
11. Only selected violent offences can be broken down by whether a knife or sharp instrument was used. These are: homicide; attempted murder; threats to kill; assault with injury and assault with intent to cause serious harm; robbery; rape; and sexual assault
12. More information can be found in [Crime in England and Wales, Year Ending September 2013](#)

5 . Violent crime

Violent crime in the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) is referred to as “violence”, and includes wounding and assault (for both completed and attempted incidents). There is also an additional breakdown of violence with, or without injury. Violent offences in police recorded data is referred to as “violence against the person” and includes homicide, violence with injury, and violence without injury. As with the CSEW, attempted assaults are counted alongside completed ones. There are some closely related offences in the police recorded crime series, such as public disorder, that have no identifiable victim and are classified as other offences.

Latest CSEW estimates show there were 1.3 million violent incidents in England and Wales. This shows no significant change compared with last year's survey, following a period when the underlying trend from the survey was generally downward (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Trends in Crime Survey for England and Wales violence, year ending December 1981 to year ending March 2015



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Prior to the year ending March 2002, CSEW respondents were asked about their experience of crime in the previous calendar year, so year-labels identify the year in which the crime took place. Following the change to continuous interviewing, respondents' experience of crime relates to the full 12 months prior to interview (i.e. a moving reference period). Year-labels for year ending March 2002 identify the CSEW year of interview.
2. The numbers of incidents are derived by multiplying incidence rates by the population estimates for England and Wales.

The CSEW subcategories of "violence with injury" and "violence without injury" also showed no change with the apparent changes (with injury up 8% and without injury down 8%) not being statistically significant.

The long-term trends have been downward with the estimate of violent incidents having decreased by 66% from its peak in 1995 (Table 4b). Around 2 in every 100 adults were a victim of violent crime in the last year, based on the year ending March 2015 survey, compared with around 5 in 100 adults in the 1995 survey (Table 4a). However, it is important to note that victimisation rates vary considerably across the population and by geographic area. Such variations in victimisation rates are further explored in both our thematic reports (which are published annually)¹, as well as the [Annual Trend and Demographic tables](#), published alongside this report.

Estimates of violence against 10 to 15 year olds as measured by the CSEW can be found in the section 'Crime experienced by children aged 10 to 15'.

The longer term reduction in violent crime, as shown by the CSEW, is supported by evidence from several health data sources. Research conducted by the Violence and Society Research Group at Cardiff University ([Sivarajasingam et al., 2015](#)) shows a downward trend, with findings from their annual survey, covering a sample of hospital emergency departments and walk-in centres in England and Wales, showed an overall decrease of 10% in serious violence-related attendances in 2014 compared with 2013 (down to 211,514 attendances in 2014). In addition, the most recent provisional National Health Service (NHS) data available on assault admissions to hospitals in England show that, for the 12 months to the end of March 2014, there were 31,243 hospital admissions for assault, a reduction of 5% compared with figures for the preceding 12 months².

Table 4a: CSEW violence - number, rate and percentage of incidents [1]

England and Wales

Adults aged 16 and over

	Interviews from:				
	Jan '95 to Dec '95	Apr '04 to Mar '05	Apr '09 to Mar '10	Apr '13 to Mar '14 ²	Apr '14 to Mar '15 ²
Number of incidents					Thousands
Violence	3,837	2,010	1,687	1,327	1,321
with injury	2,270	1,167	892	632	683
without injury	1,567	844	795	694	638
Incidence rate per 1,000 adults					
Violence	94	48	39	29	29
with injury	56	28	20	14	15
without injury	39	20	18	15	14
Percentage of adults who were victims once or more					Percentage
Violence	4.8	2.9	2.4	1.8	1.8
with injury	3.0	1.8	1.4	1.0	0.9
without injury	2.1	1.3	1.2	0.9	0.9
Unweighted base - number of adults	16,337	45,118	44,559	35,371	33,350

Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Appendix table A1, A2, A3 provide detailed footnotes and data for further years
2. Base sizes for data since the years ending March 2014 and March 2015 are smaller than previous years, due to sample size reductions introduced in April 2012

Table 4b: CSEW violence - percentage change and statistical significance [1]

England and Wales

Adults aged 16 and over

	April 2014 to March 2015 compared with:							
	Jan '95 to Dec '95		Apr '04 to Mar '05		Apr '09 to Mar '10		Apr '13 to Mar '14	
Number of incidents	Percentage change and significance ²							
Violence	-66	*	-34	*	-22	*		0
with injury	-70	*	-41	*	-23	*		8
without injury	-59	*	-24	*	-20	*		-8
Incidence rate per 1,000 adults								
Violence	-69	*	-40	*	-25	*		-1
with injury	-73	*	-46	*	-27	*		7
without injury	-64	*	-31	*	-23	*		-9
Percentage of adults who were victims once or more	Percentage point change and significance ^{2,3}							
Violence	-3	*	-1.1	*	-0.6	*		0.0
with injury	-2	*	-0.8	*	-0.4	*		0.0
without injury	-1.2	*	-0.4	*	-0.3	*		0.0

Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Appendix table A1, A2, A3 provide detailed footnotes and data for further years
2. Statistically significant change at the 5% level is indicated by an asterisk
3. The percentage point change presented in the tables may differ from subtraction of the 2 percentages due to rounding

The number of violence against the person offences recorded by the police in the year ending March 2015 showed a 23% increase compared with the previous year (up from 634,623 to 779,027, Tables 5a and 5b). There was a much larger increase in the category of "violence without injury" (up 30%) than "violence with injury" (up 16%).

All but one police force recorded a percentage point rise in violence in the year ending March compared with the previous year³, although the forces with the largest percentage increases may not necessarily have had the largest impact on the national figures, since the areas police forces serve can differ greatly in size. It is not surprising that the largest volume increase was reported by the Metropolitan Police Service, which recorded an additional 33,783 offences compared with the previous year (an increase of 26%). Other large volume increases included Greater Manchester Police (up 11,723 offences, an increase of 40%), Hampshire Constabulary (up 7,210, 34%), and Sussex Police (up 6,810, 45%). Northamptonshire Police had the largest percentage change increase, up 53% (or 3,935 offences), followed by Sussex Police (up 45% to 22,008) and Merseyside Police (up 44% to 18,587).

It is known that violent offences are more prone, than some other offences, to subjective judgement about whether or not to record a crime. The [Crime-recording: making the victim count](#) report published by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) found that violence against the person offences had the highest under-recording rates across police forces in England and Wales. Nationally, an estimated 1 in 3 (33%) violent offences that should have been recorded as crimes were not. The 'Accuracy of the statistics' section has more information.

Action taken by police forces to improve their compliance with the National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS) is likely to have resulted in the increase in the number of offences recorded⁴. It is thought that recording improvements are more likely to affect relatively less serious violent offences and explains the larger increase in the sub-category "violence without injury" compared with "violence with injury". ONS has also been informed there has generally been little change in the volume of "calls for service" related to violent crime in the year ending March 2015 compared with the previous year. Calls for service refer to emergency and non-emergency calls from members of the public and referrals from partner agencies (such as education, health, and social services) for police to attend an incident or investigate a case. This, along with the evidence from the CSEW, suggests the rise in recorded violence against the person is largely due to process improvements rather than a genuine rise in violent crime.

As well as changes in recording practices, another possible factor behind the rise is an increase in the reporting of domestic abuse and subsequent recording of these offences by the police. [An HMIC inspection](#) expressed concerns about the police response to domestic abuse, but noted the majority of Police and Crime Commissioners (PCC) were now showing a strong commitment to tackling this crime. The report noted just under half of PCCs had made a commitment to increase the reporting of this type of offence. It is thought that this renewed focus may have led to more victims coming forward to report crimes and allegations being treated more sensitively.

Recent changes in recording practice makes comparisons of trends in violence against the person offences difficult. While the latest figures have risen, the volume of violence against the person offences recorded by the police is 8% below that recorded in the year ending March 2005. The rates for violence against the person have dropped from 16 recorded offences per 1,000 population in year ending March 2005 to 14 recorded offences per 1,000 population in the year ending March 2015 (Table 5a).

Homicides are not so prone to changes in recording practice by the police. In the year ending March 2015, the police recorded 534 homicides, 1 more than in the previous year (Table 5a)⁵. Historically, the number of homicides increased from around 300 per year in the early 1960s to over 800 per year in the early years of this century⁶, a faster rate of increase than the growth in population. Since then, the number of homicides recorded per year has been on a downward trend, while the population of England and Wales has continued to grow. The rate of homicide has fallen by almost half between the year ending March 2004 and the year ending March 2015, from 17 homicides per million population⁷ to 9 homicides per million population.

From 1 April 2014 stalking became a specific legal offence following the introduction of the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012. Prior to this it would have been hidden within other offences, largely harassment. In the first year that stalking has been a separate offence category, the police recorded 2,878 offences. This change in the law should be borne in mind when looking at trends in harassment (Appendix table A4). Despite the removal of stalking, the number of harassment offences increased 34% to 81,735 in the year ending March 2015. It is thought that this is largely due to increased reporting and recording of domestic violence offences in general, many of which involve some level of harassment.

There is more detailed information on trends and the circumstances of violence against the person in [Focus on: Violent Crime and Sexual Offences, 2013/14](#).

Table 5a: Police recorded violence against the person - number and rate of offences [1,2,3]

England and Wales

	Apr '04 to Mar '05	Apr '09 to Mar '10	Apr '13 to Mar '14	Apr '14 to Mar '15
Violence against the person offences	845,673	699,011	634,623	779,027
Homicide ⁴	868	620	533	534
Violence against the person - with injury ⁵	515,119	401,244	322,818	374,216
Violence against the person - without injury ⁶	329,686	297,147	311,272	404,277
Violence against the person rate per 1,000 population	16	13	11	14

Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics
2. Police recorded crime statistics based on data from all 44 forces in England and Wales (including the British Transport Police)
3. Appendix table A4 provides detailed footnotes and further years
4. Includes the offences of murder, manslaughter, corporate manslaughter and infanticide
5. Includes attempted murder, intentional destruction of viable unborn child, causing death by dangerous driving /careless driving when under the influence of drink or drugs, more serious wounding or other act endangering life (including grievous bodily harm with and without intent), causing death by aggravated vehicle taking, assault with injury, assault with intent to cause serious harm and less serious wounding offences
6. Includes threat or conspiracy to murder, harassment, other offences against children and assault without injury (formerly common assault where there is no injury)

Table 5b: Police recorded violence against the person - percentage change [1,2,3]

England and Wales

	Percentage change		
	April 2014 to March 2015 compared with:		
	Apr '04 to Mar '05	Apr '09 to Mar '10	Apr '13 to Mar '14
Violence against the person offences	-8	11	23
Homicide ⁴	-38	-14	0
Violence against the person - with injury ⁵	-27	-7	16
Violence against the person - without injury ⁶	23	36	30

Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics
2. Police recorded crime statistics based on data from all 44 forces in England and Wales (including the British Transport Police)
3. Appendix table A4 provides detailed footnotes and further years
4. Includes the offences of murder, manslaughter, corporate manslaughter and infanticide
5. Includes attempted murder, intentional destruction of viable unborn child, causing death by dangerous driving /careless driving when under the influence of drink or drugs, more serious wounding or other act endangering life (including grievous bodily harm with and without intent), causing death by aggravated vehicle taking, assault with injury, assault with intent to cause serious harm and less serious wounding offences
6. Includes threat or conspiracy to murder, harassment, other offences against children and assault without injury (formerly common assault where there is no injury)

Neither the CSEW nor police recorded crime are good data sources for some “high harm” crimes, where there has been recent increased focus, such as Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and modern slavery.

Offences of FGM that come to the attention of the police will be contained within the police recorded crime category of assault with injury. However, it is known that much FGM remains hidden and unreported to the police. The Health and Social Care Information Center (HSCIC) have published new [experimental statistics on Female Genital Mutilation](#)⁸. These data are collected monthly from hospitals in England and are being collected to gain a better picture of the prevalence of FGM⁹. For the period September to March 2015, there were 3,963 newly identified¹⁰ cases of FGM reported nationally. Of course, these are only cases that have come to light as a result of a victim receiving medical treatment and will understate the true volume of such offences.

Modern slavery is currently recorded within a number of police recorded classifications including “sexual offences” and “other crimes against society”. As a result it is not currently possible to identify the number of modern slavery offences coming to the attention of the police. As of 1 April 2015 a separately identifiable offence of modern slavery will be included in the police recorded crime category “violence without injury”. It has been estimated that in 2013 the number of victims of [modern slavery](#) ranged between 10,000 and 13,000¹¹.

Notes for violent crime

1. There is more information on violent crime in [Focus on: Violent Crime and Sexual Offences, 2013/14](#)
2. Based on the latest National Health Service (NHS) [Hospital Episode Statistics](#) and [hospital admissions due to assault](#) (dated 15 July 2014). These don't include figures for Wales and relate to activity in English NHS hospitals
3. The exception was Leicestershire Police, which reported no change
4. The inspections took place over the period December 2013 to August 2014, this falls within the time period covered by this release. The current year covers the period January 2014 to December 2014 and the comparator year covers the period January 2013 to December 2013
5. Homicide includes the offences of murder, manslaughter, corporate manslaughter and infanticide
6. These figures, taken from the Homicide Index, are less likely to be affected by changes to in police recording practice made in 1998 and 2002, so it is possible to examine longer-term trends
7. While most rates of recorded crime are given per 1,000 population, due to the relatively low number of offences recorded, and to aid interpretation, homicide rates are given per million population
8. Figures from the Health and Social Care Information Center on Female Genital Mutilation do not include figures for Wales and relate to activity in English foundation and non-foundation trusts including A&E departments. 131 of the 157 eligible acute trusts in England submitted signed off data
9. Clinical staff must record in patient healthcare records when it is identified that a patient has undergone FGM. This applies to all NHS clinicians and healthcare professionals across the NHS. However, the requirement to submit the FGM Prevalence Dataset is only mandatory for Foundation and non-Foundation trusts, including Accident and Emergency departments. Other organisations (which may include GPs) may wish to provide an FGM Prevalence Dataset centrally, the [Data Quality Note](#) contains further information
10. Patients first identified during the reporting period as having undergone FGM at any stage in their life
11. This exploratory analysis uses Multiple Systems Estimation (MSE) which includes data on the number of victims of modern slavery from a number of organisations such as; Local Authorities, Police Forces, Government Organisations (mostly Home Office agencies), Non-governmental organisations, the National Crime Agency and the General Public (through various routes). The report '[Modern Slavery: an application of Multiple Systems Estimation](#)' has more information

6 . Robbery

Robbery is an offence in which force, or the threat of force, is used either during or immediately prior to a theft or attempted theft.

Robbery is a relatively low volume offence, accounting for just over 1% of all police recorded crime in the year ending March 2015. The latest figures show police recorded robberies decreased by 13% in the year ending March 2015 compared with the previous year (Tables 6a and 6b). With the exception of a notable rise in the number of robberies in 2005/06 and 2006/07, there has been a general downward trend since 2002/03 in England and Wales. The latest figure shows the number of robbery offences falling to 50,236 - the lowest level since the introduction of the National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS) in 2002/03 (Figure 4).

The [Crime-recording: making the victim count](#) report, published by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) found that nationally, an estimated 19% of all offences that should have been recorded as a crime were not. This compares to 14% for robbery offences.

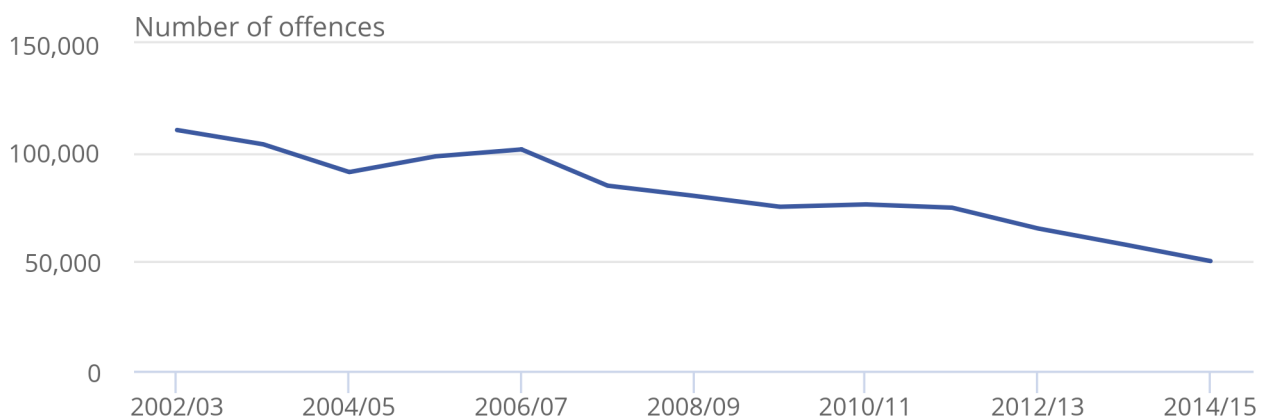
Not all robberies will be reported to the police¹, the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) estimated there were 90,000 robbery offences in the year ending March 2015. However, it should be noted that owing to the small number of robbery victims interviewed, CSEW estimates have large confidence intervals and are prone to fluctuation. The number of robberies recorded by the police provides a more robust indication of trends.

Figure 4: Trends in police recorded robberies in England and Wales, year ending March 2003 to year ending March 2015 [1,2]

England and Wales

Figure 4: Trends in police recorded robberies in England and Wales, year ending March 2003 to year ending March 2015 [1,2]

England and Wales



Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics
2. The data on this chart refer to crimes recorded in the financial year (April to March)

In the year ending March 2015, 89% of robberies recorded by the police were of personal property. There were 44,482 of these offences, down 15% compared with the previous year. Robbery of business property (which makes up the remaining 11% of total robbery offences) showed similar levels in the year ending March 2015 to those recorded in the previous year. In the year ending March 2015, 1 in 5 robberies (20%) recorded by the police involved a knife or other sharp instrument, a similar level to that recorded in the previous year (Table 9b).

Table 6a: Police recorded robbery - number and rate of offences [1,2,3]

England and Wales

	Apr '04 to Mar '05	Apr '09 to Mar '10	Apr '13 to Mar '14	Apr '14 to Mar '15
Robbery offences	91,010	75,105	57,828	50,236
Robbery of business property	7,934	8,182	5,789	5,754
Robbery of personal property	83,076	66,923	52,039	44,482
Robbery rate per 1,000 population	2	1	1	1

Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics
2. Police recorded crime statistics based on data from all 44 forces in England and Wales (including the British Transport Police)
3. Appendix table A4 provides detailed footnotes and further years

Table 6b: Police recorded robbery - percentage change [1,2,3]

England and Wales

	Percentage change		
	April 2014 to March 2015 compared with:		
	Apr '04 to Mar '05	Apr '09 to Mar '10	Apr '13 to Mar '14
Robbery offences	-45	-33	-13
Robbery of business property	-27	-30	-1
Robbery of personal property	-46	-34	-15

Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics
2. Police recorded crime statistics based on data from all 44 forces in England and Wales (including the British Transport Police)
3. Appendix table A4 provides detailed footnotes and further years

These offences are concentrated in a small number of metropolitan forces with nearly half (44%) of all offences recorded in London, and a further 20% in the Greater Manchester, West Midlands and West Yorkshire police force areas combined ([Table P1](#)). The geographic concentration of robbery offences means that trends across England and Wales tend to reflect what is happening in these areas, in particular the Metropolitan Police force area. The latest figures for the Metropolitan Police force area show that the number of robberies for the year ending March 2015 was 21,907, a decrease of 22% from the previous year ([Tables P1-P2](#)). This continues the downward trend that began in the year ending March 2013, following a period of increases between 2009 and 2012. The fall in the number of robbery offences in the Metropolitan police force area in the year ending March 2015 accounts for 84% of the total fall in robbery in England and Wales. The Greater Manchester and West Midlands forces account for a further 11%.

The small number of robbery victims interviewed in any single year means that CSEW estimates are prone to fluctuation. However, the CSEW estimate of 90,000 robbery offences in the year ending March 2015 is a decrease (46%) from the 166,000 offences estimated for the previous year and follows several years of falling estimates. The current estimate is 74% lower than the level seen in the 1995 when crime peaked on the survey ([Tables 7a and 7b](#)).

Table 7a: CSEW robbery - number, rate and percentage of incidents [1,2]

England and Wales

Adults aged 16 and over

	Interviews from:				
	Jan '95 to Dec '95	Apr '04 to Mar '05	Apr '09 to Mar '10	Apr '13 to Mar '14 ³	Apr '14 to Mar '15 ³
	Thousands				
Number of robbery incidents	339	247	320	166	90
Robbery incidence rate per 1,000 adults	8	6	7	4	2
	Percentage				
Percentage of adults that were victims of robbery once or more	0.7	0.5	0.6	0.3	0.2
Unweighted base - number of adults	16,337	45,118	44,559	35,371	33,350

Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Appendix table A1, A2, A3 provide detailed footnotes and data for further years
2. Figures are based on analysis of a small number of victims and should be interpreted with caution
3. Base sizes for data since the years ending March 2014 and March 2015 are smaller than previous years, due to sample size reductions introduced in April 2012

Table 7b: CSEW robbery - percentage change and statistical significance [1,2]

England and Wales

Adults aged 16 and over

	April 2014 to March 2015 compared with:			
	Jan '95 to Dec '95	Apr '04 to Mar '05	Apr '09 to Mar '10	Apr '13 to Mar '14
	Percentage change and significance ³			
Number of robbery incidents	-74 *	-64 *	-72 *	-46 *
Robbery incidence rate per 1,000 adults	-76 *	-67 *	-73 *	-46 *
	Percentage point change and significance ^{3,4}			
Percentage of adults that were victims of robbery once or more	-0.5 *	-0.3 *	-0.4 *	-0.1 *

Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Appendix table A1, A2, A3 provide detailed footnotes and data for further years
2. Figures are based on analysis of a small number of victims and should be interpreted with caution
3. Statistically significant change at the 5% level is indicated by an asterisk
4. The percentage point change presented in the tables may differ from subtraction of the 2 percentages due to rounding

Notes for robbery

In the 2014/15 survey, analysis showed that 51% of CSEW robbery offences were reported to the police. Further information can be found in [Table D8 in Annual trend and demographic tables, 2014/15 \(381.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#).

7 . Sexual offences

It is difficult to obtain reliable information on the volume of sexual offences as it is known that reporting rates for these type of offences are relatively low compared with other types of offence¹. Although the changes in police recorded crime figures may indicate an increased willingness of victims to report sexual offences, they may also reflect changes in recording rather than actual victimisation. For these reasons, caution should be used when interpreting trends in these offences.

Police recorded crime figures showed an increase of 37% in all sexual offences for the year ending March 2015 compared with the previous year (up from 64,229 to 88,219; Table 8a). This is the highest level recorded, and the largest annual percentage increase, since the introduction of the National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS) in April 2002. Increases in offences against both adults and children have contributed to this rise. Increases were seen in all police forces; [Table P2](#) (296.5 Kb Excel sheet) .

The rises in the volume of sexual offences recorded by the police should be seen in the context of a number of high-profile reports and inquiries which is thought to have resulted in police forces reviewing and improving their recording processes. These include:

- the investigation by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) and HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate (HMCPSI)² in 2012, which highlighted the need to improve the recording and investigation of sexual offences
- concerns about the recording of sexual offences, for example in evidence presented to the Public Administration Select Committee (PASC) inquiry into crime statistics³ and arising from other high profile cases
- the creation of the 'Independent Panel Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse', which was set up to consider whether, and the extent to which, public bodies and other non-state institutions have taken seriously their duty of care to protect children from sexual abuse in England and Wales

HMIC's inspection of crime recording, published in late 2014, found that sexual offences had been substantially under-recorded by police forces in England and Wales. HMIC reported that the national rate of under-recording of sexual offences was 26%. The inspection also found that some police forces had poor processes for crime recording in specialist units responsible for investigations of rape and other sexual offences or those more generally protecting vulnerable people, including children, mentally ill and infirm people. In some forces, such units were found to have standalone case management systems or mailboxes which were often used for referrals between specialist departments and partner organisations (such as health or social services). HMIC found records of crimes on these systems which had not made it onto the force's main crime recording system. Those that had not been recorded on the force's crime recording system would therefore not have fed through into official statistics. As forces have taken steps to improve their systems and recording processes, it is likely that proportionately more referrals are appearing in the official statistics.

More information on interpreting trends in these offences can be found in [An Overview of Sexual Offending in England and Wales](#) and [Focus on: Violent Crime and Sexual Offences, 2013/14](#).

Police recorded rape increased by 41% (to 29,265 offences) compared with the previous year, following previous increases every year since 2007/08. Other sexual offences increased by 36% (to 58,954 offences). Both rape and other sexual offences are at the highest level since the NCRS was introduced in 2002/03. The latest rises in total sexual offences, and the component categories of rape and other sexual offences, are the largest year-on-year increases since the introduction of the NCRS in 2002/03.

The number of sexual offences per head of population ([Table P3 \(296.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#)) does not vary significantly across the country, accounting for around 2-3% of total police recorded crime in most police force areas. All police force areas have recorded an increase in sexual offences in the year ending March 2015, ranging from 7% in Lancashire to 79% in Northumbria ([Table P2 \(296.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#) - excluding City of London where only a relatively small number of offences were recorded). Anecdotal evidence from police forces suggests that these increases can be partly explained by improvements in police recording practices following HMIC audits. However, overall the scale of any effect on 2014-15 data is likely to differ between police force areas and be particularly driven by the timing of their audit and the timetable by which forces introduced local changes.

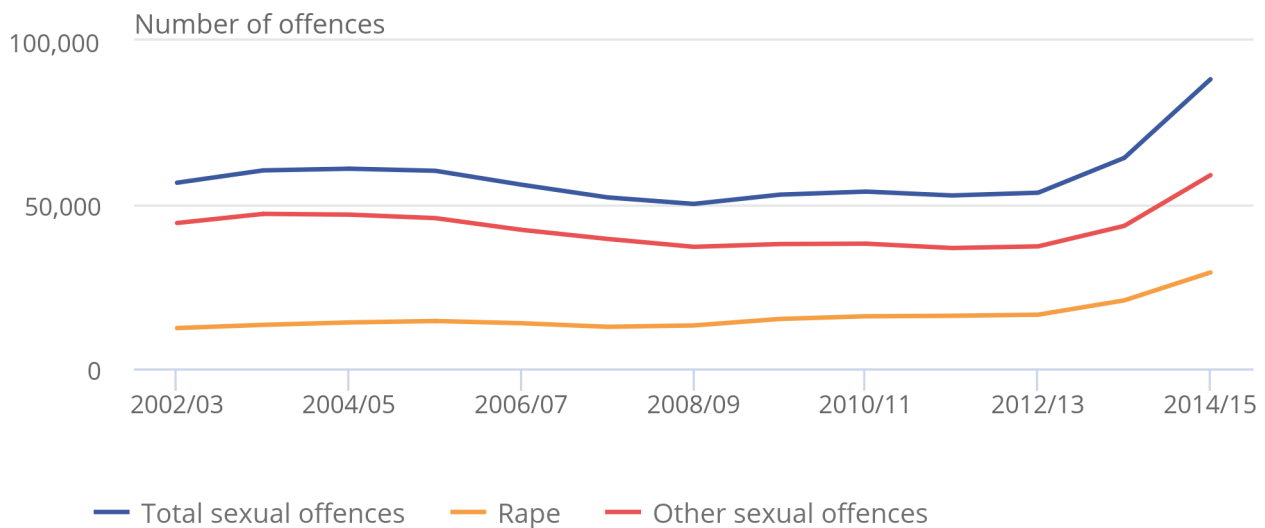
Previous increases in the number of sexual offences reported to the police were shown to have been related also to a rise in the reporting of historic offences⁴ following 'Operation Yewtree', which began in 2012. Feedback from forces indicates that both current and historic offences (those that took place over 12 months before being reported) continued to rise in the year ending March 2015 compared with the previous year. However, the major contribution to this increase is believed to have come from current offences.

Figure 5: Trends in police recorded sexual offences in England and Wales, year ending March 2003 to year ending March 2015 [1,2,3]

England and Wales

Figure 5: Trends in police recorded sexual offences in England and Wales, year ending March 2003 to year ending March 2015 [1,2,3]

England and Wales



Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics
2. The Sexual Offences Act 2003, introduced in May 2004, altered the definition and coverage of sexual offences
3. The data on this chart refer to crimes recorded in the financial year (April to March)

Table 8a: Police recorded sexual offences - number and rate of offences [1,2,3]

England and Wales

	Apr '04 to Mar '05	Apr '09 to Mar '10	Apr '13 to Mar '14	Apr '14 to Mar '15
Sexual offences	60,924	53,006	64,229	88,219
Rape	14,013	15,074	20,748	29,265
Other sexual offences	46,911	37,932	43,481	58,954
Sexual offences rate per 1,000 population	1	1	1	2

Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics
2. Police recorded crime statistics based on data from all 44 forces in England and Wales (including the British Transport Police)
3. Appendix table A4 provides detailed footnotes and further years

Table 8b: Police recorded sexual offences - percentage change [1,2,3]

England and Wales

	Percentage change		
	April 2014 to March 2015 compared with:		
	Apr '04 to Mar '05	Apr '09 to Mar '10	Apr '13 to Mar '14
Sexual offences	45	66	37
Rape	109	94	41
Other sexual offences	26	55	36

Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics
2. Police recorded crime statistics based on data from all 44 forces in England and Wales (including the British Transport Police)
3. Appendix table A4 provides detailed footnotes and further years

Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW)

Due to the small number of sexual offences identified in the main CSEW crime measure (based on face to face interviews), estimates of the volume of incidents are too unreliable to report. Since 2004/05, the CSEW has included a self-completion questionnaire module on intimate violence, for persons aged 16 to 59 only, which provides an improved measure of the proportion of people who have been victims of sexual offences in this age group.

Headline estimates from this self-completion section of the CSEW show that the proportion of people who have been victims of sexual assaults in the last year (including attempted offences) has not significantly changed between the year ending March 2015 (1.7%) and the previous year (1.5% - [Table S41](#)). These figures have remained fairly stable over the last ten years. Estimates of the proportion of people who were victims of rape or attempted rape are unchanged from the previous year (0.3%), with similar levels having been estimated throughout the last ten years. This provides further evidence that changes in the willingness of victims to report and in the police response are likely to be responsible for the increase in police recorded sexual offences rather than an increase in levels of victimisation.

Detailed findings from the self-completion module for the 2013/14 CSEW are available in [Focus on: Violent Crime and Sexual Offences, 2013/14](#) with more detailed results from the 2014/15 survey due to be released in February 2016.

Notes for sexual offences

1. As frequently indicated in the findings from the CSEW self-completion module on intimate violence, for example, presented in Focus on: Violent Crime and Sexual Offences, 2013/14.
2. [HMIC and HMCPSP, 2012](#) has further information.
3. The [Commission of an independent review into rape investigation](#) and the transcript for the [Public Administration Select Committee](#) hearing on Crime Statistics (19 November 2013) have more information.
4. More information can be found in [Crime in England and Wales, Year Ending September 2013](#).

8 . Offences involving knives and sharp instruments

Some of the more serious offences in the recorded crime data (violent, robbery and sexual offences) can be broken down by whether or not a knife or sharp instrument was involved^{1,2}.

In the year ending March 2015, the police recorded 26,370 offences involving a knife or sharp instrument, a 2% increase compared with the previous year (25,974, Table 9a). This is the first year in which these figures have increased since 2010/11 (the earliest period for which data are directly comparable). Most of the offence groups for which data are collected recorded increases, particularly the single category of 'assault with injury and assault with intent to cause serious harm' (up 13%, from 11,911 to 13,488). The increases were partially offset by a 14% decrease (down from 11,927 to 10,270) in robbery offences involving the use of a knife or sharp instrument³ over the same period. Offences involving knives and sharp instruments are less likely to have been affected by changes in recording practices due to their serious nature. More information on offences involving knives and sharp instruments can be found in the [Focus on: Violent Crime and Sexual Offences 2013/14](#) publication.

Between 2010/11 and 2012/13, across all offence groups where it is possible to identify whether a knife or sharp instrument was used, the numbers of offences recorded by the police saw reductions. From 2012/13 to the year ending March 2015, with the exceptions of homicide and robbery offences, there have been increases in the numbers of offences where a knife or sharp instrument was used. The low levels of change recorded in the overall number of offences involving a knife or sharp instrument since 2012/13 therefore masks larger rises in some offence groups and falls in others. Possession of weapon offences relating to a knives or sharp instruments also increased by 10% in the year ending March 2015.

For some offence types, such as rape and sexual assault, the relatively low number of offences, that involve the use of a knife or sharp instrument means the volume of these offences are subject to apparent large percentage changes, and should be interpreted with caution. For example, in the year ending March 2015, the number of sexual assaults involving a knife or sharp instrument increased by 28% (an additional 28 offences compared to the 101 recorded in the previous year) and the number of rapes involving knife or sharp instrument increased by 21% (an additional 55 offences compared to the 267 recorded in the previous year).

Table 9a: Number and percentage change of selected violent and sexual offences involving a knife or sharp instrument recorded by the police [1,2,3,4]

England and Wales

Selected offence type	Number of selected offences involving a knife or sharp instrument					% change year ending Mar '14 to year ending Mar '15
	Apr '10 to Mar '11	Apr '11 to Mar '12	Apr '12 to Mar '13	Apr '13 to Mar '14	Apr '14 to Mar '15	
Attempted murder	240	246	198	248	272	10
Threats to kill	1,462	1,183	1,188	1,317	1,707	30
Assault with injury and assault with intent to cause serious harm ⁵	14,144	12,774	11,491	11,911	13,488	13
Robbery	16,454	16,427	13,201	11,927	10,270	-14
Rape	259	237	190	267	322	21
Sexual assault ⁶	94	72	90	101	129	28
Total selected offences	32,653	30,939	26,358	25,771	26,188	2
Homicide ⁷	237	211	195	203	182	-10
Total selected offences including homicide	32,890	31,150	26,553	25,974	26,370	2

Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics.
2. Police recorded crime statistics based on data from all 44 forces in England and Wales (including the British Transport Police).
3. Police recorded knife and sharp instrument offences data are submitted via an additional special collection. Proportions of offences involving the use of a knife or sharp instrument presented in this table are calculated based on figures submitted in this special collection. Other offences exist that are not shown in this table that may include the use of a knife or sharp instrument.
4. Surrey police force includes unbroken bottle and glass offences in their returns, which are outside the scope of this special collection however it is not thought that offences of this kind constitute a large enough number to impact on the national figure.
5. Changes to offence codes in April 2012 mean the category of assault with injury and assault with intent to cause serious harm is not directly comparable with previous years. Appendix table A4 contains more details.
6. Sexual assault includes indecent assault on a male/female and sexual assault on a male/female (all ages).
7. Homicide offences are those currently recorded by the police as at 1 June 2015 and are subject to revision as cases are dealt with by the police and by the courts, or as further information becomes available. They include the offences of murder, manslaughter, infanticide and, as of year ending March 2013, corporate manslaughter. These figures are taken from the detailed record level Homicide Index (rather than the main police collection for which forces are only required to provide an overall count of homicides, used in Table A4). There may therefore be differences in the total homicides figure used to calculate these proportions and the homicide figure presented in Table A4.

Table 9b: Proportion of selected violent and sexual offences involving a knife or sharp instrument recorded by the police [1,2,3,4]

England and Wales

Selected offence type	Proportion of selected offences involving a knife or sharp instrument				
	Apr '10 to Mar '11	Apr '11 to Mar '12	Apr '12 to Mar '13	Apr '13 to Mar '14	Apr '14 to Mar '15
Attempted murder	46	51	49	50	48
Threats to kill	15	15	16	15	13
Assault with injury and assault with intent to cause serious harm ⁵	4	4	4	4	4
Robbery	22	22	20	21	20
Rape	2	1	1	1	1
Sexual assault ⁶	0	0	0	0	0
Total selected offences	7	7	6	6	5
Homicide ⁷	37	39	35	38	36
Total selected offences including homicide	7	7	6	6	5

Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics
2. Police recorded crime statistics based on data from all 44 forces in England and Wales (including the British Transport Police)
3. Police recorded knife and sharp instrument offences data are submitted via an additional special collection. Proportions of offences involving the use of a knife or sharp instrument presented in this table are calculated based on figures submitted in this special collection. Other offences exist that are not shown in this table that may include the use of a knife or sharp instrument
4. Surrey police force includes unbroken bottle and glass offences in their returns, which are outside the scope of this special collection however it is not thought that offences of this kind constitute a large enough number to impact on the national figure
5. Changes to offence codes in April 2012 mean the category of assault with injury and assault with intent to cause serious harm is not directly comparable with previous years. Appendix table A4 contains more details
6. Sexual assault includes indecent assault on a male/female and sexual assault on a male/female (all ages)
7. Homicide offences are those currently recorded by the police as at 1 June 2015 and are subject to revision as cases are dealt with by the police and by the courts, or as further information becomes available. They include the offences of murder, manslaughter, infanticide and, as of year ending March 2013, corporate manslaughter. These figures are taken from the detailed record level Homicide Index (rather than the main police collection for which forces are only required to provide an overall count of homicides, used in Table A4). There may therefore be differences in the total homicides figure used to calculate these proportions and the homicide figure presented in Table A4

Of the selected violent offences covered in Table 9b, around 5% involved a knife or sharp instrument in the year ending March 2015; this was a slightly lower proportion than that seen in the previous year (6%). This is partly a result of the relatively large increases seen in overall police recorded violence⁴. Just over a third of homicides (36%) and just under a half of attempted murders (48%) involved a knife or sharp instrument.

Between 2010/11 and the year ending March 2015, the proportion of offences involving a knife or sharp instrument recorded by the police has remained relatively consistent across all offence groups.

Further analysis on offences involving knives and sharp instruments has been published in [Focus on: Violent Crime and Sexual Offences, 2013/14](#).

An additional source of information about incidents involving knives and sharp instruments is provided by provisional National Health Service (NHS) hospital admission statistics⁵. Admissions for assault with a sharp instrument peaked at 5,720 in 2006/07. Admissions have declined since that year; the latest data available, for the year ending March 2014, showed that there were 3,654 admissions, a 5% decrease on the previous year. Admissions for assault with a sharp instrument in 2013/14 were the lowest since 2002/03⁶.

Notes for offences involving knives and sharp instruments

1. A sharp instrument is any object that pierces the skin (or in the case of a threat, is capable of piercing the skin), for example a broken bottle.
2. Until April 2010, West Midlands Police force included unbroken bottle and glass offences in their statistics, but now exclude these offences in line with other forces.
3. Changes to offence codes in April 2012 mean the category of assault with injury and assault with intent to cause serious harm are not directly comparable with previous years. [Appendix table A4 \(623 Kb Excel sheet\)](#) contains more details.
4. The increases seen in overall police recorded violence reflect improved recording practices, which are thought to affect lower level violent offences more than serious violent crimes such as those involving a knife or sharp instrument.
5. While it is a requirement to record every hospital admission, completing the field for external cause is not always done.
6. Based on the latest National Health Service (NHS) [Hospital Episode Statistics](#) and hospital admissions due to assault (dated 15 July 2014). These do not include figures for Wales and relate to activity in English NHS hospitals. A graph based on financial years is available in the latest [Focus on: Violent Crime and Sexual Offences](#) release.

9 . Offences involving firearms

Similar to the breakdown of offences involving knives or sharp instruments, statistics for the year ending March 2015 are available for police recorded crimes involving the use of firearms other than air weapons. Firearms are taken to be involved in an offence if they are fired, used as a blunt instrument against a person, or used as a threat. [Focus on: Violent Crime and Sexual Offences, 2013/14](#) has more detailed information on trends and the circumstances of offences involving firearms, including air weapons, recorded in 2013/14.

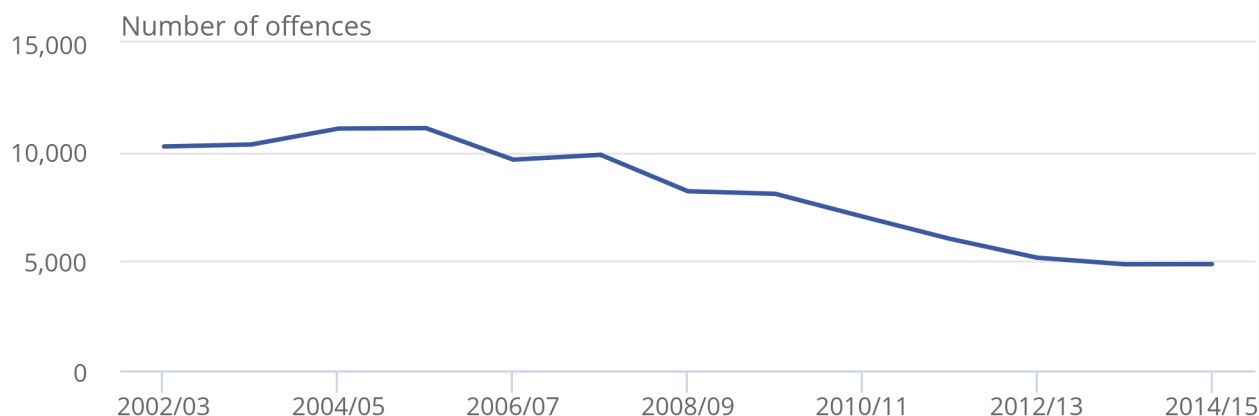
Figures for the year ending March 2015 show 4,862 offences involving firearms (excluding air weapons) were recorded in England and Wales, almost unchanged compared with the previous year (4,856, Tables 10a and 10b) and the first year since 2007/08 that these firearms offences have not seen a year-on-year decrease. Figure 6 shows the trend from 2002/03 and demonstrates that the number of offences involving firearms (excluding air weapons) recorded by the police peaked in 2005/06 before decreasing substantially (by 56%) over the 8 year period to 2013/14. This is in contrast to the 11% increase seen in overall violent crime since 2009/10. Offences involving firearms are less likely to have been affected by changes in recording practices due to their serious nature compared with some other crime types. More information on offences involving firearms can be found in the [Focus on: Violent Crime and Sexual Offences 2013/14](#).

Figure 6: Trends in police recorded crimes in England and Wales involving the use of firearms other than air weapons, year ending March 2003 to year ending March 2015 [1,2]

England and Wales

Figure 6: Trends in police recorded crimes in England and Wales involving the use of firearms other than air weapons, year ending March 2003 to year ending March 2015 [1,2]

England and Wales



Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistic
2. The data on this chart refer to crimes recorded in the financial year (April to March)

Table 10a: Police recorded offences involving firearms, - number of offences [1,2,3]

England and Wales

	Apr '04 to Mar '05	Apr '09 to Mar '10	Apr '13 to Mar '14	Apr '14 to Mar '15
Firearm offences	11,069	8,082	4,856	4,862

Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics
2. Police recorded crime statistics based on data from all 43 forces in England and Wales (excluding the British Transport Police)
3. Firearms data are provisional. Excludes offences involving the use of air weapons and offences recorded by British Transport Police. Includes crimes recorded by police where a firearm has been fired, used as a blunt instrument against a person or used as a threat

Table 10b: Police recorded offences involving firearms - percentage change [1,2,3]

England and Wales

	Percentage change		
	April 2014 to March 2015 compared with:		
	Apr '04 to Mar '05	Apr '09 to Mar '10	Apr '13 to Mar '14
Firearm offences	-56	-40	0

Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics
2. Police recorded crime statistics based on data from all 43 forces in England and Wales (excluding the British Transport Police)
3. Firearms data are provisional. Excludes offences involving the use of air weapons and offences recorded by British Transport Police. Includes crimes recorded by police where a firearm has been fired, used as a blunt instrument against a person or used as a threat

10 . Theft offences

The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) and police recorded crime both measure various theft offences. Both series cover the headline categories of domestic burglary, vehicle-related theft, theft from the person, and bicycle theft. Theft of property from outside people's homes (for example, garden furniture and tools) and theft of unattended property as measured by the CSEW are incorporated within the police recorded crime category "other theft". Additionally, shoplifting offences, which are not included in the CSEW, are recorded by the police¹.

There are substantial overlaps between theft offences in the two data series; however, the CSEW shows a larger volume as it includes incidents not reported to the police. Police recorded theft is broader, covering a wider variety of offences and victims; for example, police recorded theft includes theft against commercial victims and offences of handling stolen goods whereas the CSEW does not. Theft offences recorded by the police and the CSEW don't include robbery as these are presented as a separate offence (as described in the 'Robbery' section).

Incidents of theft experienced by 10 to 15 year olds can be found in the 'Crime experienced by children aged 10 to 15' section of this bulletin.

Total theft offences (acquisitive crime) accounted for 60% of all incidents estimated by the CSEW (an estimated 4.0 million incidents) and 46% of all police recorded crime (1.8 million offences) in the year ending March 2015.

The long-term trend in CSEW theft reflects the long-term trend in total CSEW crime. Latest estimates show a further decline, with total theft offences decreasing by 8% in the year ending March 2015 compared with the previous year (from 4.4 million to 4.0 million incidents, which is the lowest number recorded since the survey began in 1981) ([Appendix table A1 \(623 Kb Excel sheet\)](#)).

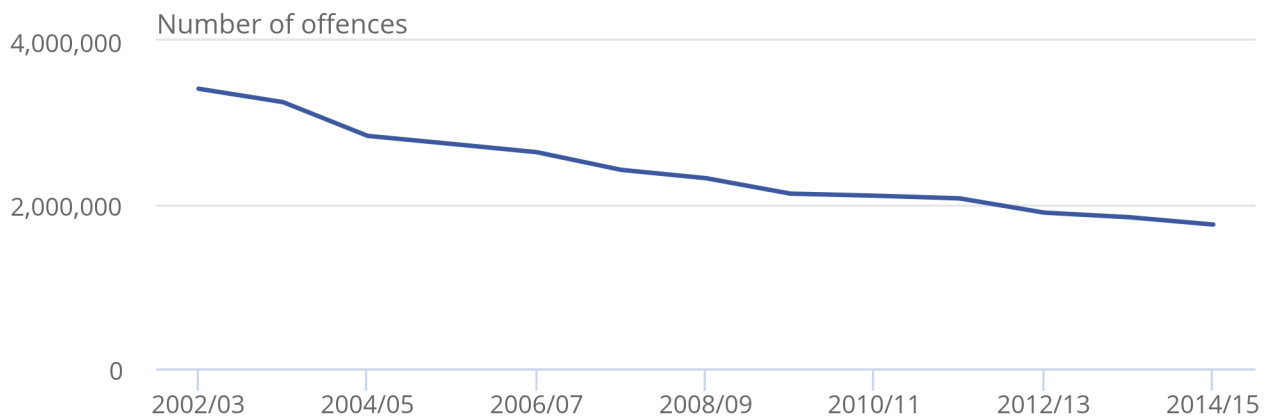
Since 2002/03, the number of police recorded theft offences has shown year-on-year decreases and is 38% lower in the year ending March 2015 than in 2004/05 (Figure 7). The latest figures show a 5% decrease compared with the previous year ([Appendix table A4 \(623 Kb Excel sheet\)](#)). As theft offences make up almost half of all police recorded crime, it is an important driver of the overall trend. However the decrease in theft has been offset by increases in other offence types which has resulted in a 3% increase in overall police recorded crime compared with the previous year.

Figure 7: Trends in police recorded theft offences in England and Wales, year ending March 2003 to year ending March 2015 [1,2]

England and Wales

Figure 7: Trends in police recorded theft offences in England and Wales, year ending March 2003 to year ending March 2015 [1,2]

England and Wales



Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics
2. The data on this chart refer to crimes recorded in the financial year (April to March)

Further analysis on theft offences, based on the 2013/14 CSEW, was published on 27 November 2014 as part of [Focus on: Property Crime, 2013/14](#).

Notes for theft offences

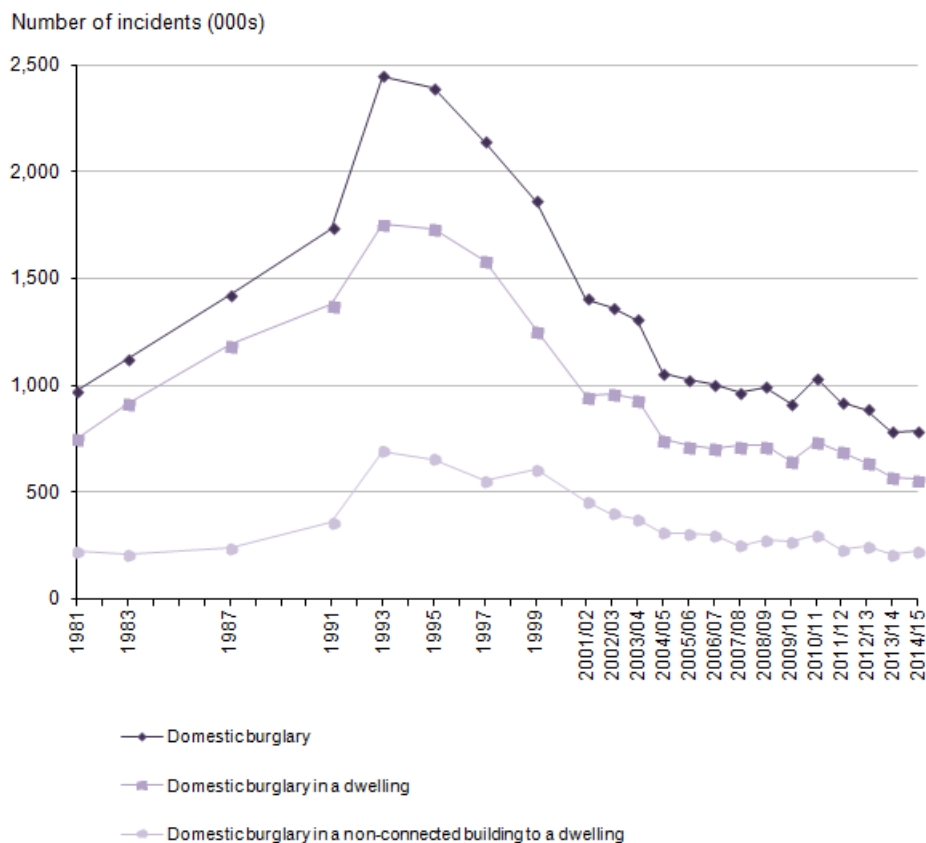
1. Section 5.2 of the [User Guide](#) has more information.

11 . Theft offences - burglary

Theft offences - burglary

The year ending March 2015 Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) estimated 785,000 incidents of domestic burglary. The level of domestic burglary was at a similar level to the previous year with the apparent 1% increase not statistically significant (Tables 11a and 11b). Over the longer term the CSEW indicates that incidents of burglary have fallen. From the mid-1990s to the 2004/05 survey estimates fell sharply followed by a period of gradual decline with some fluctuations (such as the increase seen in 2010/11). It is too early to say whether these latest results represents a change in trends. Over the longer term, CSEW estimates for the year ending March 2015 remain 26% lower than those in the 2004/05 survey and 67% lower than those in the 1995 survey.

Figure 8: Trends in Crime Survey for England and Wales domestic burglary, year ending December 1981 to year ending March 2015



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Prior to the year ending March 2002, CSEW respondents were asked about their experience of crime in the previous calendar year, so year-labels identify the year in which the crime took place. Following the change to continuous interviewing, respondents' experience of crime relates to the full 12 months prior to interview (i.e. a moving reference period). Year-labels for year ending March 2002 identify the CSEW year of interview.
2. The numbers of incidents are derived by multiplying incidence rates by the population estimates for England and Wales.

Around 3 in 100 households were victims of domestic burglary in the year ending March 2015 CSEW This compares with around 9 in 100 households in the 1995 survey, meaning that households are around 3 times less likely to be a victim of burglary than in 1995 (Tables 11a and 11b). It is widely accepted that improvements to home security have been an important factor in the reduction seen in domestic burglary offences. More recently research ([Morgan, 2014](#)) has mapped the growth and decline in domestic burglary during the 1980s and 1990s with heroin and crack cocaine misuse, which follows a similar pattern and may have also been a contributory factor. Other potential factors are discussed in the 'Existing theories on why property crime has fallen' section of [Focus on: Property Crime, 2013/14](#).

Over time, the sub-categories of CSEW 'domestic burglary in a dwelling' and 'domestic burglary in a non-connected building to a dwelling' have followed similar patterns to that of domestic burglary overall. In the year ending March 2015 there was an apparent 2% decrease in 'domestic burglary in a dwelling' and an apparent 7% increase in 'domestic burglary in a non-connected building to a dwelling' compared with the previous year, though these were not statistically significant.

Table 11a: CSEW burglary - number, rate and percentage of incidents [1]

England and Wales

	Households				
	Interviews from:				
	Jan '95 to Dec '95	Apr '04 to Mar '05	Apr '09 to Mar '10	Apr '13 to Mar '14 ²	Apr '14 to Mar '15 ²
Number of incidents	Thousands				
Domestic burglary	2,389	1,057	915	781	785
Domestic burglary in a dwelling	1,735	748	648	570	559
Domestic burglary in a non-connected building to a dwelling	654	309	266	211	225
Incidence rate per 1,000 adults					
Domestic burglary	115	48	40	33	33
Domestic burglary in a dwelling	84	34	28	24	23
Domestic burglary in a non-connected building to a dwelling	31	14	12	9	9
Percentage of households that were victims once or more	Percentage				
Domestic burglary	8.7	3.8	3.2	2.6	2.7
Domestic burglary in a dwelling	6.4	2.7	2.2	1.9	1.9
Domestic burglary in a non-connected building to a dwelling	2.6	1.2	1.0	0.7	0.8
Unweighted base - number of households	16,310	45,081	44,611	35,339	33,299

Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Appendix table A1, A2, A3 provide detailed footnotes and data for further years
2. Base sizes for data since the years ending March 2014 and March 2015 are smaller than previous years, due to sample size reductions introduced in April 2012

Table 11b: CSEW burglary - percentage change and statistical significance [1]

England and Wales

Households							
April 2014 to March 2015 compared with:							
	Jan '95 to Dec '95	Apr '04 to Mar '05	Apr '09 to Mar '10	Apr '13 to Mar '14			
Number of incidents	Percentage change and significance ²						
Domestic burglary	-67	*	-26	*	-14	*	1
Domestic burglary in a dwelling	-68	*	-25	*	-14	*	-2
Domestic burglary in a non-connected building to a dwelling	-66	*	-27	*	-15	*	7
Incidence rate per 1,000 adults							
Domestic burglary	-72	*	-31	*	-18	*	-0
Domestic burglary in a dwelling	-72	*	-31	*	-17	*	-3
Domestic burglary in a non-connected building to a dwelling	-70	*	-33	*	-19	*	6
Percentage of households that were victims once or more	Percentage change and significance ^{2,3}						
Domestic burglary	-6.0	*	-1.2	*	-0.5	*	0.0
Domestic burglary in a dwelling	-4.5	*	-0.8	*	-0.4	*	-0.1
Domestic burglary in a non-connected building to a dwelling	-1.8	*	-0.4	*	-0.2	*	0.1

Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Appendix table A1, A2, A3 provide detailed footnotes and data for further years
2. Statistically significant change at the 5% level is indicated by an asterisk
3. The percentage point change presented in the tables may differ from subtraction of the two percentages due to rounding

The [Crime-recording: making the victim count report](#), published by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) found that, an estimated 11% of burglary offences that should have been recorded as a crime were not. This level of under-recording was better than for all offences on average (19%).

The police recorded crime statistics measure both domestic burglaries (for example, those against inhabited dwellings) and non-domestic burglaries (for example, those against businesses)¹. When compared with the previous year, both domestic and non-domestic burglary decreased by 7% (from 211,988 to 197,021 offences and 231,224 to 214,433 respectively) in the year ending March 2015 (Tables 12a and 12b). This continues the downward trend seen over many years and the latest level is around 60% of that recorded by the police in 2004 /05.

Table 12a: Police recorded burglary - number and rate of offences [1,2,3]

England and Wales

	Apr '04 to Mar '05	Apr '09 to Mar '10	Apr '13 to Mar '14	Apr '14 to Mar '15
Burglary offences	680,358	540,645	443,212	411,454
Domestic burglary	321,507	268,606	211,988	197,021
Non-domestic burglary	358,851	272,039	231,224	214,433
Burglary rate per 1,000 population	13	10	8	7

Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics
2. Police recorded crime statistics based on data from all 44 forces in England and Wales (including the British Transport Police)
3. Appendix table A4 provides detailed footnotes and further years

Table 12b: Police recorded burglary - percentage change [1,2,3]

England and Wales

	Percentage change		
	April 2014 to March 2015 compared with:		
	Apr '04 to Mar '05	Apr '09 to Mar '10	Apr '13 to Mar '14
Burglary offences	-40	-24	-7
Domestic burglary	-39	-27	-7
Non-domestic burglary	-40	-21	-7

Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics
2. Police recorded crime statistics based on data from all 44 forces in England and Wales (including the British Transport Police)
3. Appendix table A4 provides detailed footnotes and further years

Notes for theft offences - burglary

1. Non-domestic burglary covers burglary in a building other than a dwelling, and includes burglaries of sheds and outhouses which do not have an entrance to the home. Section 5.2 of the [User Guide](#) has more details regarding this crime type.

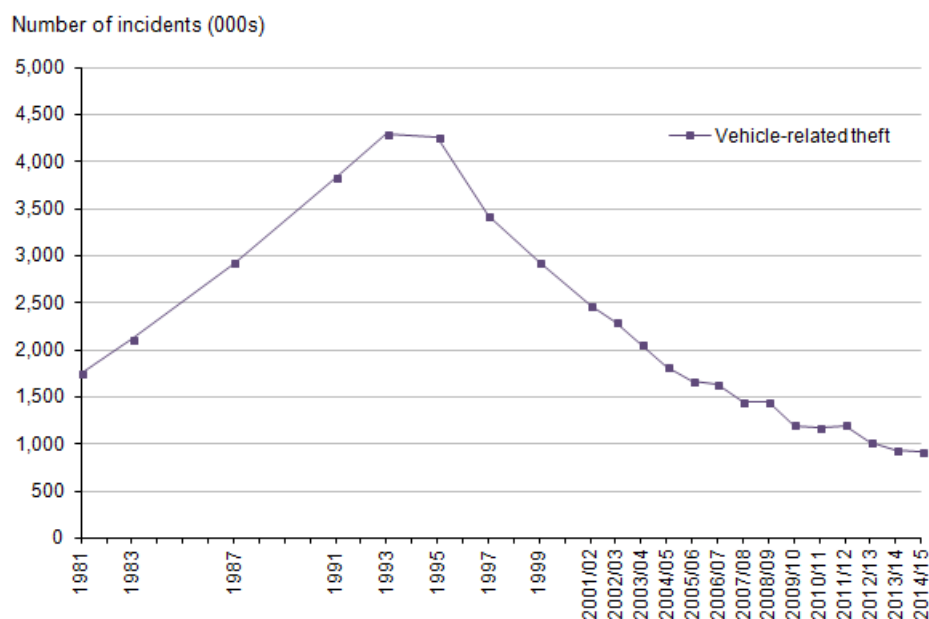
12 . Theft offences – vehicle

The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) covers offences against vehicles owned by any member of the household interviewed (including company cars). Estimates of CSEW vehicle-related theft for the year ending March 2015 was similar to that for the previous year, with the apparent 1% decrease not statistically significant (Table 13a and 13b)¹.

Over the longer term, the CSEW indicates a consistent downward trend in levels of vehicle-related theft, with the latest estimates being 78% lower than in 1995. As shown in Figure 9, the rate of reduction in vehicle offences since the mid-1990s has been striking. It is widely accepted that improvements to vehicle security has been an important factor in the reduction seen in vehicle offences. More recently research ([Morgan, 2014](#)) has mapped the growth and decline in vehicle crime during the 1980s and 1990s with heroin and crack cocaine misuse, which follows a similar pattern and may have also been a contributory factor. Other potential factors are discussed in the 'Existing theories on why property crime has fallen' section of [Focus on: Property Crime, 2013/14](#).

There were an estimated 923,000 vehicle-related thefts in the year ending March 2015 survey, the lowest estimate since the survey began in 1981. Vehicle-owning households were around 5 times less likely to become a victim of vehicle-related theft in the year ending March 2015 than in 1995. Around 4 in 100 vehicle-owning households were victims in the year ending March 2015 CSEW compared with around 20 in 100 households in the 1995 CSEW (Table 13a).

Figure 9: Trends in Crime Survey for England and Wales, vehicle-related theft, year ending December 1981 to year ending March 2015



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Prior to the year ending March 2002, CSEW respondents were asked about their experience of crime in the previous calendar year, so year-labels identify the year in which the crime took place. Following the change to continuous interviewing, respondents' experience of crime relates to the full 12 months prior to interview (i.e. a moving reference period). Year-labels for year ending March 2002 identify the CSEW year of interview.
2. The numbers of incidents are derived by multiplying incidence rates by the population estimates for England and Wales.

Table 13a: CSEW vehicle offences - number, rate and percentage of incidents [1]

England and Wales

	Vehicle-owning households				
	Interviews from:				
	Jan '95 to Dec '95	Apr '04 to Mar '05	Apr '09 to Mar '10	Apr '13 to Mar '14 ²	Apr '14 to Mar '15 ²
	Thousands				
Number of vehicle-related theft incidents	4,266	1,828	1,198	932	923
Vehicle-related theft incidence rate per 1,000 vehicle-owning households	280	107	67	51	50
	Percentage				
Percentage of vehicle-owning households that were victims of vehicle-related theft once or more	19.7	8.2	5.6	4.3	4.1
Unweighted base - vehicle owners	11,721	35,458	35,618	27,749	26,339

Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Appendix table A1, A2, A3 provide detailed footnotes and data for further years
2. Base sizes for data since the years ending March 2014 and March 2015 are smaller than previous years, due to sample size reductions introduced in April 2012

Table 13b: CSEW vehicle offences - percentage change and statistical significance [1]

England and Wales

	Vehicle-owning households						
	April 2014 to March 2015 compared with:						
	Jan '95 to Dec '95	Apr '04 to Mar '05	Apr '09 to Mar '10	Apr '13 to Mar '14			
	Percentage change and significance ²						
Number of vehicle-related theft incidents	-78 *	-50 *	-23 *	-1			
Vehicle-related theft incidence rate per 1,000 vehicle-owning households	-82 *	-54 *	-25 *	-3			
	Percentage point change and significance ^{2,3}						
Percentage of vehicle-owning households that were victims of vehicle-related theft once or more	-15.6 *	-4.1 *	-1.4 *	-0.2			

Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Appendix table A1, A2, A3 provide detailed footnotes and data for further years
2. Statistically significant change at the 5% level is indicated by an asterisk
3. The percentage point change presented in the tables may differ from subtraction of the two percentages due to rounding

The police recorded crime category of vehicle offences covers both private and commercial vehicles and shows a fall of 6% in the year ending March 2015, compared with the previous year (Tables 14a and 14b). This follows substantial decreases in this offence group, with a fall of 57% compared with 2004/05, similar to the trend found in the CSEW.

Theft from a vehicle represented about two-thirds of vehicle offences recorded by the police in the year ending March 2015 and was the only category of vehicle offences to record a fall (down 14% to 237,414 offences) compared with the previous year (Tables 14a and 14b). Theft of a motor vehicle increased by 1% (from 75,308 to 75,809) – the first recorded annual increase since the National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS) was introduced in 2002/03. It is likely that the recent incidents involving the theft of high value cars via ‘hacking’ of keyless locking systems², particularly in London, may have contributed to this increase.

Vehicle interference has increased by 88% (from 20,367 to 38,229) in the year ending March 2015 compared with the previous year. This increase is likely to be the result of a change in the guidance in April 2014 within the Home Office Counting Rules (HOCR) with respect to interpreting the motive of the offender in the case of vehicle interference. This change was designed to reduce the burden involved in determining which crime category to record the incident within. This is likely to have led to offences that previously might have been recorded as attempted theft of, or from, a vehicle or criminal damage to a vehicle now being recorded as vehicle interference where the motive of the offender was not clear.

The reductions in vehicle-related theft indicated by the CSEW and police recorded crime are in contrast to the number of motor vehicles licensed in Great Britain, which has increased by 41%, from 25.4 million at the end of 1995 to 35.8 million at the end of March 2015 ([Vehicle Licensing Statistics, January to March 2015](#))³.

Table 14a: Police recorded vehicle offences - number and rate of offences [1,2,3]

England and Wales

	Apr '04 to Mar '05	Apr '09 to Mar '10	Apr '13 to Mar '14	Apr '14 to Mar '15
Vehicle offences ⁴	820,096	494,873	372,035	351,452
Theft of a motor vehicle	242,732	117,684	75,308	75,809
Theft from a vehicle	500,360	339,170	276,360	237,414
Vehicle interference	77,004	38,019	20,367	38,229
Vehicle offences rate per 1,000 population	16	9	7	6

Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics
2. Police recorded crime statistics based on data from all 44 forces in England and Wales (including the British Transport Police)
3. Appendix table A4 provides detailed footnotes and further years
4. Includes theft of motor vehicle (including aggravated vehicle taking), theft from a vehicle, and interfering with a motor vehicle

Table 14b: Police recorded vehicle offences - percentage change [1,2,3]

England and Wales

	Percentage change		
	April 2014 to March 2015 compared with:		
	Apr '04 to Mar '05	Apr '09 to Mar '10	Apr '13 to Mar '14
Vehicle offences ⁴	-57	-29	-6
Theft of a motor vehicle	-69	-36	1
Theft from a vehicle	-53	-30	-14
Vehicle interference	-50	1	88

Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics
2. Police recorded crime statistics based on data from all 44 forces in England and Wales (including the British Transport Police)
3. Appendix table A4 provides detailed footnotes and further years
4. Includes theft of motor vehicle (including aggravated vehicle taking), theft from a vehicle, and interfering with a motor vehicle

Notes for theft offences – vehicle

1. Section 5.2 of the User Guide has more details regarding this crime type.
2. As reported by Autocar, 30 October 2014
3. Based on the total number of licensed vehicles (including both private and commercial vehicles) in England, Scotland and Wales taken from the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) database.

13 . Theft offences – other theft of property

In addition to burglary and vehicle-related thefts, the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) and police recorded crime both measure other theft of property, although they cover slightly different offences. In the CSEW this comprises: theft from the person; other theft of personal property; bicycle theft; and other household theft. In police recorded crime there are categories for: theft from the person; bicycle theft; shoplifting; and all other theft offences. There are further offence breakdowns available for all other theft offences listed in [Appendix table A4 \(623 Kb Excel sheet\)](#) .

Theft from the person – CSEW and police recorded crime

Theft from the person involves offences where there is theft of property, while the property is being carried by, or on the person of, the victim. These include snatch thefts (where an element of force may be used to snatch the property away) and stealth thefts (where the victim is unaware of the offence being committed, for example, pick-pocketing). Unlike robbery, these offences do not involve violence or threats to the victim.

In the year ending March 2015 CSEW, of all 451,000 theft from the person, 45% (205,000) were made up of stealth thefts; there is more information in [Appendix table A1 \(623 Kb Excel sheet\)](#) . Numbers of snatch thefts were much smaller, accounting for 12% of all theft from the person offences, while attempted snatch and stealth thefts made up the remaining 42%.

CSEW theft from the person decreased by 21% in the year ending March 2015, a statistically significant change (Tables 15a and 15b). Estimates of the volume of theft from the person offences have shown a slight downward trend over the period from the late 1990s, but are subject to some fluctuation due to the small numbers of victims interviewed in any one year (Figure 10). However, the current decrease is consistent with the change seen in police recorded crime for this offence type and similar to decreases seen in other theft categories such as other theft of personal property.

The police recorded crime category theft from the person accounts for around 2% of overall police recorded crime. Latest figures showed a 20% decrease in the year ending March 2015 compared with the previous year (Tables 16a and 16b), a similar pattern to that recorded by the CSEW. This is in contrast to recent increases in these offences recorded by the police between 2008/09 and 2012/13, a trend thought to have been driven by theft of smartphones. The latest decrease may, in part, be explained by improvements to mobile phone security and theft prevention¹, as previously there was evidence that theft of smartphones was driving the upward trend in street crime, especially in London².

Further analysis of theft from the person figures by police force area shows a mixed picture, with a small number of forces continuing to show increases while most show decreases. However, as with robbery, theft from the person offences are concentrated in the metropolitan areas, with 40% occurring in the Metropolitan Police force area alone in the year ending March 2015 ([Table P1 \(296.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#)). The latest figures for the Metropolitan Police force area show a decrease of 26% compared with the previous year ([Table P2 \(296.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#)). In addition, the British Transport Police (BTP), who cover crimes that occur on railways and on railway platforms and stations, accounted for 7% of the total thefts from the person offences in the year ending March 2015. BTP showed a 23% decrease in theft from the person offences compared with the previous year.

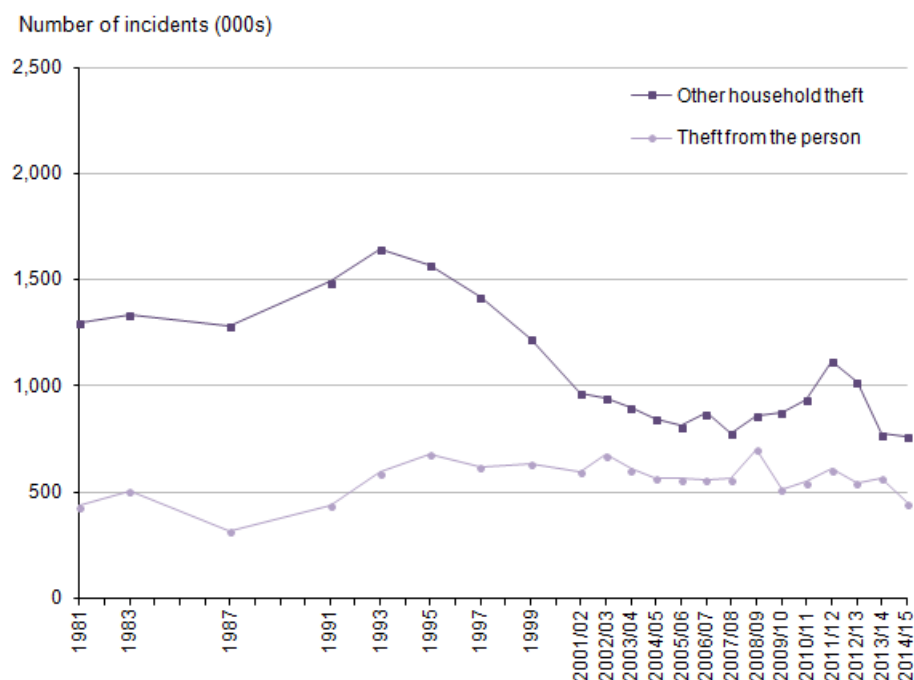
Other household theft – CSEW

This offence group consists of items stolen from outside the victim's home, and thefts in the victim's dwelling by someone entitled to be there, for example a tradesperson³. Overall, the year ending March 2015 survey estimated that there were 760,000 incidents of other household theft (Tables 15a and 15b), making up 11% of all CSEW crime.

There was no change in the level of other household theft based on interviews in the year ending March 2015 compared with the previous year (the apparent 2% decrease was not statistically significant). The latest estimates show levels of other household theft are now around two-thirds of the level recorded in 2011/12, when figures peaked following a period of year-on-year increases starting in 2007/08, and about half of the level seen in the 1995 survey (Figure 10).

The large majority of other household thefts are accounted for by theft from outside a dwelling (90%). Generally these incidents are opportunistic in nature involving theft of garden furniture or household items or furniture taken from outside people's homes⁴. The latest estimate for theft from a dwelling is 49% lower than the 1995 survey estimate ([Appendix table A1 \(623 Kb Excel sheet\)](#)).

Figure 10: Trends in Crime Survey for England and Wales, other household theft and theft from the person, year ending December 1981 to year ending March 2015



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Prior to the year ending March 2002, CSEW respondents were asked about their experience of crime in the previous calendar year, so year-labels identify the year in which the crime took place. Following the change to continuous interviewing, respondents' experience of crime relates to the full 12 months prior to interview (i.e. a moving reference period). Year-labels for year ending March 2002 identify the CSEW year of interview.
2. The numbers of incidents are derived by multiplying incidence rates by the population estimates for England and Wales.

Other theft of personal property – CSEW

Other theft of personal property offences are those which involve items stolen from victims while away from the home, but not being carried on the person (such as theft of unattended property in pubs, restaurants, entertainment venues or workplaces). The CSEW estimates that there were around 741,000 incidents of other theft of personal property in the survey year ending March 2015, a statistically significant decrease of 22% compared with the previous year (Tables 15a and 15b).

Looking at the longer term trend, other theft of personal property saw marked declines between the mid-1990s and the 2004/05 survey after which estimates fluctuated slightly but generally stayed around 1.0 million offences per year. The latest estimate of less than 750,000 offences per year is the lowest recorded by the survey since it began in 1981 and is around a third of the level seen in the 1995 survey.

Bicycle theft – CSEW and police recorded crime

The apparent 2% increase in CSEW bicycle theft, compared with the previous survey year, was not statistically significant (Tables 15a and 15b). The year ending March 2015 CSEW indicates that around 3% of bicycle owning households were victims of bicycle theft in the previous 12 months, down from 6% in the 1995 survey but unchanged from 2013/14. This is one of the lower volume CSEW offence groups and can show large fluctuations from year-to-year. [Appendix table A1 \(623 Kb Excel sheet\)](#) shows that, like other household theft, these incidents showed a marked decline between 1995 and the 1999 survey, with both small increases and decreases thereafter. The variability means that short term trends have to be interpreted with caution.

Bicycle thefts recorded by the police showed a small decrease of 4% in the year ending March 2015 compared with the previous year (Tables 16a and 16b), remaining at a similar level seen from 2012/13 onwards, and slightly lower than levels seen in the years prior to this. The current level (93,450 offences) is the lowest since the National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS) was first introduced in 2002/03.

Shoplifting – police recorded crime

Shoplifting accounted for 9% of all police recorded crime in the year ending March 2015. The police recorded 326,464 shoplifting offences in this period, a 2% increase compared with the previous year and the highest volume since the introduction of the NCRS in 2002/03. However, this is a smaller increase than the 7% recorded in the year ending March 2014. The longer term trend in shoplifting recorded by the police is different from that seen for other theft offences. While most theft offences saw steady declines over much of the last decade, levels of recorded shoplifting have shown comparatively little change over this time.

Across England and Wales there were 5,386 more shoplifting offences in the year ending March 2015 when compared with the previous year. There were reported increases in 24 of the 43 territorial police force areas in the year ending March 2015, with the Metropolitan police force recording an 11% increase in these offences ([Table P2 \(296.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#)).

The [2014 Commercial Victimisation Survey](#) provides an alternative measure of shoplifting (referred to in the survey as 'theft by customers') which includes crimes not reported to the police as well as those that have been. Results from the 2014 survey, which relate to an earlier time period than the latest police recorded crime figures, provided evidence to suggest that the rise in shoplifting recorded by the police (in the year to March 2014 the police were recording a 7% increase in shoplifting) may not have reflected an increase in the actual level of such crimes. Compared with the previous year, the 2014 CVS showed no change in the level of theft by customers (the apparent 29% reduction was not statistically significant⁵, being based on a relatively small sample of between 1000 and 2000 premises in the wholesale and retail sector). However, the latest estimates provided by the CVS were significantly down (36%) compared with the 2012 survey.

The apparent inconsistency between trends in shoplifting recorded by the police and the CVS may reflect an increase in reporting rates by businesses. While the changes were not statistically significant, the estimated proportion of shoplifting incidents that were reported to the police was 44% in 2014 compared with 42% in 2013 and 41% in 2012. The British Retail Consortium (BRC) have also reported⁶ that some retailers are adopting new policies (like those used by the Cooperative supermarket chain⁷) leading to a greater proportion of shoplifting offences being reported.

Additionally, increased reporting is consistent with findings from a separate [BRC survey](#) which showed that while their members had experienced decreased levels of shoplifting in 2013/14 compared with 2012/13, the average value of losses experienced had risen. While it is still possible that there have been some genuine rises in the incidence of shoplifting the balance of evidence suggests that the increase in offences recorded by the police could reflect a change in reporting behaviour.

All other theft offences – police recorded crime

The remainder of police recorded theft offences fall into the category 'All other theft offences', which include offences such as blackmail, theft by an employee, and making off without payment (for example, driving away from a petrol station without paying). Within this overall category, there is also an 'Other theft' offence sub-category, which comprises mostly of the theft of unattended items (including both personal property such as wallets or phones, and property from outside peoples' homes, such as garden furniture, as well as metal theft). 'Other theft' accounts for 73% of the overall "all other theft offences" category ([Appendix table A4 \(623 Kb Excel sheet\)](#)).

The most recent police recorded data showed a 4% decrease in all other theft offences, with 493,802 offences in the year ending March 2015 compared with 512,879 offences in the previous year. This decrease continues the downward trend recorded since 2003/04, with the exception of 2009/10 and 2011/12 which saw a brief period of increasing numbers of all other theft offences (Figure 11).

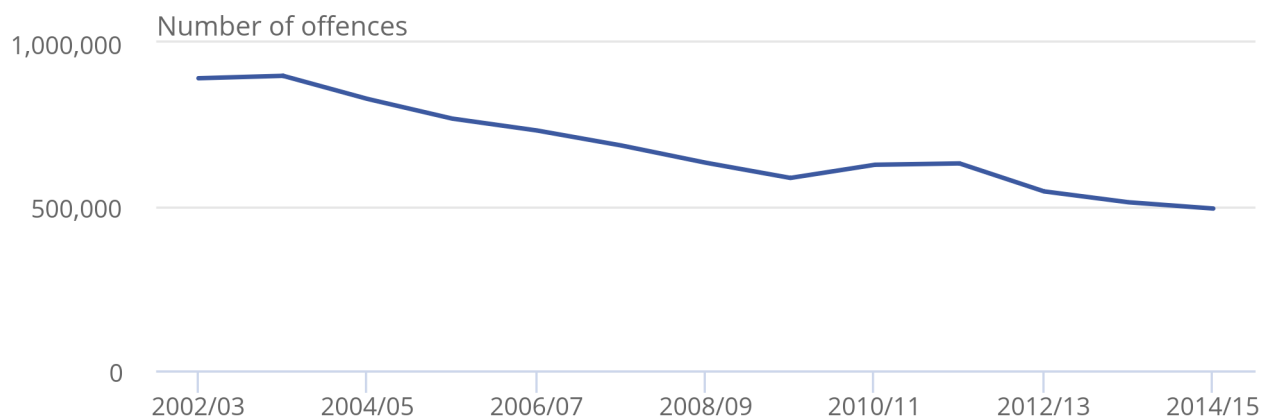
In the year ending March 2015 the police recorded 59,688 making off without payment offences, which was a 16% increase compared with the previous year. Previously there had been steep declines in this particular offence – despite this increase the latest figures remain around 15% lower than the 70,397 offences recorded in 2009/10 ([Appendix table A4 \(623 Kb Excel sheet\)](#)).

Figure 11: Trends in police recorded all other theft offences in England and Wales, year ending March 2003 to year ending March 2015 [1,2]

England and Wales

Figure 11: Trends in police recorded all other theft offences in England and Wales, year ending March 2003 to year ending March 2015 [1,2]

England and Wales



Source: Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics 2..The data on this chart refer to crimes recorded in the financial year (April to March)

As well as theft of unattended items, the police recorded 'other theft' subcategory also includes crimes against organisations which are not covered by the CSEW, such as theft of metal or industrial equipment from strategic infrastructure. 'Other theft' offences saw a 7% decrease for the year ending March 2015 compared with the previous year ([\[Appendix table A4 \(623 Kb Excel sheet\)\]](#)). This follows a 13% increase between 2009/10 and 2011/12, which was likely to have been caused, in part, by a surge in metal theft (corresponding to a spike in metal prices) over this period. Evidence suggests that such offences are decreasing, a trend that can be linked to the [new metal theft legislation](#). The legislation came into force in May 2013 and increased fines for offences under the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 1964 as well as introducing a new offence for dealers of paying for scrap metal in cash. The Home Office publication [Metal theft, England and Wales, financial year ending March 2013](#) and Chapter 2 of [Focus on: Property Crime, 2013/14](#) have further information on metal theft.

Table 15a: CSEW other theft of property - number, rate and percentage of incidents [1]

England and Wales

Adults aged 16 and over/households

	Interviews from:				
	Jan '95 to Dec '95	Apr '04 to Mar '05	Apr '09 to Mar '10	Apr '13 to Mar '14 ²	Apr '14 to Mar '15 ²
Number of incidents	Thousands				
Theft from the person	680	567	514	567	451
Other theft of personal property	2,069	1,120	1,008	950	741
Other household theft	1,570	843	875	774	760
Bicycle theft	660	390	468	375	381
Incidence rate per 1,000 adults/households					
Theft from the person	17	14	12	13	10
Other theft of personal property	51	27	23	21	16
Other household theft	76	38	38	33	32
Bicycle theft: bicycle-owning households	71	41	45	30	31
Percentage of adults/households who were victims once or more	Percentage				
Theft from the person	1.6	1.2	1.1	1.1	0.9
Other theft of personal property	4.1	2.3	2.0	1.9	1.4
Unweighted base - number of adults	16,337	45,118	44,559	35,371	33,350
Other household theft	5.1	2.8	2.9	2.7	2.5
Unweighted base - number of households	16,310	45,081	44,611	35,339	33,299
Bicycle theft: bicycle-owning households	6.1	3.6	3.9	2.7	2.7
Unweighted base - bicycle owners	6,863	19,378	20,129	16,891	15,859

Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Appendix table A1, A2, A3 provide detailed footnotes and data for further years

2. Base sizes for data since the years ending March 2014 and March 2015 are smaller than previous years, due to sample size reductions introduced in April 2012

Table 15b: CSEW other theft of property - percentage change and statistical significance [1]

England and Wales

Adults aged 16 and over/households

	April 2014 to March 2015 compared with:							
	Jan '95 to Dec '95		Apr '04 to Mar '05		Apr '09 to Mar '10		Apr '13 to Mar '14	
Number of incidents	Percentage change and significance ²							
Theft from the person	-34	*	-21	*	-12		-21	*
Other theft of personal property	-64	*	-34	*	-26	*	-22	*
Other household theft	-52	*	-10	*	-13	*	-2	
Bicycle theft	-42	*	-2		-19	*	2	
Incidence rate per 1,000 adults/households								
Theft from the person	-41	*	-27	*	-16		-21	*
Other theft of personal property	-68	*	-39	*	-30	*	-23	*
Other household theft	-58	*	-17	*	-17	*	-3	
Bicycle theft: bicycle-owning households	-57	*	-26	*	-32	*	2	
Percentage of adults/households who were victims once or more	Percentage point change and significance ^{2,3}							
Theft from the person	-0.7	*	-0.3	*	-0.2	*	-0.3	*
Other theft of personal property	-2.7	*	-0.9	*	-0.6	*	-0.5	*
Other household theft	-2.6	*	-0.3	*	-0.4	*	-0.1	
Bicycle theft: bicycle-owning households	-3.4	*	-0.9	*	-1.3	*	-0.0	

Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Appendix table A1, A2, A3 provide detailed footnotes and data for further years
2. Statistically significant change at the 5% level is indicated by an asterisk
3. The percentage point change presented in the tables may differ from subtraction of the 2 percentages due to rounding

Table 16a: Police recorded other theft - number and rate of offences [1,2,3]

England and Wales

	Apr '04 to Mar '05	Apr '09 to Mar '10	Apr '13 to Mar '14	Apr '14 to Mar '15
Theft from the person	122,081	92,247	98,280	78,814
Bicycle theft	105,953	109,847	97,684	93,450
Shoplifting	281,127	307,823	321,078	326,464
All other theft offences ^{4,5}	828,247	587,185	512,879	493,802
Rate per 1,000 population				
Theft from the person	2	2	2	1
Bicycle theft	2	2	2	2
Shoplifting	5	6	6	6
All other theft offences ^{4,5}	16	11	9	9

Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics
2. Police recorded crime statistics based on data from all 44 forces in England and Wales (including the British Transport Police)
3. Appendix table A4 provides detailed footnotes and further years
4. All other theft offences now includes all 'making off without payment' offences recorded since the year ending March 2003. Making off without payment was previously included within the fraud offence group, but following a change in the classification for the year ending March 2014, this change has been applied to previous years of data to give a consistent time series
5. For full range of offences included in all other theft see Appendix table A4

Table 16b: Police recorded other theft - percentage change [1,2,3]

England and Wales

	Percentage change		
	April 2014 to March 2015 compared with:		
	Apr '04 to Mar '05	Apr '09 to Mar '10	Apr '13 to Mar '14
Theft from the person	-35	-15	-20
Bicycle theft	-12	-15	-4
Shoplifting	16	6	2
All other theft offences ^{4,5}	-40	-16	-4

Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics
2. Police recorded crime statistics based on data from all 44 forces in England and Wales (including the British Transport Police)
3. Appendix table A4 provides detailed footnotes and further years
4. All other theft offences now includes all 'making off without payment' offences recorded since the year ending March 2003. Making off without payment was previously included within the fraud offence group, but following a change in the classification for the year ending March 2014, this change has been applied to previous years of data to give a consistent time series
5. For full range of offences included in all other theft see Appendix table A4

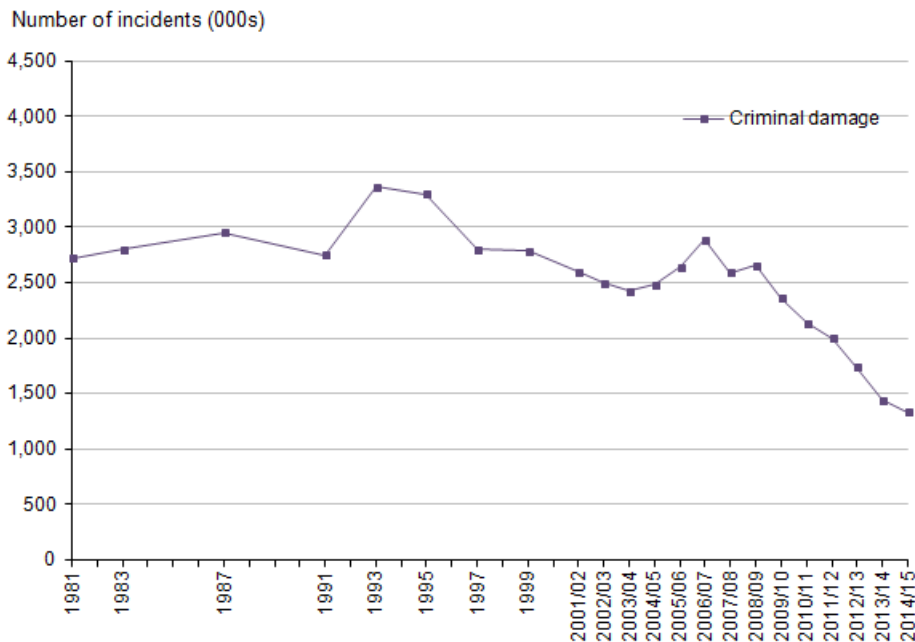
Notes for theft offences – other theft of property

1. The Home Office report Reducing mobile phone theft and improving security published in September 2014 has more information.
2. Based on figures provided by the Metropolitan Police in relation to a freedom of information (FOI) request reported by London Evening Standard – 4 April 2013.
3. Section 5.2 and Appendix 2 of the User Guide have more details on the offences that constitute CSEW other household theft.
4. The Nature of Crime tables in Focus on: Property Crime, 2013/14 have more details.
5. Percentage changes have been calculated based on rates of 'theft by customers' per 1000 wholesale and retail premises.
6. Referred to on page 19 of the British Retail Consortium Retail Crime Survey 2014
7. As reported in the Nottingham Post, 18 December 2013.

14 . Criminal damage

Based on the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) in the year ending March 2015, there were around 1.3 million incidents of criminal damage of personal and household property. The apparent 8% decrease compared with the previous survey year was not statistically significant but follows a long downward trend (Tables 17a and 17b). Figure 12 shows the trend for criminal damage has followed a slightly different pattern compared with most other CSEW crime groups. Criminal damage peaked in the 1993 survey with 3.4 million incidents followed by a series of modest falls (when compared with other CSEW offence types) until the 2003/04 survey (2.4 million offences). There was then a short upward trend until the 2006/07 CSEW (2.9 million offences), after which there were falls to its current level, the lowest since the survey began.

Figure 12: Trends in Crime Survey for England and Wales – criminal damage, year ending December 1981 to year ending March 2015



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Prior to the year ending March 2002, CSEW respondents were asked about their experience of crime in the previous calendar year, so year-labels identify the year in which the crime took place. Following the change to continuous interviewing, respondents' experience of crime relates to the full 12 months prior to interview (i.e. a moving reference period). Year-labels for year ending March 2002 identify the CSEW year of interview.
2. The numbers of incidents are derived by multiplying incidence rates by the population estimates for England and Wales.

Tables 17a and 17b show the downward trend in this offence group. There were statistically significant decreases when comparing the current figure with those from 5 and 10 years ago. This trend is also reflected in the decline in percentage of households victimised; around 4 in every 100 households were victims of criminal damage in the year ending March 2015, compared with around 10 in every 100 households in 1995.

In the latest year, there was a statistically significant decrease in criminal damage to a vehicle (down 12%). The apparent 2% increase in arson and other criminal damage however, was not statistically significant.

Table 17a: CSEW criminal damage - number, rate and percentage of incidents [1]

England and Wales

	Households				
	Interviews from:				
	Jan '95 to Dec '95	Apr '04 to Mar '05	Apr '09 to Mar '10	Apr '13 to Mar '14 ²	Apr '14 to Mar '15 ²
Number of incidents	Thousands				
Criminal damage	3,300	2,487	2,359	1,446	1,334
Criminal damage to a vehicle	1,790	1,517	1,537	999	878
Arson and other criminal damage	1,510	970	822	448	456
Incidence rate per 1,000 households					
Criminal damage	159	112	102	61	56
Criminal damage to a vehicle	86	68	67	42	37
Arson and other criminal damage	73	44	36	19	19
Percentage of households that were victims once or more	Percentage				
Criminal damage	10.1	7.1	6.7	4.2	3.8
Criminal damage to a vehicle	6.2	4.8	4.7	3.1	2.6
Arson and other criminal damage	4.3	2.7	2.3	1.3	1.2
Unweighted base - number of households	16,310	45,081	44,611	35,339	33,299

Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Appendix table A1, A2, A3 provide detailed footnotes and data for further years
2. Base sizes for data since the years ending March 2014 and March 2015 are smaller than previous years, due to sample size reductions introduced in April 2012

Table 17b: CSEW criminal damage - percentage change and statistical significance [1]

England and Wales

Households									
April 2014 to March 2015 compared with:									
	Jan '95 to Dec '95		Apr '04 to Mar '05		Apr '09 to Mar '10		Apr '13 to Mar '14		
Number of incidents	Percentage change and significance ²								
Criminal damage	-60	*	-46	*	-43	*	-8		
Criminal damage to a vehicle	-51	*	-42	*	-43	*	-12	*	
Arson and other criminal damage	-70	*	-53	*	-45	*	2		
Incidence rate per 1,000 households									
Criminal damage	-65	*	-50	*	-46	*	-9		
Criminal damage to a vehicle	-58	*	-46	*	-45	*	-13	*	
Arson and other criminal damage	-74	*	-56	*	-47	*	1		
Percentage of households that were victims once or more	Percentage point change and significance ^{2,3}								
Criminal damage	-6.3	*	-3.3	*	-2.9	*	-0.4	*	
Criminal damage to a vehicle	-3.6	*	-2.1	*	-2.1	*	-0.4	*	
Arson and other criminal damage	-3.1	*	-1.5	*	-1	*	0		

Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Appendix table A1, A2, A3 provide detailed footnotes and data for further years
2. Statistically significant change at the 5% level is indicated by an asterisk
3. The percentage point change presented in the tables may differ from subtraction of the two percentages due to rounding

The police recorded crime criminal damage and arson category is a similar offence group (although this also includes victims beyond the household population, like businesses)¹. The Crime-recording: making the victim count report, published by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC), found that nationally, an estimated 14% of criminal damage and arson offences that should have been recorded as crimes were not; this level of under-recording is better than the national average of 19%. The 'Accuracy of the statistics' section has more information.

In the year to March 2015, the criminal damage and arson category was flat overall (Tables 18a and 18b), with an increase in arson offences (up 5% to 19,598) balancing out the drop in criminal damage (down 1% to 484,244 offences). In the long term trends, criminal damage and arson offences was fairly flat from 2002/03 to 2006/07, with marked falls since; this follows a similar trend to the CSEW.

Table 18a: Police recorded criminal damage and arson offences- number and rate of offences [1,2,3]

England and Wales

	Apr '04 to Mar '05	Apr '09 to Mar '10	Apr '13 to Mar '14	Apr '14 to Mar '15
Criminal damage and arson	1,187,477	800,645	506,014	503,842
Arson	48,368	32,580	18,582	19,598
Criminal damage	1,139,109	768,065	487,432	484,244
Criminal damage and arson rate per 1,000 population	22	15	9	9

Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics.
2. Police recorded crime statistics based on data from all 44 forces in England and Wales (including the British Transport Police).
3. Appendix table A4 provides detailed footnotes and further years.

Table 18b: Police recorded criminal damage and arson offences - percentage change [1,2,3]

England and Wales

	Percentage change		
	April 2014 to March 2015 compared with:		
	Apr '04 to Mar '05	Apr '09 to Mar '10	Apr '13 to Mar '14
Criminal damage and arson	-58	-37	0
Arson	-59	-40	5
Criminal damage	-57	-37	-1

Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics
2. Police recorded crime statistics based on data from all 44 forces in England and Wales (including the British Transport Police)
3. Appendix table A4 provides detailed footnotes and further years

Notes for criminal damage

1. Section 5.3 of the User Guide has more details regarding this crime type.

15 . Other crimes against society

Other crimes against society are offences recorded by the police which do not generally have a specific identifiable victim. They make up around 11% of all police recorded crime. Trends in such offences tend to reflect changes in police workload and activity rather than in levels of criminality.

The group of offences is made of the following categories:

- drug offences
- possession of weapons offences
- public order offences
- miscellaneous crimes against society

Other crimes against society showed an increase of 1% compared with the previous year, with 403,878 offences recorded in the year ending March 2015 (Tables 19a and 19b). Figure 13 shows the trend over time and how each separate offence category contributes to the overall total.

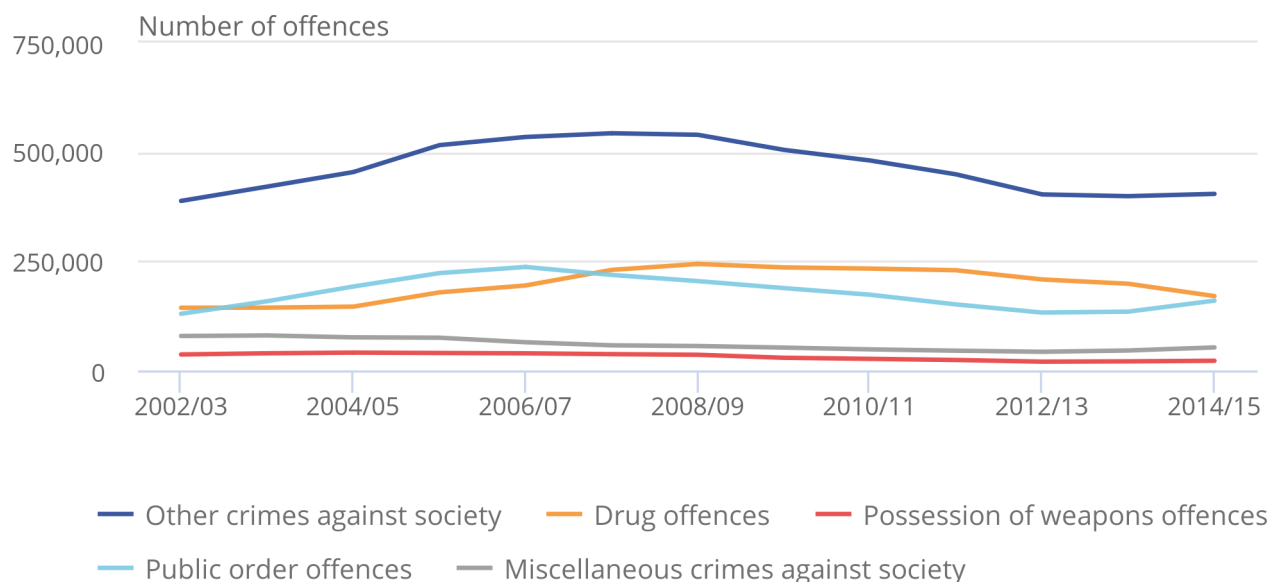
The increase reported this year is the first time that the number of offences in the other crimes against society category has increased since it peaked in the year ending March 2008 (542,656 offences). The marked increases in the recording of these offences between the year ending March 2005 and the year ending March 2008 coincide with the priority placed on increasing the numbers of offences brought to justice associated with a previous government's 2005 to 2008 Public Service Agreement targets. This is particularly reflected in the trend for drug offences and public order offences (the relevant sections have further details). Between the year ending March 2008 and the year ending March 2014, the number of offences against society recorded decreased year-on-year, mainly driven by reductions in public order offences. However, as described below, the latest figure shows a change in trends.

Figure 13: Trends in police recorded other crimes against society in England and Wales, year ending March 2003 to year ending March 2015 [1,2]

England and Wales

Figure 13: Trends in police recorded other crimes against society in England and Wales, year ending March 2003 to year ending March 2015 [1,2]

England and Wales



Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics.
2. The data on this chart refer to crimes recorded in the financial year (April to March).

Drug offences

The police recorded 169,964 drug offences in the year ending March 2015, a decrease of 14% compared with the previous year. Figure 13 shows the trend over time for drug offences, where the number of drug offences steadily rose from the year ending March 2005 until the year ending March 2009 (peaking at 243,536 offences). They remained fairly consistent at around 230,000 each year until the year ending March 2012, after which they began to fall. Despite recent decreases, the number of drug offences recorded in the year ending March 2015 remains 19% higher than the number recorded in the year ending March 2003.

The number of drug offences recorded by the police is heavily dependent on police activities and priorities; changes over time may reflect changes in the policing of drug crime, rather than real changes in its incidence. The increases in the recording of drug offences between the year ending March 2005 and the year ending March 2009 coincide with the priority placed Public Service Agreement targets. For example, in the past decade the police have been granted powers to issue:

- warnings on the street (rather than at a police station) for possession of cannabis offences (April 2004)
- penalty notices for disorder for possession of cannabis (January 2009)

In the year ending March 2015, possession of cannabis offences accounted for 65% of all police recorded drug offences; this proportion has remained broadly similar since the year ending March 2006 (between 65% and 70%).

The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) can also be used to investigate trends in drug use. Relevant figures from the CSEW are compiled and published in an annual report by the Home Office: Drug Misuse: Findings from the 2013 to 2014 [Crime Survey for England and Wales](#) ¹. The general trends from the year ending March 2014 report show that overall illicit drug use in the last year among 16 to 59 year olds has increased in comparison to the previous year, and is back to the same level as in the year ending March 2012.

Public order offences

Public order offences cover circumstances where an offender is behaving in a way that causes, or would be likely to cause, alarm, distress or disorder. If there is an identifiable victim against who physical violence is used (or attempted) then this will be recorded as a violent offence, though public order offences may include some offences where injury is threatened. The offences in this category include public fear, alarm or distress, which has been moved from the violence offence group. Affray is also included in this offence group, a person is guilty of affray they use or threaten unlawful violence towards another and their conduct is such as would cause a "person of reasonable firmness" present at the scene to fear for their personal safety.

The latest figures (159,528 offences) show a 19% increase in public order offences compared with the previous year (Table 19b). The majority of this category (60%) was made up of public fear, alarm or distress offences, which showed an 21% increase in the year ending March 2015 compared with the previous year; a rise that is likely to reflect improvements in recording practices. Racially or religiously aggravated public fear, alarm or distress offences also increased (by 21%) in the year ending March 2015, and other offences against the State or public order have increased by 12% on the previous year. Public order offences rose from the year ending March 2003 and peaked in the year ending March 2007 (236,661 offences) and have since shown year-on-year decreases until the year ending March 2013 ([Appendix table A4 \(623 Kb Excel sheet\)](#)). The latest two years have both seen increases reported. Like drug offences, increases in this offence can reflect more police activity and reporting, rather than actual changes in the levels of criminality. Furthermore, as with violent crime, public order offences are more prone to changes in police recording practices and anecdotal evidence from forces suggests a greater proportion of such incidents are being recorded as crimes.

Possession of weapons offences

This offence category covers only weapons possession offences, where there is no direct victim. Any circumstances in which a weapon has been used against a victim would be covered by other relevant victim-based offences. Information regarding offences where firearms or knives and sharp instruments have been used can be found in the 'Offences involving firearms' and 'Offences involving knives and sharp instruments' sections of this release.

The police recorded 21,904 possession of weapon offences in the year ending March 2015, a 6% increase compared with the previous year (20,621, Table 19a and 19b). The number of possession of weapons offences peaked in the year ending March 2005 (40,605 offences), before showing year-on-year decreases until the year ending March 2013 when, similar to public order offences, the numbers have begun rising again. The latest increase has been driven by a rise in the possession of knives and other sharp instruments² (up 10%) and possession of firearms with intent (up 18%). Both these offences are now at their highest level since the year ending March 2011.

Miscellaneous crimes against society

Miscellaneous crimes against society comprises a variety of offences ([Appendix table A4 \(623 Kb Excel sheet has a full list\)](#)). The largest volume offences include: handling stolen goods, threat to commit criminal damage, obscene publications and perverting the course of justice. The category of 'Wildlife crime', which was previously included in other notifiable offences, has been separated into its own category since the [Crime Statistics, year ending June 2014 release](#). 'Wildlife crime' is a low volume offence, because the vast majority of wildlife offences are non-notifiable (that is, not recorded by the police) and dealt with at magistrates' courts by other agencies, such as the National Crime Agency and the Border Force.

The police recorded 52,482 miscellaneous crimes against society offences in the year ending March 2015, an increase of 15% compared with the previous year (Table 19b). The number of offences has increased in the last 2 years, after previously showing year-on-year decreases since 2003/04.

The latest increase is, in part, driven by a large rise in the number of obscene publications and protected sexual material offences, which has increased by 72% to 7,960 offences in the year ending March 2015, when compared with the previous year (4,618 offences). This is largely due to an increase in offences related to the making and distribution of indecent photographs or pseudo-photographs (including those of children) via the internet or through mobile technology. It is an offence for a person to take or distribute such indecent photographs. The police service is reporting that they are giving more attention to child sexual exploitation and this is likely to have led to more of these offences being identified. In addition, due to the introduction of fly tipping in this category as of April 2014, there was also a large rise in the number of other indictable or triable either way offences (increase of 90% to 4,887). It will take another year before there is a full comparator year for this offence category (when flytipping has been included for both the previous and current year).

There was also a large rise in threats to commit criminal damage (which includes possession of articles with the intent to commit criminal damage, such as spray paint) which increased by 56% from 5,790 offences in the year ending March 2014 to 9,015 offences in the year ending March 2015 ([Appendix table A4 \(623 Kb Excel sheet\)](#)).

Table 19a: Police recorded other crimes against society - number and rate of offences [1,2,3]

England and Wales

	Apr '04 to Mar '05	Apr '09 to Mar '10	Apr '13 to Mar '14	Apr '14 to Mar '15
Other crimes against society	453,825	504,649	398,677	403,878
Drug offences	145,837	235,584	198,215	169,964
Trafficking of drugs	24,190	33,223	29,348	27,026
Possession of drugs	121,647	202,361	168,867	142,938
Possession of weapons offences	40,605	28,758	20,621	21,904
Public order offences	191,872	188,254	134,401	159,528
Miscellaneous crimes against society	75,511	52,053	45,440	52,482
Rate per 1,000 population				
Other crimes against society	9	9	7	7
Drug offences	3	4	4	3
Possession of weapons offences	1	1	0	0
Public order offences	4	3	2	3
Miscellaneous crimes against society	1	1	1	1

Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics.
2. Police recorded crime statistics based on data from all 44 forces in England and Wales (including the British Transport Police).
3. Appendix table A4 provides detailed footnotes and further years.

Table 19b: Police recorded other crimes against society - percentage change [1,2,3]

England and Wales

	Percentage change		
	April 2014 to March 2015 compared with:		
	Apr '04 to Mar '05	Apr '09 to Mar '10	Apr '13 to Mar '14
Other crimes against society	-11	-20	1
Drug offences	17	-28	-14
Trafficking of drugs	12	-19	-8
Possession of drugs	18	-29	-15
Possession of weapons offences	-46	-24	6
Public order offences	-17	-15	19
Miscellaneous crimes against society	-30	1	15

Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics.
2. Police recorded crime statistics based on data from all 44 forces in England and Wales (including the British Transport Police).
3. Appendix table A4 provides detailed footnotes and further years.

Notes for other crimes against society

1. The figures for the year ending March 2015 will be published on 23 July 2015.
2. Recorded under 10D possession of an article with blade or point.

16 . Fraud

The extent of fraud is difficult to measure because it is a deceptive crime, often targeted at organisations rather than individuals. Some victims of fraud may be unaware they have been a victim of crime, or that any fraudulent activity has occurred. Others may be reluctant to report the offence to the authorities, feeling embarrassed that they have fallen victim. Fraud is an offence not currently included in the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) headline estimates, and the level of fraud reported via administrative sources is thought to significantly understate the true level of such crime.

This section draws on a range of sources. No individual source provides a complete measure of the overall extent of fraud offences, but together they help to provide a fuller picture. There is more information on the different sources of fraud data in Section 5.4 of the [User Guide](#).

Recent changes to reporting and recording of fraud statistics

There have been a number of changes to the presentation of fraud, which were first introduced in the quarterly bulletin, released in July 2013. Since that time, to reflect changes in operational arrangements for reporting and recording of fraud, data presented in the police recorded crime series include offences recorded by Action Fraud, a public facing national reporting centre that records incidents reported directly to them from the public and other organisations. Data from Action Fraud are collated by the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau (NFIB), a government funded initiative run by the City of London Police, who lead national policing on fraud.

Since 1 April 2013, Action Fraud has taken responsibility for the central recording of fraud offences previously recorded by individual police forces¹. To allow for piloting and development of the Action Fraud service this transfer had a phased introduction between April 2011 and March 2013,^{2,3}. From 1 April 2014, all fraud figures included within overall police recorded crime have been sourced from Action Fraud. This means that for the first time a year on year comparison of recorded fraud offences can be made, as there are two full years of data on centrally reported fraud.

Although Action Fraud receives reports of fraud from victims across the UK, data presented in this bulletin cover fraud offences where the victim resides in England or Wales only, based on the victim's postcode. Currently, Action Fraud data are not included in sub-national tables³.

Total fraud offences recorded by Action Fraud

In the year ending March 2015, a total of 230,630 fraud offences were recorded in England and Wales (Table 20a), equivalent to 4 offences recorded per 1,000 population. This represents a volume increase of 9% compared with the previous year (Table 20b).

The effects of the transition to centralised reporting no longer has a direct effect when considering the year-on-year changes and as a result the rise of 9% reflects an increase in the volume of fraud reported to Action Fraud by victims.

[Appendix table A5 \(623 Kb Excel sheet\)](#) shows a more detailed breakdown of the fraud offences recorded by Action Fraud in the year ending March 2015, and indicates that the largest share of offences (43%) were accounted for by non-investment frauds (98,714 offences),⁴. This increased 15% from the year ending March 2014. Just under half of non-investment frauds specifically related to frauds involving online shopping and auctions (42,589).

Fewer than 20,000 offences reported to Action Fraud involved cheque, plastic card and online bank accounts. This is much lower than the volume of such frauds estimated from the Crime Survey and figures from industry sources (see below). This is likely to reflect the fact that many individuals who have experienced such crime will not report the incident to Action Fraud, especially if their financial services provider reimburses their losses⁵.

There is more information on the types of offences within each of the Action Fraud categories in Section 5.4 of the [User Guide](#) and [Appendix table A5 \(623 Kb Excel sheet\)](#).

For more information on fraud statistics recorded by other industry bodies, see below.

Table 20a: Fraud offences recorded by the police and Action Fraud - number and rate of offences [1,2]

England and Wales

	Apr '09 to Mar '10	Apr '13 to Mar '14	Apr '14 to Mar '15
Fraud offences recorded by the police and Action Fraud 3,4,5,6	73,259	211,229	230,630
Fraud rate per 1,000 population	1	4	4

Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office and Action Fraud, National Fraud Authority

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime and Action Fraud data are not designated as National Statistics.
2. Police recorded crime statistics based on all data from all 44 forces in England and Wales (including the British Transport Police).
3. Action Fraud have taken over the recording of fraud offences on behalf of individual police forces. This process began in April 2011 and was rolled out to all police forces by March 2013. The offences in this table therefore include those recorded by either the police or Action Fraud individually, or both, depending on the time period specified.
4. Due to the change in recording of fraud offences being taken over by Action Fraud, caution should be applied when comparing data over this transitional period and with earlier years. The User Guide provides more details including information on transfer date to Action Fraud for each force.
5. From Year ending March 2013, forgery offences have been reclassified under miscellaneous crimes against society.
6. 'Making off without payment' was previously included in fraud. Since April 2013, it is included in all other theft offences.

Table 20b: Fraud offences recorded by the police and Action Fraud - percentage change [1,2]

England and Wales

	Percentage change	
	April 2014 to March 2015 compared with:	
	Apr '09 to Mar '10	Apr '13 to Mar '14
Fraud offences recorded by the police and Action Fraud ^{3,4,5,6}	215	9

Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office and Action Fraud, National Fraud Authority

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime and Action Fraud data are not designated as National Statistics.
2. Police recorded crime statistics based on all data from all 44 forces in England and Wales (including the British Transport Police).
3. Action Fraud have taken over the recording of fraud offences on behalf of individual police forces. This process began in April 2011 and was rolled out to all police forces by March 2013. The offences in this table therefore include those recorded by either the police or Action Fraud individually, or both, depending on the time period specified.
4. Due to the change in recording of fraud offences being taken over by Action Fraud, caution should be applied when comparing data over this transitional period and with earlier years. The User Guide provides more details including information on transfer date to Action Fraud for each force.
5. From Year ending March 2013, forgery offences have been reclassified under miscellaneous crimes against society.
6. 'Making off without payment' was previously included in fraud. Since April 2013, it is included in all other theft offences.

Fraud offences reported by industry bodies – overall picture

In line with recommendations from the [National Statistician's review of crime statistics](#), this bulletin draws on additional sources to provide further context on fraud offences. In addition to the offences recorded by Action Fraud, which are included in the police recorded crime series; the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau (NFIB) also currently receive data for investigative purposes directly from two industry bodies:

1. Cifas is a UK-wide fraud prevention service representing around 350 organisations from the public and private sectors. These organisations mainly share data on confirmed cases of fraud, particularly application, identity and first party frauds, via the Cifas National Fraud Database. Data supplied by Cifas to the NFIB are recorded in line with the Home Office Counting Rules (HOCR) for recorded crime.
2. Financial Fraud Action UK (FFA UK) is responsible for coordinating activities on fraud prevention in the UK payments industry. FFA UK collates information relating to cheque, plastic card and online bank accounts via its Fraud Intelligence Sharing System (FISS) database, and this is in turn provided to NFIB. FISS is an intelligence tool rather than a fraud reporting tool, and its main purpose is to share actionable intelligence about the criminals or entities relating to fraud offences rather than count the numbers of victims of fraud. As a result, the number of cases presented in Table 21 is considerably less than the total number reported to FFA UK by its members. Comprehensive statistics on these fraud types are published twice yearly by FFA UK.

For further information on the types of fraud covered by Cifas and FFA UK, please see Section 5.4 of the [User Guide](#).

The data from these two industry bodies relates only to those organisations that are part of the respective membership networks (see the Cifas and FFA UK website for details of membership). Coverage can therefore change as new members join or previous members withdraw. These data are subject to continuing development and we are giving consideration as to whether these can be incorporated within the headline crime statistics in future to give a more comprehensive measure of fraud.

Users should be aware that at this stage the NFIB data sourced from industry bodies cover the United Kingdom as a whole, while all other data in this bulletin refer to England and Wales.

In the year ending March 2015, the NFIB received 389,718 reports of fraud from Cifas and FFA UK (Table 21). These are in addition to the figures reported by Action Fraud, which are part of police recorded crime. Even so, these numbers are a small percentage of the overall reports of fraud these agencies receive (see below for more information). This represents a 17% increase from the previous year (when 333,672 offences were received). There are several possible reasons for this increase:

- the result of improvements in the collection of data for intelligence purposes by FFA UK ⁶
- improvements to administrative systems used for reporting fraud cases to the NFIB⁷
- an increase in overall fraud⁸

Of the fraud offences reported by Cifas and FFA UK to the NFIB, 81% were in the category of 'banking and credit industry fraud' (315,578). This category includes fraud involving plastic cards, cheques and online bank accounts which accounted for the majority of the offences recorded in the year ending March 2015. The category also covers payment-related frauds under the subcategory 'Application Fraud' which includes offences that occurred outside of the banking sector; for example, fraudulent applications made in relation to hire purchase agreements, as well as to insurance, telecommunications or retail companies, or public sector organisations. However, they do not include a significant volume of card fraud not reported to the police for investigation.

Cifas do not currently collect data on 'card not present' fraud⁹ (which is thought to represent a significant volume of all plastic card fraud), lost or stolen cards and ATM fraud. Like Cifas, FFA UK also does not feed through to the NFIB data on all such frauds at present. This is due to the limited benefits of sharing these cases from an intelligence perspective. As a result these do not appear in the figures in Table 21. FFA UK do however record these frauds via a separate fraud reporting mechanism, and publish data annually on the volume of incidents of frauds on all payment types (including 'card not present'), alongside data on financial fraud losses by the value of losses to customers¹⁰. In the 2014 calendar year, they reported 1.3 million cases of fraud on UK-issued cards¹¹, the most since 2008. Over 1 million of these cases were 'card not present' frauds, making it by far the largest category.

Cifas and FFA UK provide separate feeds to NFIB via their individual databases, however, a proportion of organisations are members of both industry bodies (for more information see both the [Cifas](#) and [FFA UK](#) websites).

It is possible that there may be some double or triple counting between both these sources and the offences recorded via direct reports from victims to Action Fraud. For example, if police are called to a bank and apprehend an offender for a fraud offence, the police may report this crime to Action Fraud in addition to the bank reporting the same crime to Cifas and/or FFA UK as part of their processes. Experts believe this duplication to be so small that it has an insignificant effect on crime trends, but there is no simple cross-referencing method within NFIB to detect the scale of it.

Table 21: Fraud offences, reported by industry bodies to NFIB, year ending March 2015 [1,2]

United Kingdom

Fraud Type ⁴	Numbers		
	Cifas	FFA UK	Total
Banking and credit industry fraud	206,002	109,576	315,578
Cheque, Plastic Card and Online Bank Accounts (not PSP) ⁵	139,665	109,576	249,241
Application Fraud (excluding Mortgages)	62,196	0	62,196
Mortgage Related Fraud	4,141	0	4,141
Insurance Related Fraud	9,224	0	9,224
Telecom Industry Fraud (Misuse of Contracts) ⁶	64,730	0	64,730
Business Trading Fraud	139	0	139
Fraudulent Applications for Grants from Charities	47	0	47
Total	280,142	109,576	389,718

Source: National Fraud Intelligence Bureau⁶

Notes:

1. Fraud data are not designated as National Statistics.
2. From year ending March 2013, this table presents fraud data collated by NFIB from Cifas and Financial Fraud Action UK (FFA UK) only and does not include fraud offences recorded by Action Fraud, which are now represented alongside police recorded crime. Data presented here are therefore not comparable with past published NFIB figures.
3. Section 5.4 of the User Guide provides an explanation and examples of fraud offences within each category.
4. A PSP is a payment service provider (for example Paypal, World Pay) that is not a bank, dealing in electronic money transfers. Fraud offences perpetrated using PSPs fall under 'Online shopping and auctions' (not collected by industry bodies).
5. The Cifas Telecom Industry Fraud figure is substantially higher than that seen in the year ending December 2013 bulletin. This is due to a correction of an error that was caused by the NFIB system not correctly picking up certain Cifas fraud types.
6. Further information on the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau can be found on <https://www.cityoflondon.police.uk/advice-and-support/fraud-and-economic-crime/nfib/Pages/default.aspx>

Measuring fraud using the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW)

Fraud is not currently included in the headline CSEW crime estimates. However, the CSEW includes supplementary modules of questions on victimisation across a range of fraud and cyber-crime offences, including plastic card and bank/building society fraud. These are currently reported separately from the headline estimates.

ONS is currently conducting work to extend the main victimisation module in the CSEW to cover elements of fraud and cyber-crime. There is more information in the recently published methodological note [Update – Extending the CSEW to include fraud and cyber crime \(113.5 Kb Pdf\)](#) and in Section 5.4 of the [User Guide](#).

Once the new questions are added to the survey it will lead to an increase in the volume of crime measured by it. To give an indication of the scale of including such crimes in the future, a separate piece of analysis was conducted of existing questions from the 2012/13 CSEW. However, this was based on some simple assumptions given the current absence of data on main elements, such as the number of times respondents fell victim within the crime reference period. The analysis showed that together, plastic card fraud and bank and building society fraud could contribute between 3.6 and 3.8 million incidents of crime to the total number of CSEW crimes in that year.

Plastic card fraud

The year ending March 2015 CSEW showed that 4.6% of plastic card owners were victims of card fraud in the last year, a statistically significant decrease from the 5.1% estimated in the year ending March 2014. There have been small reductions in levels of plastic card fraud over the last few years, following a rise between the 2005/06 and 2009/10 surveys (Figure 14). In general, the CSEW trend in plastic card fraud has been consistent with those revealed by industry sources. However, the latest estimate contrasts with the rise being reported by FFA UK.

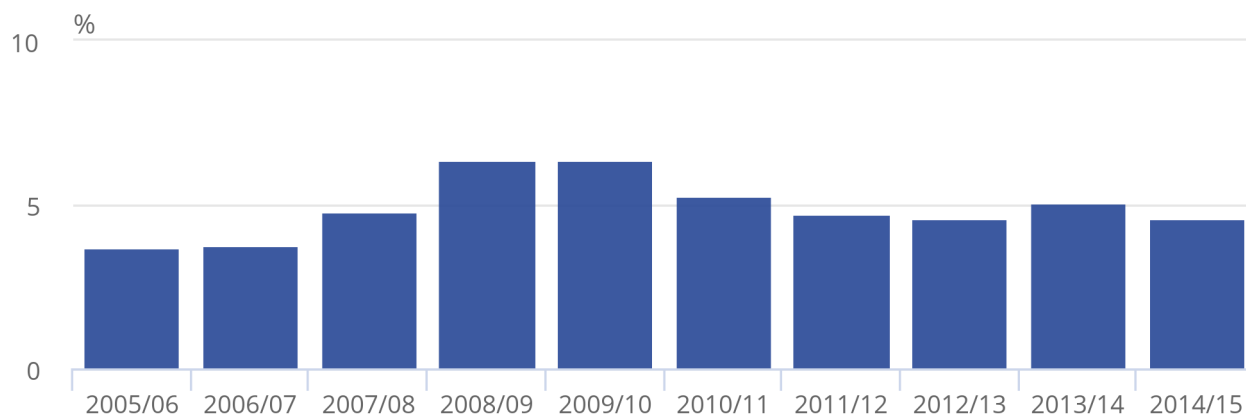
The current level of victimisation remains higher than more established offences, for example theft from the person and other theft of personal property (0.9% and 1.4% respectively, Table 15). Further analysis, based on the 2011/12 CSEW, was published on 9 May 2013 as part of F [ocus on: Property Crime, 2011/12: Chapter 3 – Plastic card fraud](#).

Figure 14: Proportion of plastic card users who had been a victim of plastic card fraud in the last year, year ending March 2006 to year ending March 2015 CSEW1

England and Wales, adults aged 16 and over

Figure 14: Proportion of plastic card users who had been a victim of plastic card fraud in the last year, year ending March 2006 to year ending March 2015 CSEW1

England and Wales, adults aged 16 and over



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. The data on this chart refer to crimes experienced in the 12 months before interview, based on interviews carried out in that financial year (April to March)

Notes for fraud

1. Police forces continue to record forgery offences, which fall under 'Other crimes against society' and are not included under 'Fraud offences'. Section 5.4 of the User Guide has more information.
2. More information regarding the date when each police force transferred responsibility to Action Fraud can be found in Section 5.4 of the User Guide.
3. Table 5c in the User Guide has details on when each local force transferred responsibility for recording to Action Fraud.
4. Examples of non-investment frauds include online shopping and auction, computer software service and ticket fraud.
5. Where the bank reimburses the loss they may report the crime to an industry body such as CIFAS or FFA UK.
6. FFA UK made an improvement to its data collection for intelligence purposes during 2013, which has resulted in a considerable increase in the number of incidents reported to the NFIB during 2014.
7. A change to the NFIB fraud database allowed better reporting by CIFAS of fraud cases in the category of Telecom Industry Fraud.
8. For example, Cifas has reported an increase in plastic card fraud across its members.
9. Card not present fraud is where the cardholder and card are not present at the point of sale, for example, fraudulent use of the card online, over the phone or by mail order.
10. Fraud case volumes (2008 to 2014) and fraud losses (2004 to 2014) on UK-issued cards are reported in the 'Fraud The Facts 2015' publication.
11. It is important to note that number of cases relates to the number of accounts defrauded, rather than the number of victims.

17 . Crime experienced by children aged 10 to 15

Since January 2009, the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) has asked children aged 10 to 15 resident in households in England and Wales about their experience of crime in the previous 12 months.

Findings from the children survey should be interpreted with greater care than for the adult survey data. Reasons for this include:

- changes to the design of the children's questionnaire during the first 3 years of the survey mean the estimates prior to the year ending March 2012 are not comparable with later years
- the number of child interviews that take place in any year (around 3,000) is much smaller than for the main survey (approximately 35,000). This means estimates of crimes against children can fluctuate more than adult estimates due to the much smaller sample size
- as [Millard and Flatley \(2010\)](#) note, children are often involved in low-level incidents which may involve an offence in law but may not be viewed by participants, or others, as serious enough to amount to a crime. Two methods for classifying incidents recorded in the survey have been used – 'preferred' and 'broad'. The 'broad' measure counts all incidents which are legally defined as crimes, which may include very low-level incidents between children. The 'preferred' measure takes into account factors which determine the severity of an incident (such as the level of injury, value of items stolen and relationship with the perpetrator). The analysis provided in this chapter uses the 'preferred' measure; tables for the broad measure of crime are available in the [Appendix tables \(623 Kb Excel sheet\)](#) ¹

Overall level of crime

Based on CSEW interviews in the year ending March 2015, there were an estimated 709,000 crimes experienced by children aged 10 to 15 using the preferred measure. This showed no change from the previous 12 months, with the 13% decrease not being statistically significant ([Appendix table A8 \(623 Kb Excel sheet\)](#)). The number of crimes experienced by children aged 10 to 15 has decreased by a third since 2011/12, the first year that is directly comparable with the current year. This appears to be part of a general trend of decreasing crime against children recorded by the survey, and is in-line with recent movements found among adults (which was down 27% over the same period).

In the year ending March 2015, the survey estimated 12% of children aged 10 to 15 were victims of crime. This is the third consecutive year in which the survey has shown that 12% of children aged 10 to 15 were victims of crime.

Table 22: CSEW offences experienced by children aged 10 to 15, preferred measure - number, rate and percentage of incidents [1,2]

England and Wales

	Children aged 10 to 15					
	Interviews from:					
	Apr '09 to Mar '10 ³	Apr '10 to Mar '11 ³	Apr '11 to Mar '12	Apr '12 to Mar '13 ⁴	Apr '13 to Mar '14 ⁴	Apr '14 to Mar '15 ⁴
Number of incidents (thousands)	1,056	918	1,066	817	810	709
Incidence rate per 1,000 children aged 10 to 15	266	233	274	213	212	190
Percentage who were victims once or more	14.6	11.6	15.1	12.2	12.1	11.8
Unweighted base - number of children aged 10 to 15	3,762	3,849	3,930	2,879	2,933	2,374

Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Some estimates are based on a small number of children, hence caution should be applied; User Guide tables UG7, UG8 and UG9 provide the margins of error around the estimates.
2. The 'Preferred measure' takes into account factors identified as important in determining the severity of an incidence (such as level of injury, value of item stolen or damaged, relationship with the perpetrator) while the 'Broad measure' counts all incidents which would be legally defined as crimes and therefore may include low-level incidents between children.
3. Question changes during development of the children's questionnaire in the first two years should be considered when interpreting the figures. Comparisons before year ending March 2012 should be interpreted with caution.
4. Base sizes for data from year ending March 2013 onwards are smaller than previous years, due to sample size reductions introduced.

Violent crime

Violence in the 10 to 15 year old module of the CSEW differs from the main survey as robbery is still included within this category. Robbery was included in the main CSEW count of violence until recently, it was separated out into its own and became consistent with the police recorded crime offence categories. As well as robbery, wounding and assault currently continue to make up the offence category of violence against 10 to 15 year olds.

The CSEW estimates that there were around 373,000 incidents of violence against children aged 10 to 15 in the year ending March 2015 (Table 23). While the apparent 16% decrease compared with the previous survey year, was not statistically significant the longer trend is downward; the current estimate is 37% lower than the estimate for the year ending March 2012, which was statistically significant ([Appendix table A8 \(623 Kb Excel sheet\)](#)).

Although not directly comparable, the decrease seen in the children's survey was higher than found amongst adults (which recorded a statistically significant decrease of 24% since the year ending March 2012).

While the estimated 16% decrease in violent crime against 10 to 15 year olds over the past twelve months is not statistically significant, the decrease does fit with other sources of information. The Violence and Society Research Group at Cardiff University have found the number of 11 to 17 year olds being admitted to hospitals for treatment following violence declined 18%, from 25,108 in 2013 to 20,553 in 2014² (see [Sivarajasingam et al. 2015](#)).

Table 23: CSEW violence experienced by children aged 10 to 15, preferred measure - number, rate and percentage of incidents [1,2]

England and Wales

Children aged 10 to 15

	Interviews from:					
	Apr '09 to Mar '10 ³	Apr '10 to Mar '11 ³	Apr '11 to Mar '12	Apr '12 to Mar '13 ⁴	Apr '13 to Mar '14 ⁴	Apr '14 to Mar '15 ⁴
Number of incidents	Thousands					
Violence	643	602	591	479	445	373
Wounding	130	90	58	92	64	55
Assault with minor injury	270	337	307	212	218	169
Assault with no injury	167	118	139	107	110	102
Robbery	76	58	87	68	53	47
Incidence rate per 1,000 children						
Violence	162	153	152	125	116	100
Wounding	33	23	15	24	17	15
Assault with minor injury	68	86	79	55	57	45
Assault with no injury	42	30	36	28	29	27
Robbery	19	15	22	18	14	13
Percentage of children who were victims once or more	Percentage					
Violence	8.5	6.8	7.7	6.1	6.5	5.7
Wounding	1.8	1.1	1	1	1.1	0.8
Assault with minor injury	3.7	3.7	3.6	2.9	3.3	2.8
Assault with no injury	2.4	1.7	2.2	1.4	1.7	1.6
Robbery	1.3	0.9	1.3	1	0.7	0.7
Unweighted base - number of children aged 10 to 15	3,762	3,849	3,930	2,879	2,933	2,374

Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Some estimates are based on a small number of children, hence caution should be applied; User Guide tables UG7, UG8 and UG9 provide the margins of error around the estimates.
2. The 'Preferred measure' takes into account factors identified as important in determining the severity of an incidence (such as level of injury, value of item stolen or damaged, relationship with the perpetrator) while the 'Broad measure' counts all incidents which would be legally defined as crimes and therefore may include low-level incidents between children.
3. Question changes during development of the children's questionnaire in the first two years should be considered when interpreting the figures. Comparisons before year ending March 2012 should be interpreted with caution.
4. Base sizes for data from year ending March 2013 onwards are smaller than previous years, due to sample size reductions introduced.

Property offences

For the children's survey, property offences are restricted to personal crimes only. Any household theft or criminal damage to the house/vehicle will be recorded when the adult respondent from the household completes the survey themselves.

Three offences from the children's data – theft from or outside the dwelling, bicycle theft, and criminal damage – are all designated as household offences for adults on the CSEW. These are restricted to occasions where the property stolen or damaged belonged solely to the child respondent. This methodology is designed to restrict the possibility of double counting within the estimates, however some may still remain.

In the survey for the year ending March 2015, there were 278,000 incidents of theft, and 59,000 incidents of criminal damage to personal property experienced by children aged 10 to 15 (Table 24). In all, 6% of children were victims of theft at least once, with the largest theft category being other theft of personal property (4% of children were victims); 1% experienced criminal damage to personal property ([Appendix table A10 \(623 Kb Excel sheet\)](#)).

Unlike violent offences, property offences experienced by children show no consistent increasing or decreasing trend over the past few years. For many offences, this is similar to what is reported amongst adults – for example, since the year ending March 2010 (when the children survey was first introduced), instances of personal theft offences (theft from the person and other personal theft) both surveys peaked in the year ending March 2012. Evidence from Focus On Property Crime publications suggest this was related to a reported increase in the theft of items such as mobile phones³.

Table 24: CSEW property offences experienced by children aged 10 to 15, preferred measure - number, rate and percentage of incidents [1,2]

	Interviews from:					
	Apr '09 to Mar '10 ³	Apr '10 to Mar '11 ³	Apr '11 to Mar '12	Apr '12 to Mar '13 ⁴	Apr '13 to Mar '14 ⁴	Apr '14 to Mar '15 ⁴
Number of incidents	Thousands					
Theft offences	364	288	435	304	322	278
Theft from the person	61	35	55	42	49	53
Other theft of personal property	209	171	263	208	225	172
Theft from the dwelling/outside the dwelling ⁵	20	25	40	22	18	29
Bicycle theft ⁵	73	58	77	32	30	24
Criminal damage to personal property ⁵	49	28	40	34	43	59
Incidence rate per 1,000 children						
Theft offences	92	73	112	79	84	75
Theft from the person	15	9	14	11	13	14
Other theft of personal property	53	43	67	54	59	46
Theft from the dwelling/outside the dwelling ⁵	5	6	10	6	5	8
Bicycle theft ⁵	18	15	20	8	8	6
Criminal damage to personal property ⁵	12	7	10	9	11	16
Percentage of children who were victims once or more	Percentage					
Theft offences	7.4	5.4	8.1	6.5	6.2	5.9
Theft from the person	0.9	0.7	1.2	0.9	0.7	1.1
Other theft of personal property	4.4	3.1	4.9	4.4	4.4	3.8
Theft from the dwelling/outside the dwelling ⁵	0.5	0.5	0.7	0.5	0.4	0.6
Bicycle theft ⁵	1.6	1.2	1.5	0.8	0.7	0.5
Criminal damage to personal property ⁵	0.7	0.4	0.8	0.8	0.9	1.3
Unweighted base - number of children aged 10 to 15	3,762	3,849	3,930	2,879	2,933	2,374

Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Some estimates are based on a small number of children, hence caution should be applied; User Guide tables UG7, UG8 and UG9 provide the margins of error around the estimates.

2. The 'Preferred measure' takes into account factors identified as important in determining the severity of an incidence (such as level of injury, value of item stolen or damaged, relationship with the perpetrator) while the 'Broad measure' counts all incidents which would be legally defined as crimes and therefore may include low-level incidents between children.

3. Question changes during development of the children's questionnaire in the first two years should be considered when interpreting the figures. Comparisons before year ending March 2012 should be interpreted with caution.
4. Base sizes for data from year ending March 2013 onwards are smaller than previous years, due to sample size reductions introduced.
5. These offences are designated as 'household offences for adults on the CSEW (respondents reply on behalf of the household) but are presented here as 'personal' offences when the property stolen or damaged solely belonged to the child respondent. This broadens the scope of personal victimisation but may also result in double-counting of offences on the adult survey; the extent to which this happens will be evaluated in future.

Notes for crime experienced by children aged 10 to 15

1. More information about the preferred and broad measures of crime against children can be found in the [User Guide](#).
2. Calendar years are used in this analysis.
3. See for instance, the chapter on mobile phone theft in [Focus On Property Crime 2011/12](#), and the overview chapter of [Focus On Property Crime 2013/14](#).

18 . Anti-social behaviour

Incidents recorded by the police

Figures recorded by the police relating to anti-social behaviour (ASB) can be considered alongside police recorded (notifiable) crime to provide a more comprehensive view of the crime and disorder that comes to the attention of the police. It is important to note that any incident of ASB which results in a notifiable offence will be included in police recorded crime figures (and excluded from the ASB counts). This is to ensure there are no overlaps between the two series.

The police record ASB incidents in accordance with the National Standard for Incident Recording (NSIR); Section 5.7 of the [User Guide](#) has further details. These figures are not currently accredited National Statistics. A review by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary ([HMIC](#)) in 2012 found significant variation in the recording of ASB incidents across police forces. It is also known that occasionally police forces may be duplicating some occurrences of a singular ASB incident where multiple reports by different callers have been made.

Following the HMIC review in 2012, it was also found that there was a wide variation in the quality of decision making associated with the recording of ASB¹. HMIC found instances of:

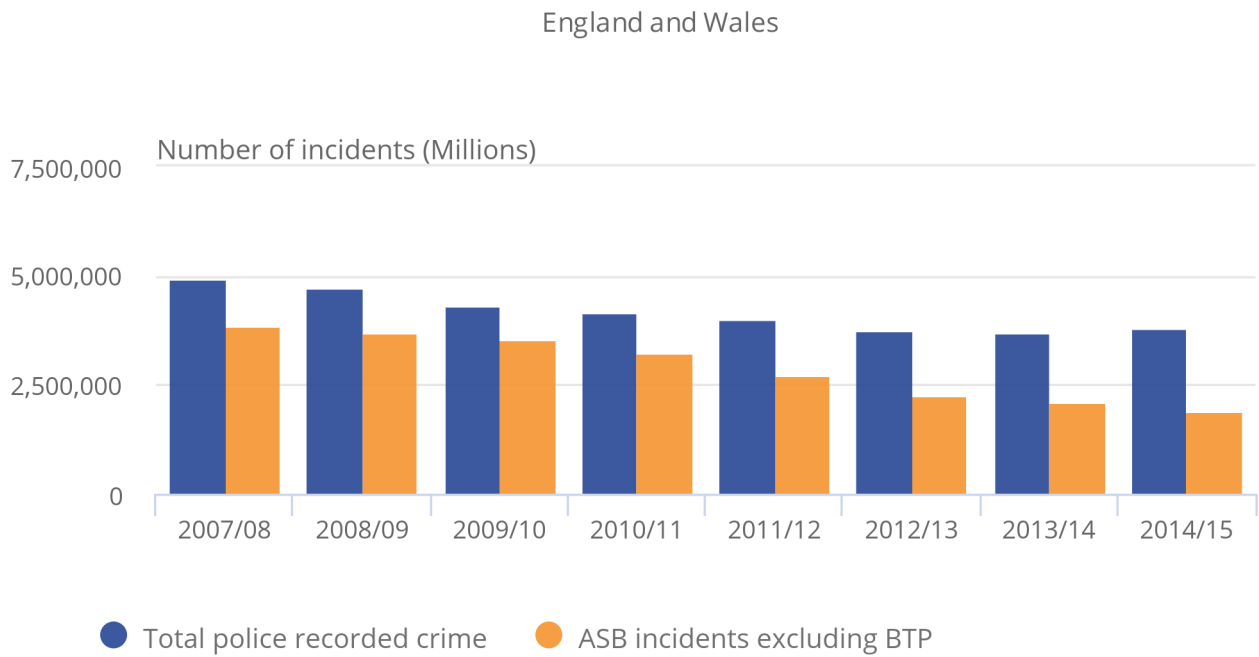
- forces failing to identify crimes, instead wrongly recording them as ASB
- reported ASB not being recorded on force systems, for instance if the victim had reported it directly to the neighbourhood team or via email (as opposed to by telephone)
- reported ASB being recorded as something else, such as suspicious behaviour
- incidents that were not ASB being recorded as ASB

Furthermore, data on ASB incidents before and after the year ending March 2012 are not directly comparable, owing to a change in the classification used for ASB incidents. From April 2012, ASB incidents also include data from the British Transport Police, so direct comparisons can only be made from 2012/13 onwards. The police recorded 2.0 million incidents of ASB in the year ending March 2015. This compares with the 3.8 million notifiable crimes recorded by the police over the same period (Figure 15). The number of ASB incidents recorded by the police in the year ending March 2015 decreased by 8%, compared with the previous year.

Figure 15: Police recorded crime and anti-social behaviour incidents in England and Wales, year ending March 2008 to year ending March 2015 [1,2]

England and Wales

Figure 15: Police recorded crime and anti-social behaviour incidents in England and Wales, year ending March 2008 to year ending March 2015 [1,2]



Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office / ASB incidents: years ending March 2008 to 2010 - National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA); year ending 2011 - Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC); from year ending March 2012 onwards - Home Office

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime and ASB incident data are not designated as National Statistics
2. Following a different approach to recording ASB incidents data, figures from year ending March 2012 onwards are not directly comparable with previous years; see Chapter 5 of the User Guide for more information
3. ASB incidents exclude British Transport Police
4. The data on this chart refer to crimes recorded in the financial year (April to March)

From the year ending March 2012, a new set of 3 simplified categories for ASB was introduced (further details are available in Chapter 5 of the [User Guide](#)):

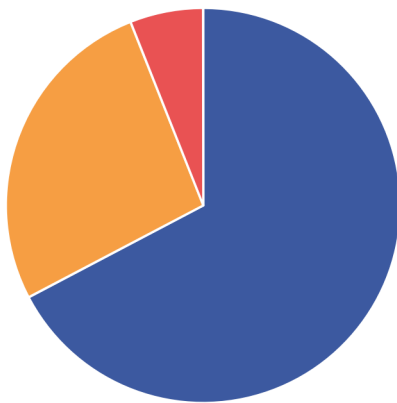
1. 'Nuisance' captures incidents where an act, condition, thing or person causes trouble, annoyance, irritation, inconvenience, offence or suffering to the local community in general rather than to individual victims.
2. 'Personal' captures incidents that are perceived as either deliberately targeted at an individual or group, or having an impact on an individual or group rather than the community at large.
3. 'Environmental' captures incidents where individuals and groups have an impact on their surroundings, including natural, built and social environments.

All forces adopted these new definitions, though in the [HMIC report](#) it was found that 35% of all incidents reviewed were incorrectly categorised; this should be taken into account when considering ASB incident figures.

In the year ending March 2015, 67% of the ASB incidents categorised by the police were identified as nuisance; 27% as personal; and 6% as environmental (Figure 16). This distribution may reflect propensity of reporting rather than the actual distribution of ASB by type.

Figure 16: Categories of anti-social behaviour incidents in England and Wales, year ending March 2015

Figure 16: Categories of anti-social behaviour incidents in England and Wales, year ending March 2015



Source: Police recorded incidents, Home Office

Notes:

1. ASB incident data are not designated as National Statistics
2. Figures include British Transport Police
3. The data on this chart refer to crimes recorded in the financial year (April to March)

CSEW measures of anti-social behaviour

Questions about respondents' actual experiences of ASB in their local area were added to the year ending March 2012 Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) to expand on existing questions about perceived ASB. These questions asked whether the respondent had personally experienced or witnessed ASB in their local area and, if so, what types.

In the year ending March 2015, 28% of adults indicated that they had personally experienced or witnessed at least one of the ASB problems asked about in their local area in the previous year (Table 25), which has not changed from the previous year. This included 10% of adults who experienced or witnessed drink related anti-social behaviour and 8% who witnessed or experienced groups hanging around on the streets.

Table 25: CSEW experiences of anti-social behaviour, year ending March 2014 and year ending March 2015

England and Wales, Adults aged 16 and over

	%	
	Apr '14 to Mar '15 compared with:	
	Apr '13 to Mar '14	Apr '14 to Mar '15
Personally experienced/witnessed anti-social behaviour in local area	28.5	27.8
Types of anti-social behaviour experienced/witnessed ¹		
Drink related behaviour	9.6	9.8
Groups hanging around on the streets	8.6	8.5
Inconsiderate behaviour ²	5.3	5.3
Loud music or other noise	5.1	5.3
Litter, rubbish or dog-fouling	4.1	4.6
Vandalism, criminal damage or graffiti	3.7	4.0
Vehicle related behaviour ³	3.1 *	3.8
People using or dealing drugs	3.0 *	3.7
People being intimidated, verbally abused or harassed	3.3	3.4
Nuisance neighbours	2.8	3.0
Begging, vagrancy or homeless people	0.9	1.0
Out of control or dangerous dogs	0.6	0.8
People committing inappropriate or indecent sexual acts in public	0.2	0.3
Other anti-social behaviour	1.8	1.8
Unweighted base- number of adults	35,348	33,332

Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

1. Respondents can experience more than one type of anti-social behaviour, so percentages will not sum to the total that experienced/witnessed anti-social behaviour in their local area.

2. Includes repeated/inappropriate use of fireworks; youths kicking/throwing balls in inappropriate areas; cycling /skateboarding in pedestrian areas or obstructing pavements; people throwing stones/bottles/eggs, etc.

3. Includes inconvenient/illegal parking; abandoned vehicles; speeding cars/motorcycles; car revving; joyriding, etc.

4. * Statistically significant difference

The CSEW also contains a separate set of questions asking respondents about perceptions of problems with different types of ASB in their local area; 7 of these are used to provide an overall index of perceived ASB. In the year ending March 2015 CSEW, 11% of adults perceived there to be a high level of ASB in their local area (Table 26), which was no change on the previous year (the 1% drop was not statistically significant).

Since the year ending March 2005 the CSEW has consistently estimated that around a quarter of adults perceive a problem in their local area with "people using or dealing drugs" and almost a third perceive "rubbish or litter lying around" as a problem in their local area. Other anti-social behaviour indicators have tended to show declines over this time period, with the most pronounced decline for the 'Abandoned or burnt-out cars' category, which peaked at 24% in 2002/03 and has subsequently fallen each year down to 2% of adults in the year ending March 2015 ([Table D9 \(381.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#)).

Table 26: CSEW trends in the anti-social behaviour indicators, years ending December 1996 to March 2015 [1]

England and Wales, Adults aged 16 and over

		Apr '14 to Mar '15 compared with:					%
		Jan '96 to Dec '96	Apr '04 to Mar '05	Apr '09 to Mar '10	Apr '13 to Mar '14	Apr '14 to Mar '15	
High level of perceived anti-social behaviour ²	:		17.0	14.4	12.1	11.0	
Percentage saying there is a very/fairly big problem in their area							
Rubbish or litter lying around		26.0	29.9	28.3	29.3	28.8	
People using or dealing drugs		20.9	25.7	26.0	24.9	24.3	
People being drunk or rowdy in public places ²	:		22.4	23.9	19.3	18.3	
Teenagers hanging around on the streets		23.5	30.6	27.0	19.9	* 17.3	
Vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage to property		24.3	28.3	22.9	16.5	16.0	
Noisy neighbours or loud parties		7.7	9.1	11.0	11.0	11.8	
Abandoned or burnt-out cars ²	:		11.6	4.8	2.3	2.4	
Unweighted base- number of adults ^{3,4}		7,625	42,937	42,390	8,742	8,190	

Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. The Annual trend and demographic table D9 contains further years data
2. The question on abandoned or burn-out cars was introduced in 2000 and the question on people being drunk or rowdy in public places was introduced in 2001
3. Unweighted bases refer to the question relating to people using or dealing drugs. Other bases will be similar
4. From April 2011 the number of respondents asked questions about their perceptions of problems in the local area was reduced (from a full sample) to a half sample and from April 2012 was reduced to a quarter sample
5. * Statistically significant difference

It is difficult to directly compare the two CSEW measures (perceptions of and experiences of ASB) since the list of ASB categories used in the experience-based questions is more expansive than those asked of respondents in relation to their perceptions. They also measure different things; actual experiences and perceptions. It is likely someone can experience an ASB incident without necessarily believing that it is part of a problem in their local area, if it was an isolated occurrence, for example. The frequency or number of incidents experienced, coupled with the perceived extent and seriousness of a problem, will also vary from person to person.

Notes for anti-social behaviour

1. The HMIC report: [A step in the right direction: The policing of anti-social behaviour](#) has further details

19 . Other non-notifiable crimes

The police recorded crime series is restricted to offences which are, or can be, tried at a Crown Court and a few additional closely related summary offences¹. A range of non-notifiable offences may be dealt with by the police issuing an out of court disposal or by prosecution at court. Offences dealt with at court may also include some offences that have been identified by other agencies – for example, prosecutions by TV Licensing or by the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) for vehicle registration offences.

Data on these offences provide counts of offences where action has been brought against an offender and guilt has either been ascertained in court, or the offender has admitted culpability through acceptance of a penalty notice. These offences generally only come to light through the relevant authorities looking to identify offending behaviour. These figures help fill a gap in the coverage of the main Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) and police recorded crime statistics.

The most recent data available on non-notifiable crimes are for the year ending December 2014. Key findings include the following:

- cases brought to court in the year ending December 2014 resulted in over 1.0 million convictions for non-notifiable offences, an increase of 3% from the previous year (Tables 27a and 27b)²
- around 29,000 Penalty Notices for Disorder were issued for non-notifiable offences in the year ending December 2014 a decrease of 17% from the previous year³

Table 27a: Non-notifiable crimes dealt with by the courts/Penalty Notices for Disorder - number and rate

England and Wales

	Apr '09 to Mar '10 ¹	Jan '13 to Dec '13	Jan '14 to Dec 14
Non-notifiable convictions (thousands) ²	1,239	984	1,017
Incidence rate (per 1,000 population) ^{3,4}	23	18	18
Non-notifiable Penalty Notices for Disorder (thousands) ^{5,6}	63	34	29
Incidence rate (per 1,000 population) ^{3,4}	1	1	1

Source: Ministry of Justice Criminal Justice Statistics Quarterly Update to Dec 2014 (Tables 1.2, 2.1, 3.4)

Notes:

1. Comparisons are made against the year ending March 2010. This is the earliest point in the published time series.
2. Figures for non-notifiable convictions apply to offenders aged 10 and over.
3. The year to December 2014 incidence rate is calculated using ONS mid-2013 census based population estimates. Other figures are also calculated using mid-year population estimates from previous years.
4. Numbers will be affected by the size of the resident population relative to the transient or visiting populations and may therefore over-represent the number of crimes relative to the real population of potential offenders.
5. Penalty Notices for Disorder, both higher and lower tier offences, issued to offenders aged 16 and over.
6. Includes British Transport Police from 2011.

Table 27b: Non-notifiable crimes dealt with by the courts/Penalty Notices for Disorder - percentage change

England and Wales

	Percentage change	
	Jan '14 to Dec '14 compared with	
	Apr '09 to Mar 10 ¹	Jan '13 to Dec '13
Non-notifiable convictions ²	-18	3
Incidence rate ^{3,4}	-21	3
Non-notifiable Penalty Notices for Disorder ^{5,6}	-54	-17
Incidence rate ^{3,4}	-56	-17

Source: Ministry of Justice Criminal Justice Statistics Quarterly Update to Dec 2014 (Tables 1.2, 2.1, 3.4)

Notes:

1. Comparisons are made against the year ending March 2010. This is the earliest point in the published time series
2. Figures for non-notifiable convictions apply to offenders aged 10 and over
3. The year to December 2014 incidence rate is calculated using ONS mid-2013 census based population estimates. Other figures are also calculated using mid-year population estimates from previous years
4. Numbers will be affected by the size of the resident population relative to the transient or visiting populations and may therefore over-represent the number of crimes relative to the real population of potential offenders
5. Penalty Notices for Disorder, both higher and lower tier offences, issued to offenders aged 16 and over
6. Includes British Transport Police from 2011

The police and, increasingly, local authorities, have powers to issue penalty notices for a range of traffic offences; the police issued 1.15 million Fixed Penalty Notices (over 60% of which related to speeding) in 2013/4.

Notes for other non-notifiable crimes

1. The Notifiable Offence List includes all indictable and triable-either-way offences (that is, offences which could be tried at a Crown Court) and a few additional closely related summary offences (which would be dealt with by magistrates' courts). Appendix 1 of the [User Guide](#) has more information on the classifications used for notifiable crimes recorded by the police.
2. The latest figures available from the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) relate to all offences for the year ending December 2014 and thus lag the CSEW and police recorded series by 3 months but are included to give a fuller picture.
3. Figures from the MoJ's [Criminal Justice Statistics Quarterly Update to December 2014](#) (Tables 1.2, 2.1, 3.4).
4. Figures from the Home Office's [Police Powers and Procedures 2013/14](#) publication.

20 . Commercial Victimisation Survey

In order to address the significant gap in crime statistics that existed for crimes against businesses, the [National Statistician's review of crime statistics](#) (National Statistician, 2011), recommended that the Home Office continue to implement its plans for a telephone survey of businesses.

The 2014 Commercial Victimisation Survey (CVS)¹ provided information on the volume and type of crime committed against business premises in England and Wales across three sectors: 'Wholesale and retail'; 'Accommodation and food'; and 'Agriculture, forestry and fishing'. Between them, these 3 sectors accounted for just under a third of all business premises in England and Wales in 2014.

The 2013 and 2012 CVS's covered a slightly different set of business sectors. For 2013² the same sectors as 2014 were covered with the addition of 'Arts, entertainment and recreation'. The 2012³ CVS also included 'Wholesale and retail'; 'Accommodation and food'; and additionally 'Manufacturing'; and 'Transportation and storage'.

Headline figures for the number of crimes against businesses premises in the sectors covered by the CVS are included in this bulletin.

In the 2014 CVS there were an estimated total of 4,123,000 crimes experienced by business premises in the wholesale and retail sector. The apparent decrease of 30% compared with the 2013 CVS (5,915,000 crimes) was not statistically significant. However, comparing the 2014 CVS with the 2012 CVS there was a 47% statistically significant decrease. Between the 2012 and 2014 surveys estimated levels of shoplifting and burglary showed statistically significant decreases.

In the accommodation and food sector, the 2014 CVS estimated a total of 565,000 crimes against premises. The apparent 2% fall compared with the 2013 CVS (575,000 crimes) was not statistically significant. However, comparing the 2014 CVS with the 2012 CVS (985,000 crimes) there was a 43% statistically significant decrease over this time period. Between the 2012 and 2014 surveys estimated levels of theft and burglary showed statistically significant decreases.

In the 2014 CVS there were an estimated total of 95,000 crimes experienced by business premises in the agriculture, forestry and fishing sector. The apparent decrease of 29% compared with the 2013 CVS (133,000 crimes) was not statistically significant. This sector was not included in the 2012 CVS.

Of the three sectors surveyed in 2014, the highest levels of victimisation were seen for 'Wholesale and retail' premises (41% of premises experienced crime) and least prevalent in 'Agriculture, forestry and fishing' premises (26% of premises experienced crime in the 2014 CVS).

Table 28: Crime experienced by businesses, by industry sector, 2012, 2013 and 2014 CVS [1]

England and Wales

	All CVS crime ¹ (numbers of incidents, 000s)	All CVS crime (rate per 1,000 premises)	All CVS crime (% of premises that experienced crime)
2012			
Wholesale and retail	7,708	19,701	53
Accommodation and food	985	7,361	43
Transportation and storage	324	5,824	40
Manufacturing	164	1,500	30
2013			
Wholesale and retail	5,915	17,261	45
Accommodation and food	575	4,565	42
Arts, entertainment and recreation	196	4,660	45
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	133	1,475	30
2014			
Wholesale and retail	4,123	13,070	41
Accommodation and food	565	4,677	37
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	95	1,131	26

Source: 2012, 2013 and 2014 Commercial Victimisation Survey, Home Office

Notes:

1. Data may not sum to totals shown due to rounding

Notes for Commercial Victimisation Survey

1. The Home Office's 2014 findings: Crimes against businesses: Findings from the 2014 Commercial Victimisation Survey
2. The Home Office's 2013 findings: Headline findings from the 2013 Commercial Victimisation Survey and Detailed findings from the 2013 Commercial Victimisation Survey
3. The Home Office 2012 findings: Headline findings from the 2012 Commercial Victimisation Survey and Detailed findings from the 2012 Commercial Victimisation Survey

21 . Data sources – coverage and coherence

Crime Survey for England and Wales

The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) is a face-to-face survey in which people resident in households in England and Wales are asked about their experiences of crime in the 12 months prior to the interview. It covers both children aged 10-15 and adults aged 16 and over, but does not cover those living in group residences (such as care homes, student halls of residence and prisons), or crimes against commercial or public sector bodies. Respondents are interviewed in their own homes by trained interviewers using a structured questionnaire that is administered on a laptop computer using specialist survey software. The questions asked do not use technical terms or legal definitions, but are phrased in plain English language.

The information collected during the interview is later reviewed by a team of specialist coders employed by the survey contractors (currently TNS-BMRB) who determine whether or not what was reported amounts to a crime in law and, if so, what offence has been experienced. This 'offence coding' aims to reflect the Home Office Counting Rules for recorded crime that govern how the police record offences reported to them. The CSEW is able to capture all offences experienced by those interviewed, not just those that have been reported to, and recorded by, the police. It covers a broad range of victim-based crimes experienced by the resident household population. However, there are some serious but relatively low volume offences, such as homicide and sexual offences, which are not included in its main estimates. The survey also currently excludes fraud and cyber crime though there is ongoing development work to address this gap, as described in the recently published methodological note [Update – Extending the CSEW to include fraud and cyber crime \(113.5 Kb Pdf\)](#). This [infographic](#) sets out what is and is not covered by the CSEW.

Since it began, the CSEW has been conducted by an independent (from government or the police) survey research organisation using trained interviewers to collect data from sampled respondents. The interviewers have no vested interest in the results of the survey. For the crime types and population groups it covers, the CSEW has a consistent methodology and is unaffected by changes in levels of public reporting to the police, recording practice or police activity. As such, the survey is widely seen to operate as an independent reality-check of the police figures. The independence of the survey has been further strengthened by the transfer of responsibility from the Home Office to ONS in April 2012.

The CSEW has a higher number of reported offences than police recorded crime as the survey is able to capture all offences by those interviewed, not just those that have been reported to the police and then recorded. However, it does cover a narrower range of offences than the police recorded crime collection.

The CSEW has necessary exclusions from its main count of crime (for example, homicide, crimes against businesses and other organisations, and drug possession). The survey also excludes sexual offences from its main crime count given the sensitivities around reporting this in the context of a face-to-face interview. However, at the end of the main interview there is a self-completion element (via a computer), where adults aged 16 to 59 are asked about their experience of domestic and sexual violence, and these results are reported separately¹.

Since the survey started in 1982 (covering crime experienced in 1981) a core module of victimisation questions has asked about a range of offences experienced either by the household (such as burglary) or by the individual respondent (such as robbery). The methodologies employed have remained unchanged since the survey started enabling a consistent measure of crimes committed against individuals to be created over the last thirty years. One such methodology involves the estimates only including the first five incidents in any series of repeat crimes (known as capping) in order to ensure that estimates are not affected by respondents who report an extremely high number of crimes which may be variable between years. With recent attention placed on where the cap currently sits² (with only the first five incidents included), ONS have initiated a programme of work to investigate the effect of capping on a range of crime types and whether increasing the cap (or removing it entirely) would improve the estimates. Further information on the programme of work being conducted by ONS in relation to capping is available in the methodological note '[High frequency repeat victimisation in CSEW](#)'.

Offences such as fraud, cyber attacks, and online harassment have not traditionally been part of the core modules on the CSEW. Recent development work by ONS has led to the inclusion of new questions on the survey from April 2015 which will in future publications enable the CSEW to measure and understand the nature of these newer types of crime. Further information and details of the timetable by which ONS plan to publish these estimates can be found in the methodological note '[Update – Extending the CSEW to include fraud and cyber crime \(113.5 Kb Pdf\)](#)'.

Since the survey is based on a sample of the population, estimates have a margin of quantifiable (and non quantifiable) error associated with them. The latter includes:

- when respondents have recalled crimes in the reference period that actually occurred outside that period ('telescoping')
- crimes that did occur in the reference period that were not mentioned at all (either because respondents failed to recall a fairly trivial incident or, conversely, because they did not want to disclose an incident, such as a domestic assault)
- respondents saying they reported a crime to the police when they did not (a 'socially desirable' response)
- some incidents reported during the interview being miscoded ('interviewer/coder error')

In 2009, the CSEW was extended to cover children aged 10 to 15, and this release also incorporates results from this element of the survey. However, the main analysis and commentary is restricted to adults and households due to the long time series for which comparable data are available.

The CSEW has a nationally representative sample of around 35,000 adults and 3,000 children (aged 10 to 15 years) per year. The response rates for the survey in 2014/15 were 70% for adults and 60% for children. The survey is weighted to adjust for possible non-response bias and to ensure the sample reflects the profile of the general population. The [CSEW technical report](#) has more details of the methodology.

Police recorded crime and other sources of crime statistics

Police recorded crime figures are supplied by the 43 territorial police forces of England and Wales, plus the British Transport Police, via the Home Office, to ONS. The coverage of police recorded crime is defined by the Notifiable Offence List³, which includes a broad range of offences, from murder to minor criminal damage, theft and public order offences. However, there are some, mainly less serious offences, that are excluded from the recorded crime collection. These 'non-notifiable' crimes include many incidents that might generally be considered to be anti-social behaviour, but that may also be crimes in law (including by-laws) such as littering, begging and drunkenness. Other non-notifiable offences include driving under the influence of alcohol, parking offences and TV licence evasion. These offences are not covered in either of the main two series and are separately reported on in this release to provide additional context.

Police recorded crime is the primary source of sub-national crime statistics and for relatively serious, but low volume, crimes that are not well measured by a sample survey. It covers victims (including, for example, residents of institutions and tourists as well as the resident population) and sectors (for example, commercial bodies) excluded from the CSEW sample. Recorded crime has a wider coverage of offences, for example covering homicide, sexual offences, and crimes without a specific, identifiable victim (referred to as 'Other crimes against society') not included in the main CSEW crime count. Police recorded crime also provides good measures of well-reported crimes, but does not cover any crimes that are not reported to, or discovered by, the police. It is also affected by changes in reporting and recording practices. Like any administrative data, police recorded crime will be affected by the rules governing the recording of data, by the systems in place, and by operational decisions in respect of the allocation of resources.

As well as the main police recorded crime series, there are additional collections providing detail on offences involving the use of knives and firearms, which are too low in volume to be measured reliably by the CSEW.

This quarterly statistical bulletin also draws on data from other sources to provide a more comprehensive picture. These include incidents of anti-social behaviour recorded by the police (which fall outside the coverage of notifiable offences), non-notifiable crimes dealt with by the courts (also outside the coverage of recorded crime or the CSEW), crime reports from the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau and the results of the Commercial Victimisation Surveys (based on a nationally representative sample of business premises in selected sectors each year).

More details of these sources can be found in the [User Guide to Crime Statistics for England and Wales](#). Information on UK and international comparisons can be found in the 'International and UK comparisons' section.

Strengths and limitations of the CSEW and police recorded crime

Strengths and limitations of the CSEW and police recorded crime

Survey for England and Wales

Strengths Large nationally representative sample survey which provides a good measure of long-term trends for the crime types and the population it covers (that is, those resident in households)

Consistent methodology over time

Covers crimes not reported to the police and is not affected by changes in police recording practice; therefore is a more reliable measure of long term trends

Coverage of survey extended in 2009 to include children aged 10 to 15 resident in households

Independent collection of crime figures

Limitations Survey is subject to error associated with sampling and respondents recalling past events

Excludes crimes against businesses and those not resident in households (for example, residents of institutions and visitors)

Headline estimates exclude offences that are difficult to estimate robustly (such as sexual offences) or that have no victim who can be interviewed (for example, homicides, and drug offences)

Excludes fraud and cyber crime

Police recorded crime

Strengths Has wider offence coverage and population coverage than the CSEW

Good measure of offences that are well-reported to the police

Is the primary source of local crime statistics and for lower-volume crimes (for example, homicide)

Provides whole counts (rather than estimates that are subject to sampling variation)

Time lag between occurrence of crime and reporting results tends to be short, providing an indication of emerging trends

Limitations Excludes offences that are not reported to, or not recorded by, the police and does not include less serious offences dealt with by magistrates courts (for example, motoring offences)

Trends can be influenced by changes in recording practices or police activity

There are concerns about the quality of recording – crimes may not be recorded consistently across police forces and so the true level of recorded crime may be understated

Not possible to make long-term comparisons due to fundamental changes in recording practice introduced in 1998 and 2002/03

Notes for data sources – coverage and coherence

1. [Focus on: Violent Crime and Sexual Offences, 2013/14](#) has more detailed information.
2. See for example, [this article](#) authored by Professor Sylvia Walby, published on The Conversation, 15 June 2015.
3. The Notifiable Offence List includes all indictable and triable-either-way offences (offences which could be tried at a crown court) and a few additional closely related summary offences (which would be dealt with by magistrates' courts). Appendix 1 of the [User Guide](#) has more information on the classifications used for notifiable crimes recorded by the police.
4. Section 3.3 of the [User Guide](#) has more information.

22 . Accuracy of the statistics

Being based on a sample survey, Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) estimates are subject to a margin of error. Unless stated otherwise, all changes in CSEW estimates described in the main text are statistically significant at the 5% level. Since the CSEW estimates are based on a sample survey, it is good practice to publish confidence intervals alongside them; these provide a measure of the reliability of the estimates. Details of where these are published, including further information on statistical significance can be found in Chapter 8 of the [User Guide](#).

Police recorded crime figures are a by-product of a live administrative system which is continually being updated as incidents are logged as crimes and subsequently investigated. Some incidents initially recorded as crime may, on further investigation, be found not to be a crime (described as being "no crimed"). Other justifications for a previously recorded crime being "no crimed" include, an incident being recorded in error, or transferred to another force. Some offences may change category, for example from theft to robbery (Section 3.2 of the [User Guide](#) has further details of the process involved from recording a crime to the production of statistics). The police return provisional figures to the Home Office on a monthly basis and each month they may supply revised totals for previously supplied months. The Home Office Statistics Unit undertake a series of validation checks on receipt of the data and query outliers with forces who may then re-submit data. Details of these validation checks are given in Section 3.3 of the User Guide, and the differences in data published between the current and preceding publications can be found in [Table QT1a \(208.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#).

Police recording practice is governed by the Home Office Counting Rules (HOCR) and the National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS). The HOCR have existed in some form since the 1920s, with substantial changes in 1998.

The NCRS was introduced in April 2002 following a critical report from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) in 2000 (Povey, 2000), which showed there was a problem with differing interpretation of the HOCR that resulted in inconsistent recording practices across forces.

The Audit Commission carried out regular independent audits of police data quality between 2003/04 and 2006/07. In their final assessment, published in September 2007 ([Audit Commission](#), 2007), they commented that "The police have continued to make significant improvements in crime recording performance and now have better quality crime data than ever before".

However, both the UK Statistics Authority (2010) and the National Statistician ([2011](#)) have highlighted concerns about the absence of such periodic audits. A HMIC quality review in 2009 into the way in which police forces record the most serious violence (which at the time was part of a central government target) found some variation in recording, which they partly attributed to the lack of independent monitoring of crime records. In line with a recommendation by the National Statistician, HMIC carried out a review of police crime and incident reports in all forces in England and Wales during 2011 ([HMIC, 2012](#)) and a full national inspection of crime data integrity was undertaken during 2014 ([HMIC, 2014](#)).

ONS analysis published in January 2013 used a 'comparable' sub-set of offences covered by both the CSEW and police recorded crime in order to compare the relationship between the two series. This analysis showed that between the years ending March 2003 and 2007 the reduction in the volume of crime measured by the two series was similar, but between the years ending March 2007 and 2012 the gap between the two series widened, with the police recorded crime series showing a faster rate of reduction. A possible explanation for this is a gradual erosion of compliance with the NCRS, such that a growing number of crimes reported to the police are not being captured in crime recording systems. The [Analysis of Variation in Crime trends](#) methodological note has more details.

Statistics based on police recorded crime data do not currently meet the required standard for designation as National Statistics.

Additionally, as part of the [inquiry by the Public Administration Select Committee \(PASC\)](#) into crime statistics allegations of under-recording of crime by the police have been made. In the PASC inquiry, the Chief Inspector of Constabulary, Sir Tom Winsor, outlined how HMIC would be undertaking an inspection of the integrity of police recorded crime during 2014. Findings from the inspections of crime recording processes and practices have helped provide further information on the level of compliance across England and Wales.

HMIC's inspection methodology involved audits of a sample of reports of crime received either through incidents reported by the public, crimes directly reported to a police crime bureau, and those reports referred by other agencies directly to specialist departments within a force. HMIC's aim was to check whether correct crime recording decisions were made in each case. Inspections were carried out between December 2013 and August 2014; a total of 10,267 reports of crime recorded between November 2012 and October 2013 across all 43 police forces in England and Wales were reviewed.

The final report on findings from the HMIC inspections, [Crime-recording: making the victim count](#), was published on 18 November 2014 and separate [crime data integrity force reports](#) for each of the 43 police forces in England and Wales were published on 27 November 2014.

Based on an audit of a large sample of records, HMIC concluded that, across England and Wales as a whole, an estimated 1 in 5 offences (19%) that should have been recorded as crimes were not. The greatest levels of under-recording were seen for violence against the person offences (33%) and sexual offences (26%). However, there was considerable variation in the level of under-recording across the different offence types investigated. For other crime types: an estimated 14% of criminal damage and arson offences that should have been recorded as crimes were not; 14% of robbery offences; 11% of burglary offences; and 17% of other offences (excluding fraud).

The final HMIC [report](#) outlines several recommendations to strengthen recording practices in forces including improved training for those involved in crime recording, better auditing and tightening of recording processes. More detail can be found in the [User Guide](#).

Current increases seen in both certain crime types in police recorded crime data, and across various police forces, are likely to be influenced by the implementation of the HMIC recommendations. As a result these trends should be interpreted with caution.

Further evidence suggesting that there has been a recent improvement in compliance with the NCRS can be seen from updated analysis comparing trends in the CSEW and police recorded crime (presented in Section 4.2 of the [User Guide](#)). This shows that the gap between the two series is narrowing; suggesting that improvements to recording practices may be partly responsible for increases in recorded crime.

Interpreting data on police recorded crime

The renewed focus on the quality of crime recording means that caution is needed when interpreting statistics on police recorded crime. While we know that it is likely that improvements in compliance with the NCRS have led to increases in the number of crimes recorded by the police it is not possible to quantify the scale of this, or assess how this effect varied between different police forces. Police recorded crime for England and Wales as a whole has increased by 3% when compared with the previous year, and 26 police forces have recorded overall increases in levels of crime.

Apparent increases in police force area data may reflect a number of factors including tightening of recording practice, increases in reporting by victims and also genuine increases in the levels of crime.

It is thought that incidents of violence are more open to subjective judgements about recording and thus more prone to changes in police practice. A number of forces have also shown large increases in sexual offences, which are likely to be due to the 'Yewtree effect', although improved compliance with recording standards for sexual offences is also likely to have been a factor.

23 . Users of Crime Statistics

There is significant interest in crime statistics and a diverse range of users. These include elected national and local representatives (such as MPs, Police and Crime Commissioners and local councillors), police forces, those delivering support or services to victims of crime, lobby groups, journalists, academic researchers, teachers and students.

These statistics are used by central and local government and the police service for planning and monitoring service delivery and for resource allocation. The statistics are also used to inform public debate about crime and the public policy response to it. Further information about the uses of crime statistics is available in the [Crime Statistics Quality and Methodology Information report](#).

From November 2014 to January 2015 we conducted a user engagement exercise to help assess the extent to which police recorded crime statistics meet users' needs in light of concerns over the quality of the data raised by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) in its recent report [Crime Recording: making the victim count](#). We asked users if the findings would affect how people used the data, and how we might improve the statistics to better meet user needs. Feedback from users who took part indicated that:

- the majority will continue to use Police Recorded Crime Statistics, despite some concerns over their accuracy
- many said that it was now more important to continue to have clear commentary in statistical bulletins to highlight the limitations of the data
- many said they would use the data more cautiously in future and apply more caveats
- the majority used Police Recorded Crime data, because it is the best source available or the only data that fulfils their purpose
- the majority thought it was very important or fairly important to have an improved level of accuracy for them to continue using the statistics

A fuller report detailing [responses](#) to the user engagement exercise was published in May 2015.

24 . International and UK comparisons

There are currently no recognised international standards for crime recording. International comparisons are limited due to the differing legal systems that underpin crime statistics and processes for collecting and recording crimes.

Crimes recorded by the police

The system for recording crime in England and Wales by the police is widely recognised by international standards to be one of the best in the world. Few other jurisdictions have attempted to develop such a standardised approach to crime recording and some of those that have base their approach on the England and Wales model (for example, Australia, Northern Ireland). Therefore, it is difficult to make international comparisons of levels of recorded crime given the lack of consistency in definitions, legal systems and police or criminal justice recording practices.

The legal system in Northern Ireland is based on that of England and Wales and the Police Service for Northern Ireland (PSNI) has the same notifiable offence list for recorded crime as used in England and Wales. In addition, the PSNI has adopted the National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS) and Home Office Counting Rules for recorded crime that applies in England and Wales. Therefore there is broad comparability between the recorded crime statistics in Northern Ireland and England and Wales.

However, recorded crime statistics for England and Wales are not directly comparable with those in Scotland. The recorded crime statistics for Scotland are collected on the basis of the Scottish Crime Recording Standard, which was introduced in 2004. Like its counterpart in England and Wales, it aims to give consistency in crime recording. The main principles of the Scottish Crime Recording Standard are similar to the National Crime Recording Standard for England and Wales with regard to when a crime should be recorded.

However, there are differences between the respective counting rules. For example, the 'Principal Crime Rule' in England and Wales states that if a sequence of crimes in an incident, or alternatively a complex crime, contains more than 1 crime type, then the most serious crime should be counted. For example, an incident where an intruder breaks into a home and assaults the sole occupant would be recorded as 2 crimes in Scotland, while in England and Wales it would be recorded as 1 crime.

Differences in legislation and common law have also to be taken into account when comparing the crime statistics for England/Wales and Scotland.

Victimisation surveys

A number of countries run their own national victimisation surveys and they all broadly follow a similar model to the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) in attempting to obtain information from a representative sample of the population resident in households about their experience of criminal victimisation. The US National Crime and Victimisation Survey (NCVS) is the longest running, established in 1973 and there are similar surveys in other countries including Australia, Canada, Finland, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden and New Zealand. However, while these surveys have a similar objective they are not conducted using a standard methodology. Sampling (frames and of households/individuals) and modes of interview (for example face-to-face interviewing, telephone interviewing, self-completion via the web) differ, as do the crime reference periods (last 5 years, last 12 months, last calendar year) over which respondents are asked about their victimisation experience. Similarly, there is a lack of standardisation in question wording and order. Response rates vary considerably across the world, as do methods to adjust for any resulting possible non-response bias; therefore, it becomes extremely difficult to make valid comparisons between the surveys.

There have been attempts in the past to run international surveys on a standard basis and the International Crime and Victimization Survey (ICVS) was initiated by a group of European criminologists with expertise in national crime surveys. The survey aimed to produce estimates of victimisation that could be used for international comparisons. The first survey was run in 1989 and was repeated in 1992, 1996 and 2004/5. All surveys were based upon a 2,000 sample of the population, and in most countries, surveys were carried out with computer-assisted telephone interviewing. A pilot ICVS-2, intended to test alternative and cheaper modes of data collection including self-completion via the web, was carried out in a limited number of countries in 2010.

However, despite the attempt to obtain a standardised and comparable approach to all of the surveys, this was never successfully achieved. While a standard questionnaire was used in all countries, alongside a standard mode of interviewing, important differences remained in the approach to sampling, translation of questions into different national languages, interview lengths and response rates which make comparisons problematic.

Both Scotland and Northern Ireland have their own separate victimisation surveys that, like the CSEW, complement their recorded crime figures.

The Northern Ireland Crime Survey (NICS) closely mirrors the format and content of the CSEW, using a very similar methodology with continuous interviewing and a face-to-face interview with a nationally representative sample of adults (16 years and over), using a similar set of questions. Thus, results from the two surveys are broadly comparable.

The Scottish Crime and Justice Survey (SCJS) also follows a similar format to the CSEW, having a shared antecedence in the British Crime Survey (whose sample during some rounds of the survey in the 1980s covered Scotland, south of the Caledonian Canal). There are differences in the crimes/offence classifications to reflect the differing legal systems, but the results from the surveys are broadly comparable.

25. List of products

Release tables published alongside this commentary include a set of bulletin tables containing the data tables and numbers appearing behind graphs in this publication, and more detailed estimates and counts of crime levels as set out in the table below.

The following are associated with the production of crime statistics:

1. [Crime statistics publications on the Home Office website](#)
2. [Historic police recorded crime](#)
3. [National Statistician's Review of Crime Statistics](#)
4. [Previous quarterly publication](#)
5. [User Guide to Crime Statistics for England and Wales](#)
6. [Guide to Finding Crime Statistics](#)
7. [2013/14 Crime Survey for England and Wales Technical Report Volume 1](#)
8. [Analysis of variation in crime trends](#) (methodological note)
9. [Future Dissemination Strategy – Summary of Responses](#)
10. [Methodological note: Presentational changes to National Statistics on police recorded crime in England and Wales](#)
11. [Methodological note: Presentational and methodological improvements to National Statistics on the Crime Survey for England and Wales](#)

12. [Update – Extending the CSEW to include fraud and cyber crime](#) (methodological note)
13. [‘An overview of hate crime in England and Wales’](#) (published 17 December 2013)
14. [‘Focus on Violent Crime and Sexual Offences, 2013/14’](#) (published 12 February 2015)
15. [‘Focus on Public Perceptions of Crime and the Police, and the Personal Well-being of Victims, 2013 to 2014’](#) (published 26 March 2015)
16. [‘Focus on Property Crime, 2013/14’](#) (published 27 November 2014)

Anonymised datasets from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (in SPSS format) currently are available on:

- the [UK Data Service](#) through the [Economic and Social Data Service \(ESDS\)](#)
- Virtual Micro data Laboratory ([VML](#)).

In addition to these National Statistics releases, provisional police recorded crime data drawn from local management information systems sit behind, street level figures released each month, via [Police recorded crime, street level mapping tool](#).

Crime statistics for Scotland are available from the [Scottish Government](#).

Crime statistics for Northern Ireland are available from the [Police Service of Northern Ireland](#).

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27. Background notes

1. The Crime in England and Wales quarterly releases are produced in partnership with the Home Office who collate and quality assure the police recorded crime data presented in the bulletins. Home Office colleagues also quality assurance the overall content of the bulletin.
2. National Statistics are produced to high professional standards set out in the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure that they meet customer needs. They are produced free from any political interference.
3. Next quarterly publication - 15 October 2015

Future thematic report due to be published: Focus on Property Crime, 2014/15 – November 2015.

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4. Details of the policy governing the release of new data are available by visiting www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/code-of-practice/index.html or from the Media Relations Office email: media.relations@ons.gsi.gov.uk

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

Designation can be broadly interpreted to mean that the statistics:

- meet identified user needs
- are well explained and readily accessible
- are produced according to sound methods
- are managed impartially and objectively in the public interest

Once statistics have been designated as National Statistics it is a statutory requirement that the Code of Practice shall continue to be observed.