

Statistical bulletin

# Crime in England and Wales: year ending Mar 2017

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

- Excluding the new Experimental Statistics on fraud and computer misuse, latest estimates from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) showed there were 5.9 million incidents of crime covered by the survey, a 7% reduction compared with the previous year's survey.
- Including fraud and computer misuse offences, there were an estimated 11 million incidents of crime covered by the CSEW.
- The police recorded nearly 5 million offences in the year ending March 2017, which represented an annual rise of 10%; this increase is likely to reflect a range of factors, which vary by crime type, including continuing improvements to recording processes and practices, expanded offence coverage and also genuine increases in some crime types.
- The differing trends between the two data sources can be explained by methodological differences between them, such as crime and population coverage and variations in police recording practices over time.

## 2 . Statistician's quote

"The latest figures show the largest annual rise in crimes recorded by the police in a decade. While ongoing improvements to recording practices are driving this volume rise, we believe actual increases in crime are also a factor in a number of categories."

"Some of the increases recorded by the police are in the low volume, but high harm, offences such as homicide and knife crime that the Crime Survey is not designed to measure. If the increases in burglary and vehicle theft recorded by the police continue we would expect these to show up in the survey in due course. We will continue to monitor these trends and investigate the factors driving any changes."

John Flatley, Crime Statistics and Analysis, Office for National Statistics, @ONSJohnFlatley on Twitter.

## 3 . Things you need to know about this release

The Crime Survey for England and Wales (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 range of offences in the 12 months prior to the interview. For the population and offence types it covers, the CSEW generally provides the better measure of trends on a consistent basis over time, because it is unaffected by changes in levels of reporting to the police or police recording practices. The methodology employed in the headline estimate of crime has remained comparable since the survey began in 1981. Statistics produced from the CSEW are designated as National Statistics.

The CSEW is able to capture a broad range of victim-based crimes experienced by those interviewed, not just those that have been reported to, and recorded by, the police. However, there are some high harm but relatively lower-volume offences, such as homicide and sexual offences, which are not included in its main estimates. The survey also excludes crimes against commercial or public sector bodies, tourists or those living in communal establishments (such as care homes, student halls of residence and prisons). As the CSEW is a victim survey, it excludes so called "victimless" crimes such as drug possession.

Experimental Statistics on fraud and computer misuse from the survey are included in this release following the inclusion of new questions on such victimisation in October 2015 (further information is available in Section 5.4 of the [User Guide to Crime Statistics for England and Wales](#)). Until such data are available for 2 complete survey years, commentary on trends will be based on CSEW crime excluding fraud and computer misuse offences.

## Police recorded crime

Police recorded crime figures are restricted to a subset of notifiable offences<sup>1</sup> that have been reported to and recorded by the police. Therefore, while the police recorded crime series covers a wider population and a broader set of offences than the CSEW (for example, residents of institutions, tourists and crimes against commercial bodies), it does not include crimes that do not come to the attention of the police or are not recorded by them. The police recorded crime series is prone to changes in recording practices and police activity as well as changing behaviour in public reporting of crime. As a result, trends will not always reflect changing levels of criminal activity.

In January 2014, UK Statistics Authority found that the statistics based on police recorded crime data did not meet the required standard for designation as National Statistics. Police recorded crime is not currently considered a reliable measure of trends in crime for most crime types. Further information is available in the “Quality and methodology” section of this release.

## Time periods covered

The latest CSEW figures presented in this release are based on interviews conducted between April 2016 and March 2017, measuring peoples’ experiences of crime in the 12 months before the interview.

The latest recorded crime figures relate to crimes recorded by the police during the year ending March 2017 (between April 2016 and March 2017). In this release:

- “latest year” (or “latest survey year”) refers to the (survey) year ending March 2017
- “previous year” (or “previous survey year”) refers to the (survey) year ending March 2016
- any other time period is referred to explicitly

## Notes for: Things you need to know about this release

1. Notifiable offences are those crimes that could possibly be tried by a jury plus a few additional closely-related summary offences dealt with by magistrates, such as assault without injury.

## 4 . What is happening to trends in crime?

### Crime Survey for England and Wales

Excluding fraud and computer misuse offences, there were an estimated 5.9 million incidents of crime experienced by adults aged 16 and over based on Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) interviews in the year ending March 2017. This is a decrease of 7% from the 6.3 million incidents estimated in the previous year’s survey.

Estimates derived from the new fraud and computer misuse offence questions (published as [Experimental Statistics](#)) show there were an additional 5.2 million incidents of such offences in the latest year’s survey (3.4 million fraud and 1.8 million computer misuse offences). Adding fraud and computer misuse offences to the existing CSEW series gives an estimated 11 million incidents of crime covered by the survey. Valid year-on-year comparisons of CSEW estimates including the new fraud and computer misuse figures will not be available until January 2018, when 2 full years of data are available.

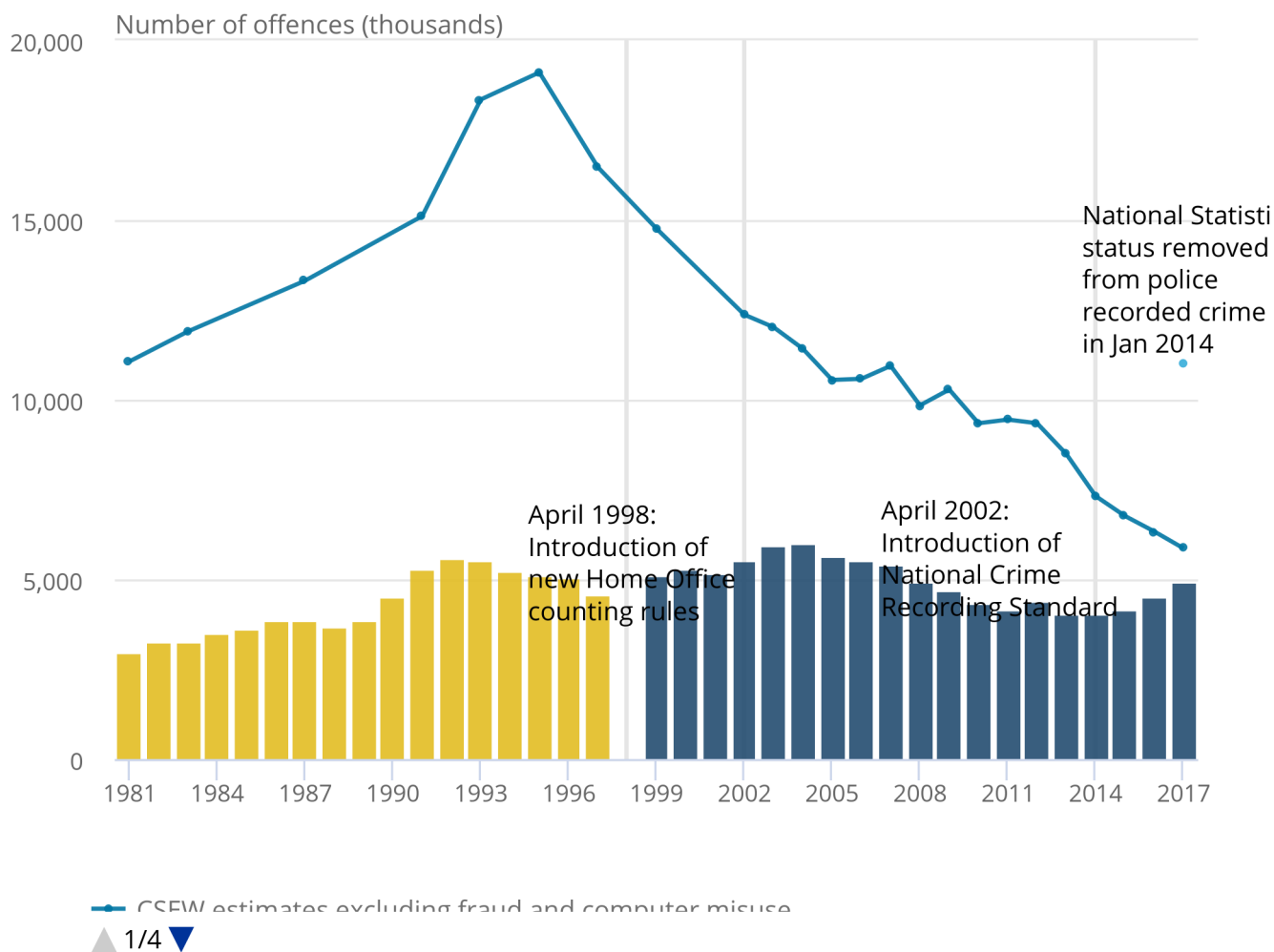
Crime covered by the CSEW (excluding fraud and computer misuse offences) increased steadily from 1981, before peaking in 1995. The CSEW then showed marked falls until the survey year ending March 2005. Following this there were smaller changes from year to year but the underlying trend continued downwards, albeit with some fluctuation. Since the survey year ending March 2013, CSEW crime has seen significant reductions each year (Figure 1).

Although fraud and computer misuse offences have substantially increased the volume of crime covered by the survey, this new estimated total of 11 million incidents is still 42% (8.1 million) below the 1995 peak level. However, the latest total is similar to the level of crime seen a decade ago (in the survey year ending March 2007, at 10.9 million incidents).

The likelihood of being a victim of CSEW crime (excluding fraud and computer misuse) has fallen considerably over time; around 14 in 100 adults were victims in the latest survey year compared with around 25 in 100 adults a decade ago (in the survey year ending March 2007) and around 40 in 100 adults in 1995 (the peak survey year). When fraud and computer misuse offences are included in the CSEW estimates, the victimisation rate in the latest survey year increases to around 21 in 100 adults, but this is still significantly lower than the victimisation rate seen a decade ago.

Figure 1: Trends in Crime Survey for England and Wales and police recorded crime, year ending December 1981 to year ending March 2017

Figure 1: Trends in Crime Survey for England and Wales and police recorded crime, year ending December 1981 to year ending March 2017



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

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

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics.
2. CSEW data on this chart refer to different time periods: a) 1981 to 1999 refer to crimes experienced in the calendar year (January to December) b) from year ending March 2002 onwards the estimates relate to crimes experienced in the 12 months before interview, based on interviews carried out in that financial year (April to March).
3. From the year ending March 2012 onwards, police recorded crime data has included offences from additional sources of fraud data.
4. CSEW data relate to adults aged 16 and over or to households.
5. Some forces have revised their data and police recorded crime totals may not agree with those previously published.
6. Data on fraud and computer misuse are published as Experimental Statistics, which are in the testing phase and not yet fully developed. They are published to involve users and stakeholders in their development, and as a means to build in quality at an early stage.
7. New victimisation questions on fraud and computer misuse were incorporated into the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) from October 2015. The questions are currently asked of half the survey sample to test for detrimental effects on the survey as a whole and help ensure that the historical time series is protected.

## Police recorded crime

In contrast to the 7% decrease seen in the CSEW, police recorded offences increased by 10% compared with the previous year, to nearly 5 million offences. All forces except for Cumbria and North Yorkshire showed an annual increase in the volume of crime recorded. These increases need to be seen in the context of the focus on the quality of crime recording by the police in recent years. This follows inspections of forces by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC), the [Public Administration Select Committee inquiry](#) into crime statistics, and the [UK Statistics Authority's decision](#) to remove the National Statistics designation from police recorded crime statistics in 2014.

An ongoing programme of unannounced inspections of crime recording on an ongoing basis by HMIC is likely to have continued to impact on crime recording practices in forces. From the 10 [inspection reports](#) published to date it is apparent that whilst improvements in recording have been made since 2014, the level varies between forces and there continues to be variation in the level of compliance with the [Home Office Counting Rules](#) (HOCR). The latest reports also show that the recording of violent and sexual offences in particular requires further improvement. This suggests that despite the increases seen in police recorded crime, the volume of offences recorded is still lower than it should be, particularly in relation to violent and sexual offences <sup>1</sup>.

Police recorded crime increased during most of the 1980s and then fell each year from 1992 to 1997. Following the expanded coverage of offences and changes to the HOCR in 1998, and the introduction of the National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS) in April 2002, there were increases in the number of crimes recorded by the police that were not reflected by trends in the CSEW. This suggested that the upward trend in recorded crime resulted from changes to recording processes.

Following the bedding-in of these recording changes, there was a general downward trend in police recorded crime for 7 years from the year ending March 2004; a trend which was mirrored by the CSEW. However, since the year ending March 2014, total police recorded crime has increased each year. The size of year-on-year increases has grown each year, with police recorded crime increasing by 3% in the year ending March 2015, by 8% in the year ending March 2016, and by 10% in the latest year <sup>2</sup>.

For detailed information on why the two data sources are showing differing trends see the methodological note, [Why do the two sources show differing trends](#) published alongside this bulletin, published alongside the bulletin.

## Other related data

CSEW estimates of crimes experienced by children aged 10 to 15 ([Appendix tables](#) A9, A10, A11 and A12) are not directly comparable with the main survey of adults, so are not included in the headline totals. The CSEW estimated that around 11 in 100 children aged 10 to 15 were victims of at least one crime in the latest survey year. A total of 697,000 crime<sup>3</sup> were estimated to have been experienced by children aged 10 to 15:

- 52% were violent crimes (359,000), with the majority of these being low-level violence<sup>4</sup>
- 36% were thefts of personal property (251,000)
- 7% were criminal damage to personal property (46,000)
- 6% were robbery (41,000)

Given the small sample size for the 10-to-15-year-old element of the CSEW, estimates can fluctuate over time and as a result, trends can be difficult to interpret. Detailed data are available from [Tables F21, F22 and F23](#).

Neither the CSEW nor police recorded crime series cover all crime and other sources of information help to provide a fuller picture. Additional data can provide information on non-notifiable offences.

Around 1.8 million incidents of anti-social behaviour (ASB) were recorded by the police (including the British Transport Police<sup>5</sup>) in the latest year, a decrease of 1% compared with the previous year ([Figure F12](#)). These are incidents that may still be crimes in law, such as littering or dog fouling, but are not of a level of severity that would result in the recording of a notifiable offence, and therefore are not included in the main police recorded crime series. There have been no recent inspections into ASB, however, 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.

The CSEW also provides information on ASB and showed that an estimated 30% of respondents reported experiencing or witnessing ASB in their local area in the latest survey year. While this is a statistically significant increase from the 28% found in the previous survey year, this estimate has remained at a similar level (between 27% and 30%) since the data were first collected in the survey year ending March 2012. Further information is available in [Figures F12 and F13 and Tables F24 and F25](#).

In the year ending December 2016 (the latest period for which data are available), there were 1.1 million convictions for non-notifiable offences<sup>6</sup> that were not covered in police recorded crime or the CSEW, similar to the number seen in the previous year.

In addition, there were 17,000 Penalty Notices for Disorder (PNDs) issued in relation to non-notifiable offences for the year ending December 2016, a decrease of 23% from the year ending December 2015; the majority of these PNDs related to drunk and disorderly behaviour<sup>7</sup>. Further information is available in [Tables F26a and F26b](#).

As the CSEW is a survey of the population resident in households it traditionally has not covered crimes against businesses<sup>8</sup>. Additionally, the police recorded crime series can only provide a partial picture of crimes against the business community as not all offences come to the attention of the police. The [Commercial Victimisation Survey](#) (CVS) provides estimates of crime against selected business premises<sup>9</sup> covered in its sample and gives some insight into the number of these crimes that go unreported to the police.

The 2016 CVS showed that businesses in the wholesale and retail sector experienced the highest levels of crime – an estimated 5.2 million incidents, a rate of around 13,000 incidents per 1,000 business premises. However, the CVS does not cover all industry sectors (the survey generally covers premises in three or four industrial sectors each year) and the small sample sizes associated with individual sectors mean that caution must be applied when comparing crime rates over time.

## Notes for: What is happening to trends in crime?

1. More information and details of both past and future inspections can be found on the [HMIC website](#) and in the [User Guide to Crime Statistics for England and Wales](#).
2. These figures are including fraud offences.
3. 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.
4. 78% of violent crimes experienced in the latest survey year resulted in minor or no injury.
5. It is not possible to look at longer trends in ASB including British Transport Police, as data is only available from the year ending March 2013.
6. 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.
7. A pilot scheme was implemented from November 2014 in Leicestershire, Staffordshire and West Yorkshire police forces to reduce the types of out-of-court disposals available for adult offenders, including limiting their use of Penalty Notices for Disorder (PND). In the pilot areas, the only out-of-court disposals available are community resolutions and conditional cautions. Since the pilot ended in November 2015 these three forces have continued with their limited use of out-of-court disposals and some other forces have also adopted similar policies. This is likely to have been a factor in the declining number of PNDs issued.
8. Although the recent extension to cover fraud against adults resident in households includes incidents where the victim has been fully (or partially) reimbursed by their financial provider.
9. 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.

## 5 . What types of crime have changed in the last year?

### Crime Survey for England and Wales

Most categories of theft in the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) estimates showed an apparent reduction compared with the previous year's survey but the only statistically significant decreases were in the sub-categories of other theft of personal property (16%), other household theft (13%) and vehicle-related theft (10%). In combination, these reductions led to a 10% significant decrease in all theft offences (Table 1a).





**Table 1a: Crime Survey for England and Wales incidence rates and numbers of incidents for year ending March 2017 and percentage change<sup>1</sup>**

Offence group <sup>2</sup>	Apr '16 to Mar '17		April 2016 to March 2017 compared with:							
			Jan '95 to Dec '95	Apr '06 to Mar '07	Apr '11 to Mar '12	Apr '15 to Mar '16				
	Rate per 1,000 population <sup>3</sup>	Number of incidents (thousands) <sup>4</sup>	Number of incidents - percentage change and significance <sup>5</sup>							
Violence	27	1,240	-68	*	-41	*	-29	*	-2	
with injury	13	588	-74	*	-47	*	-35	*	2	
without injury	14	652	-58	*	-34	*	-22	*	-6	
Robbery	3	129	-62	*	-59	*	-48	*	-17	
Theft offences <sup>6</sup>	..	3,324	-71	*	-41	*	-38	*	-10	*
Theft from the person	8	367	-46	*	-34	*	-40	*	1	
Other theft of personal property	14	641	-69	*	-43	*	-40	*	-16	*
Unweighted base - number of adults	35,420	35,420								
Domestic burglary	27	650	-73	*	-35	*	-30	*	-7	
in a dwelling	19	464	-73	*	-34	*	-33	*	-6	
in a non-connected building to a dwelling	8	186	-72	*	-38	*	-20	*	-10	
Other household theft	24	587	-63	*	-33	*	-48	*	-13	*
Unweighted base - number of households	35,334	35,334								
Vehicle-related theft	42	790	-81	*	-52	*	-34	*	-10	*
Unweighted base - number of vehicle owners	28,216	28,216								
Bicycle theft	23	290	-56	*	-37	*	-34	*	-11	
Unweighted base - number of bicycle owners	16,824	16,824								
Criminal damage	48	1,172	-65	*	-59	*	-41	*	-3	
Unweighted base - number of households	35,334	35,334								
ALL CSEW CRIME <sup>6</sup>	..	5,864	-69	*	-46	*	-37	*	-7	*
Fraud and computer misuse(ES) <sup>7,8</sup>	112	5,166	..		..		..		..	
Fraud	73	3,370	..		..		..		..	
Bank and credit account fraud	54	2,489	..		..		..		..	
Non-investment fraud	16	737	..		..		..		..	
Advance fee fraud	2	76	..		..		..		..	
Other fraud	1	68	..		..		..		..	

Computer misuse	39	1,795	..	..	..	..
Computer virus	26	1,193	..	..	..	..
Unauthorised access to personal information (including hacking)	13	603	..	..	..	..
Unweighted base - number of adults	17,171	17,171				
ALL CSEW CRIME INCLUDING FRAUD AND COMPUTER MISUSE (ES) <sup>9</sup>	..	11,030	..	..	..	..

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

1. More detail on further years can be found in Appendix tables A1 and A2.
2. Section 5 of the User Guide provides more information about the crime types included in this table.
3. Rates for violence, robbery, theft from the person and other theft of personal property are quoted per 1,000 adults; rates for domestic burglary, other household theft, and criminal damage are quoted per 1,000 households; rates for vehicle-related theft and bicycle theft are quoted per 1,000 vehicle-owning and bicycle-owning households respectively.
4. Data may not sum to totals shown due to rounding.
5. Statistically significant change at the 5% level is indicated by an asterisk.
6. It is not possible to construct a rate for all theft offences or CSEW crime because rates for household offences are based on rates per household, and those for personal offences on rates per adult, and the two cannot be combined.
7. Data on fraud and computer misuse are published as Experimental Statistics, which are in the testing phase and not yet fully developed. They are published in order to involve users and stakeholders in their development, and as a means to build in quality at an early stage.
8. New victimisation questions on fraud and computer misuse were incorporated into the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) from October 2015. The questions are currently asked of half the survey sample to test for detrimental effects on the survey as a whole and help ensure that the historical time series is protected.
9. This combined estimate is not comparable with headline estimates from earlier years. For year-on-year comparisons and analysis of long-term trends it is necessary to exclude fraud and computer misuse offences, as data on these are only available for the latest year.

The latest decrease in total theft offences estimated by the CSEW reflects the long-term trend; with total theft offences now 71% lower than the peak in 1995 and at the lowest number recorded since the survey began in 1981.

An estimated 10 in 100 adults experienced theft offences in the survey year ending March 2017 (4.4 million victims aged 16 and over, Table 1b). In comparison, an estimated 4 in 100 households experienced criminal damage (848,000 victims) and 2 in 100 adults experienced violence (770,000 victims).



**Table 1b: Crime Survey for England and Wales prevalence rates and numbers of victims for year ending March 2017 and percentage change<sup>1</sup>**

Offence group <sup>2</sup>	Apr '16 to Mar '17		April 2016 to March 2017 compared with:			
			Jan '95 to Dec '95	Apr '06 to Mar '07	Apr '11 to Mar '12	Apr '15 to Mar '16
	Percentage, victims once or more <sup>3</sup>	Number of victims (thousands) <sup>4</sup>	Numbers of victims - percentage change and significance <sup>5</sup>			
Violence	1.7	770	-60 *	-41 *	-30 *	-7
with injury	0.8	369	-69 *	-51 *	-40 *	-12
without injury	0.9	428	-51 *	-30 *	-19 *	-1
Robbery	0.2	106	-62 *	-55 *	-50 *	-17
Theft offences <sup>6</sup>	9.5	4,394	-66 *	-37 *	-34 *	-10 *
Theft from the person	0.7	346	-47 *	-32 *	-39 *	2
Other theft of personal property	1.2	576	-65 *	-40 *	-37 *	-15 *
Unweighted base - number of adults	35,420	35,420				
Domestic burglary	2.1	516	-71 *	-37 *	-31 *	-7
in a dwelling	1.5	366	-72 *	-37 *	-34 *	-5
in a non-connected building to a dwelling	0.6	157	-71 *	-38 *	-24 *	-11
Other household theft	2.0	488	-54 *	-26 *	-43 *	-11 *
Unweighted base - number of households	35,334	35,334				
Vehicle-related theft	3.6	682	-77 *	-48 *	-31 *	-9
Unweighted base - number of vehicle owners	28,216	28,216				
Bicycle theft	2.1	265	-53 *	-34 *	-33 *	-11
Unweighted base - number of bicycle owners	16,824	16,824				
Criminal damage	3.5	848	-60 *	-52 *	-38 *	-6
Unweighted base - number of households	35,334	35,334				
ALL CSEW CRIME <sup>7</sup>	13.9	6,438	-60 *	-38 *	-32 *	-8 *
Fraud and computer misuse (ES) <sup>8, 9</sup>	8.6	3,990	..	..	..	..
Fraud	6.0	2,772	..	..	..	..
Bank and credit account fraud	4.4	2,013	..	..	..	..
Non-investment fraud	1.5	696	..	..	..	..

Advance fee fraud	0.1	63	..	..	..	..
Other fraud	0.1	56	..	..	..	..
Computer misuse	3.0	1,375	..	..	..	..
Computer virus	1.9	896	..	..	..	..
Unauthorised access to personal information (including hacking)	1.1	518	..	..	..	..
Unweighted base - number of adults	17,171	17,171				
<hr/>						
ALL CSEW CRIME INCLUDING FRAUD AND COMPUTER MISUSE(ES) <sup>10</sup>	20.5	9,486	..	..	..	..

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

1. More detail on further years can be found in Appendix tables A3 and A8.
2. Section 5 of the User Guide provides more information about the crime types included in this table.
3. Percentages for violence, robbery, theft from the person and other theft of personal property are quoted for adults; percentages for domestic burglary, other household theft, and criminal damage are quoted for households; percentages for vehicle-related theft and bicycle theft are quoted for vehicle-owning and bicycle-owning households respectively.
4. Where applicable, numbers in sub-categories will not sum to totals, because adults /households may have been a victim of more than one crime.
5. Statistically significant change at the 5% level is indicated by an asterisk.
6. This is the estimated percentage/number of adults who have been a victim of at least one personal theft crime or have been resident in a household that was a victim of at least one household theft crime.
7. This is the estimated percentage/number of adults who have been a victim of at least one personal crime or have been resident in a household that was a victim of at least one household crime.
8. Data on fraud and computer misuse are published as Experimental Statistics, which are in the testing phase and not yet fully developed. They are published in order to involve users and stakeholders in their development, and as a means to build in quality at an early stage.
9. New victimisation questions on fraud and computer misuse were incorporated into the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) from October 2015. The questions are currently asked of half the survey sample to test for detrimental effects on the survey as a whole and help ensure that the historical time series is protected.
10. This combined estimate is not comparable with headline estimates from earlier years. For year-on-year comparisons and analysis of long-term trends it is necessary to exclude fraud and computer misuse offences, as data on these are only available for the latest year.



## Police recorded crime

The police recorded 458,021 more offences in the year ending March 2017 than in the previous year. This 10% rise in the number of recorded crimes in the latest year was largely driven by increases in violence against the person (up 175,060 offences, 18%), theft (up 118,774 offences, 7%) and public order offences (up 78,697 offences, 39%).

There were smaller volume increases in criminal damage and arson (up 24,302 offences, 5%), sexual offences (up 14,982 offences, 14%), burglary (up 10,535 offences, 3%), robbery (up 8,121 offences, 16%), and possession of weapons (up 5,243 offences, 20%).

The possible factors driving some of these changes are explained in “Has the long-term decline in theft ended?”, “Latest violent crime figures continue to present a complex picture” and “Police recorded offences involving weapons continue to rise” sections of this bulletin.



**Table 2: Police recorded crimes in England and Wales - rate, number and percentage change for year ending March 2017<sup>1,2,3</sup>**

Offence group	Apr '16 to Mar '17		Apr '16 to Mar '17 compared with:		
	Rate per 1,000 population	Number of offences	Apr '06 to Mar '07	Apr '11 to Mar '12	Apr '15 to Mar '16
			Number of offences - percentage change		
VICTIM-BASED CRIME	65	3,788,269	-21	10	10
Violence against the person offences	20	1,167,426	43	86	18
Homicide	0	723	-5	31	26
Violence with injury <sup>4</sup>	8	466,018	-8	38	8
Violence without injury <sup>5</sup>	12	700,685	128	143	25
Sexual offences	2	121,113	116	130	14
Rape	1	41,150	199	157	15
Other sexual offences	1	79,963	89	118	14
Robbery offences	1	59,231	-42	-21	16
Robbery of business property	0	6,004	-36	-11	11
Robbery of personal property	1	53,227	-42	-22	17
Theft offences	32	1,876,758	-29	-10	7
Burglary	7	411,536	-34	-18	3
Domestic burglary	4	205,869	-30	-16	6
Non-domestic burglary	4	205,667	-38	-20	-0
Vehicle offences	7	407,057	-47	-2	11
Theft of a motor vehicle <sup>6</sup>	2	97,152	-50	6	19
Theft from a vehicle	4	257,931	-49	-14	8
Interfering with a motor vehicle	1	51,974	-25	108	14
Theft from the person	2	88,512	-23	-12	6
Bicycle theft	2	94,487	-15	-18	9
Shoplifting	6	369,440	26	20	10
All other theft offences <sup>7</sup>	9	505,726	-31	-20	4
Criminal damage and arson	10	563,741	-52	-10	5
OTHER CRIMES AGAINST SOCIETY	9	527,231	-1	18	20
Drug offences	2	136,342	-30	-40	-8
Trafficking of drugs	0	25,224	-5	-19	-2
Possession of drugs	2	111,118	-34	-44	-10
Possession of weapons offences	1	30,869	-21	30	20

Public order offences	5	282,956	20	88	39
Miscellaneous crimes against society	1	77,064	20	71	23
<hr/>					
TOTAL FRAUD OFFENCES <sup>8</sup>	11	649,770	..	..	5
<hr/>					
TOTAL RECORDED CRIME - ALL OFFENCES INCLUDING FRAUD	86	4,965,270	-9	13	10

Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

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 tables A4 and A7 provide detailed footnotes and further years.
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. Includes theft of motor vehicle and aggravated vehicle taking.
7. 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.
8. Total fraud offences cover crimes recorded by the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau via Action Fraud, Cifas and Financial Fraud Action UK. Action Fraud have taken over the recording of fraud offences on behalf of individual police forces. Percentage changes compared with earlier years are not presented, as fraud figures for year ending March 2007 and year ending March 2012 covered only those crimes recorded by individual police forces. Given the addition of new data sources, it is not possible to make direct comparisons with earlier years.

In contrast to the decrease seen in CSEW estimates of theft, police recorded theft offences increased in the year ending March 2017 (up 118,774 offences, 7%). This increase is a result of rises in a number of theft categories, the largest rises were seen in vehicle theft offences (up 11% to 407,057) and shoplifting (up 10% to 369,440) ([Table A4](#)). For more information on theft, see the “Has the long-term decline in theft ended?” section of this bulletin.

The police recorded a 39% increase in public order offences in the last year, following an increase of 28% in the previous year ([Table A4](#)). Public order offences cover a range of incidents including “causing intentional harassment, alarm or distress”. These offences are not covered by the CSEW and can be influenced by changes in police activity and recording practices. Improvements to recording are thought to have had an impact on public order offences in a similar way to the related violence against the person offences.

Additionally, in the latest year, there was a 5% increase in the number of fraud offences referred to the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau (NFIB) in England and Wales (up to 649,770 offences) compared with the previous year. For detailed information on trends in fraud, see the “What is happening to trends in fraud?” section of this bulletin.

## 6 . Has the long-term decline in theft ended?

Both the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) and police recorded crime series have shown long-term declines in theft offences. Alongside this bulletin we have published four overview articles, with more detailed information on the long-term trends, on [bicycle theft](#), [vehicle-related theft](#), [robbery and theft from the person](#), and [burglary and other household theft](#).

The latest estimates from the CSEW showed a 10% decrease in all theft offences compared with the previous year. This was driven by a 13% decrease in other household theft (a volume decrease of 85,000 incidents), other theft of personal property (16%, a reduction of 123,000 incidents) and in vehicle-related theft (10%, a reduction of 88,000 incidents).

In contrast to the CSEW, police recorded theft has increased by 7% compared with the previous year. The theft offences category of police recorded crime covers a range of acquisitive crimes including burglary, vehicle offences (principally theft of and theft from a motor vehicle), theft from the person, as well as theft of unattended items. Robbery, which is theft (or attempted theft) involving the use or threat of force, is covered in a separate category. However, since it is a similar type of offence and the motivation to commit a robbery will normally be the acquisition of money or property, the latest robbery trends are also covered in this section.

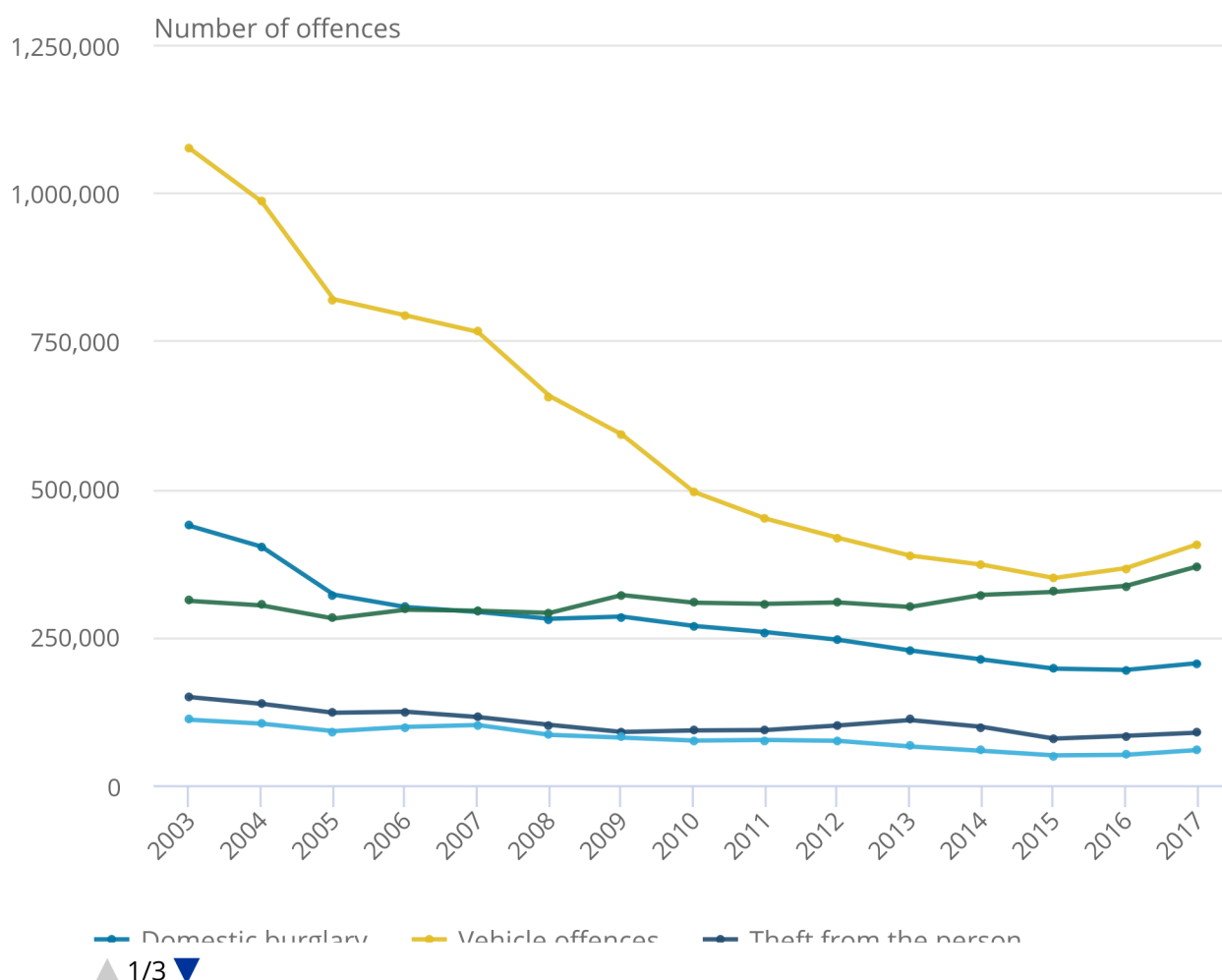
The police recorded increases across all theft categories, but the most marked were in vehicle theft offences (up 11%, from 366,248 to 407,057) and shoplifting (up 10%, from 336,322 to 369,440). Both of these categories have seen rising numbers of crimes recorded over the last few years, with shoplifting increasing in each of the last 3 years and vehicle thefts in the last 2 years. However, these latest increases were larger than those seen in the year ending March 2016 (5% vehicle theft offences, 3% shoplifting) ([Appendix Table A4](#)).

There were smaller volume increases in theft from the person offences (up by 6%, from 83,141 to 88,512) domestic burglary (up 6% compared with the previous year, from 194,384 to 205,869 offences) and robbery (up 16%, from 51,110 to 59,231). In these categories, the increases in the number of recorded crimes have emerged more recently.

These recent increases should be seen in the context of a longer-term declining trend in theft offences (Figure 2). The current level remains 29% lower than in the year ending March 2007 (Table 2). While the police recorded 118,774 more theft offences in the latest year compared with the previous one, when expressed as a rate per head of population, there has been little change compared with the previous year ([Table A7](#)).

**Figure 2: Trends in selected police recorded theft offences and robbery in England and Wales, year ending March 2003 to year ending March 2017**

Figure 2: Trends in selected police recorded theft offences and robbery in England and Wales, year ending March 2003 to year ending March 2017



Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

#### Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics.

Robbery is an offence that is disproportionately concentrated in London and other larger cities. In the latest year, London accounted for 41% of all police recorded robbery in England and Wales. Data published by Metropolitan Police<sup>1</sup> suggests that in recent years robberies committed on mopeds have increased across London. Often the mopeds used to facilitate snatch thefts and robberies are also stolen; these vehicles typically do not have immobilisers and vehicles are targeted that have little to no strong security products<sup>2</sup>. The increase in these types of crimes could be a contributing factor to the rise seen in vehicle-related thefts, theft from the person and robbery.

In contrast to the police recorded crime figures, the latest data from the CSEW continue to show falls in theft, with the estimated number of theft offences having declined by 10% compared with the previous year ( [Table A1](#)). However, this does not necessarily mean that we can conclude that increases in police recorded crime do not reflect a genuine rise in crime. While the CSEW provides a robust measure of long-term trends, as discussed within the [methodological note](#), [Why do the two sources show differing trends?](#), published alongside this bulletin, it is less useful at providing an indication of emerging trends. This is in part due to the time lag arising from the 12-month recall period<sup>3</sup> and also due to the natural variability in estimates arising from any sample survey.

While general recording process improvements may have spilled over into a number of these theft offence categories, it is likely that for domestic burglary, vehicle theft offences, theft from the person and robbery, these increases reflect a genuine rise in these types of crime.

## Notes for: Has the long-term decline in theft ended?

1. Evidenced in the Metropolitan Police's "[Be Safe](#)" Campaign
2. The lag effect on the CSEW relates to the reference period used in the survey interview. Respondents are asked about crimes they experienced in the 12 months prior to the interview. Since the earliest interviews in the current survey year took place in April 2016, the latest estimates are based on crimes occurring between April 2015 and February 2017. Further information on the survey reference period is available in Chapter 2 of the [User Guide to Crime Statistics for England and Wales](#).
3. The lag effect on the CSEW relates to the reference period used in the survey interview. Respondents are asked about crimes they experienced in the 12 months prior to the interview. Since the earliest interviews in the current survey year took place in April 2016, the latest estimates are based on crimes occurring between April 2015 and February 2017. Further information on the survey reference period is available in Chapter 2 of the [User Guide to Crime Statistics for England and Wales](#).

## 7 . Latest violent crime figures continue to present a complex picture

Violent crime covers a wide range of offences including minor assaults (such as pushing and shoving), harassment and abuse (that result in no physical harm), through to wounding and homicide. Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) violence includes incidents with and without injury and also covers attempted incidents. Violent offences in police recorded data are referred to as "violence against the person" and include homicide, violence with injury and violence without injury<sup>1</sup>. As with the CSEW, both actual and attempted assaults are included in the figures. The police recorded crime category of violence against the person also includes some offences, such as harassment and stalking, in which there is no physical assault involved.

For the population and violent offences that it covers, the CSEW provides the better measure of trends. The police recorded crime series is restricted to violent offences that have been reported to, and recorded by, the police. In addition, due to the ensuing efforts of police forces to tighten recording practice and improve recording processes, this series is not currently believed to provide a reliable measure of trends.

### Overview of the latest violent crime figures

There were an estimated 1.2 million incidents of violence experienced by adults aged 16 and over in the latest CSEW survey year; no change from the previous survey year (the apparent 2% decrease was not statistically significant). The sub-categories of "violence with injury" and "violence without injury" both showed no significant change (Figure 3).



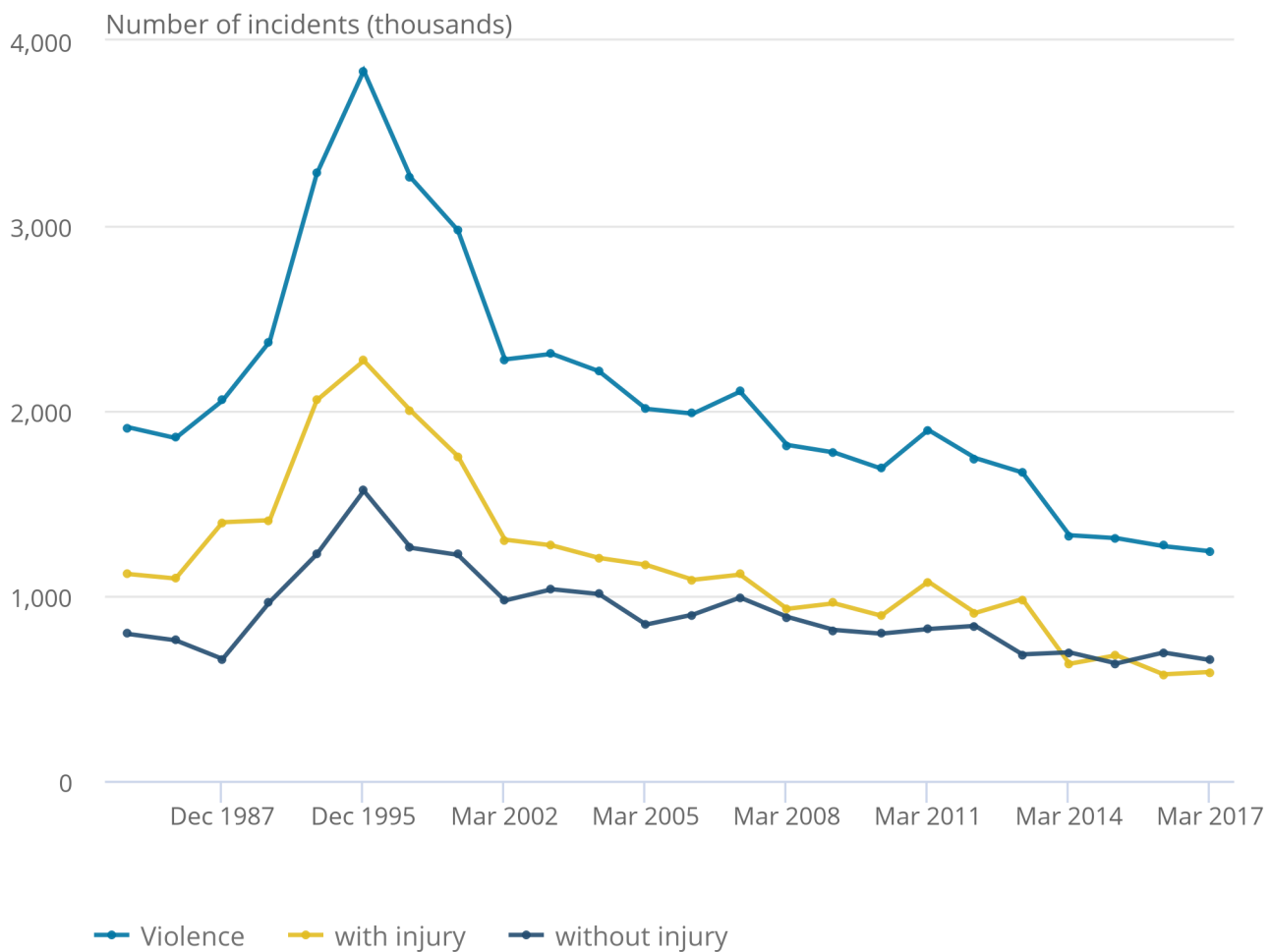
This fairly flat trend continues that seen in recent years, with no significant year-on-year change since the survey year ending March 2013. However, the cumulative effect of this downward trend has seen a statistically significant decrease of 26% in the latest survey year compared with the year ending March 2013. The longer-term reductions in violent crime, as shown by the CSEW, are also reflected in the findings of research conducted by the [Violence and Society Research Group at Cardiff University](#). Findings from their annual survey, covering a sample of hospital emergency departments and walk-in centres in England and Wales, show that serious violence-related attendances in 2016 were down compared with 2015 and continue a generally long-term downward trend.

Around 2 in every 100 adults were a victim of CSEW violent crime in the latest survey year, compared with around 3 in 100 adults in the survey year ending March 2007 and 5 in 100 adults in 1995 (the peak year).

Estimates of violence against 10-to-15-year-olds, as measured by the CSEW, can be found in [Table F22](#).

**Figure 3: Trends in Crime Survey for England and Wales violence, year ending December 1981 to year ending March 2017**

Figure 3: Trends in Crime Survey for England and Wales violence, year ending December 1981 to year ending March 2017



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

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 (that is, a moving reference period). Year-labels for the year ending March 2002 identify the CSEW year of interview.

In contrast to the recent flat trend shown by the CSEW, violence against the person offences recorded by the police in the latest year increased by 18% compared with the previous year (up from 992,366 to 1,167,426).

However, recent changes in recording practice make interpreting trends in police recorded violence against the person offences difficult. 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) in November 2014, found that levels of under-recording by the police were particularly pronounced for violent crime and sexual offences (where 67% and 74% of reports of crime were recorded respectively). These offences have been the main focus of the subsequent rolling programme of HMIC inspections.

Nationally, an estimated 1 in 3 (33%) reports of violence that should have been logged as crimes were not recorded as such.

Ongoing work by police forces over the last 2-to-3 years to improve crime recording practices are thought to be an important driver of the increase in all police recorded violence. These are thought to have had a larger effect on relatively less-serious types of violent crime but to have had a lesser impact on more serious sub-categories as described in the homicide and weapons sections.

More [recent inspections](#) carried out by HMIC<sup>2</sup> show that whilst improvements in recording have been made, this varies between forces and some forces have further work to do to ensure reports of crime, in particular violent crime, are recorded correctly. Therefore, the increases in police recorded crime as a result of improved recording could continue for some time.

The “violence without injury” sub-category, which accounted for 60% of all violence recorded by the police, showed a larger increase in the latest year (up 25% to 700,685 offences), than the “violence with injury” sub-category (up 8% to 466,018 offences).

There was a large volume increase in the sub-category of “assault without injury” (up 65,112 offences) and smaller increases in threats to kill (up 4,500 offences), modern slavery<sup>3</sup> (up 1,385 offences) and stalking (up 1,135 offences).

In the latest year, harassment offences accounted for 46% of the increase in violence without injury, and 37% of the increase in total violence against the person. In the latest year, harassment offences rose by 41% (up to 219,643 offences from 155,431 offences).

Previously, the expansion of the harassment category in April 2015 to include two additional notifiable offences<sup>4</sup> was a large driver in the increases in violence against the person offences. Although figures for both the latest year and previous year now include these two new offences, caution should be taken when making comparisons across the two years. The continued increase will in part be a result of improved compliance in recording of these offences over time.

The large increase seen in harassment in the latest year may also be due to some forces incorrectly recording some crimes as harassment. In the latest [joint inspection](#)<sup>5</sup> conducted by HMIC and HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate (HMCPSI), it was found that stalking was not always recorded accurately by the police and in some of these cases, stalking was recorded as harassment. These findings suggest we cannot currently be confident about the accuracy of the recorded crime figures for stalking or harassment.

Most of the 8% increase in the “violence with injury” sub-category (to 466,018 offences) is a result of an increase in assault with injury (91% of the increase). There was also a much smaller volume increase of 110 in the number of attempted murder offences<sup>6</sup>.

Nearly all police forces recorded a rise in violence in the latest year compared with the previous year. In percentage terms, the largest increase was reported by Durham Constabulary (up 55% to 14,650 offences). Other large percentage increases included Northumbria Police (up 51% to 32,941 offences), South Yorkshire Police (up 38% to 28,372 offences), and Cheshire Constabulary (up 34% to 18,289 offences), as shown in [Tables P1 and P2](#). When interpreting these figures, it is important to bear in mind that these increases will reflect recording improvements and the extent of such effects differs across police forces.

A number of forces have indicated that the rise in recorded violence is a result of a greater proportion of reports of crime being recorded rather than a genuine rise in violent crime. For example, data from the Metropolitan Police Service showed that while police recorded violence against the person increased by 5% in the latest year, the number of “[calls for service](#)” (for example, emergency and non-emergency calls from members of the public) relating to violent crime decreased by around 2% over the same period. The year ending March 2017 CSEW estimated that 43% of violence was reported to the police, which is a return to levels seen in the year ending March 2013 survey (44%) and earlier, following a period of higher reporting rates in the last few years.

## Homicide

Unlike many other offences in the “violence against the person” category, the quality of recording of homicides is thought to have remained consistently good.

The police recorded 723 homicides in the latest year, 149 more (26% increase) than in the previous year ( [Tables F3a and F3b](#))<sup>7,8</sup>. However, the 723 homicides recorded in the year ending March 2017 include the 96 cases of manslaughter that resulted from events in Hillsborough in 1989; excluding these cases, the number of homicides increased by 9%.

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 century, which was at a faster rate than population growth over the same period. However, over the past decade, the volume of homicides has generally decreased while the population of England and Wales has continued to grow. The rate of homicide fell 12% between the year ending March 2007 and the year ending March 2017, from 14 homicides per 1 million of the population to 12 homicides per 1 million. Excluding the 96 Hillsborough cases, the rate is 11 homicides per 1 million of the population.

There is more detailed information on long-term trends and the circumstances of violence in [Focus on violent crime and sexual offences, England and Wales: year ending March 2016](#); however, this does not include the most recent statistics for the year ending March 2017. The latest statistics published relating to “hate crime” were released by the Home Office in [Hate Crime, England and Wales, 2015 to 2016](#).

## Notes for: Latest violent crime figures continue to present a complex picture

1. There are some closely-related offences in the police recorded crime series, such as public order offences, that have no identifiable victim and are contained within the “other crimes against society” category.
2. These reports were published during 2016 and 2017, and the most recent reports were published on 15 June 2017.
3. Modern slavery can take multiple forms including sexual exploitation, forced labour and domestic servitude. Before 1 April 2015, modern slavery offences were recorded under trafficking for sexual exploitation, immigration offences, and other indictable or triable-either-way offences. As of 1 April 2015, a separately identifiable crime recording category of modern slavery was introduced. The [Modern Slavery Act 2015](#) consolidated existing slavery and trafficking offences into one Act. These provisions came into force on 31 July 2015.
4. These are “disclosure of private sexual photographs and films (including on the internet) with the intent to cause distress or anxiety” and “sending letters (including emails) with intent to cause distress or anxiety”; the latter is thought to account for 97% of these newly added offences, based on data from 42 forces supplied via the Home Office Data Hub.
5. [Living in fear - the police and CPS response to harassment and stalking](#) inspection report was published in July 2017.
6. These figures do not yet include attempted murders related to the Westminster Bridge terrorist-related incident in March 2017 as these numbers had not been confirmed at the time the data was compiled for publication.
7. Homicide includes the offences of murder, manslaughter, corporate manslaughter and infanticide. Figures from the Homicide Index for the time period April 2014 to March 2016, which take account of further police investigations and court outcomes, were published in [Focus on violent crime and sexual offences: year ending March 2016](#) on 9 February 2017.
8. These figures do not yet include murders related to the Westminster Bridge terrorist-related incident in March 2017 as these numbers had not been confirmed at the time the data was compiled for publication. This includes seven offences of corporate manslaughter relating to the Croydon train crash.

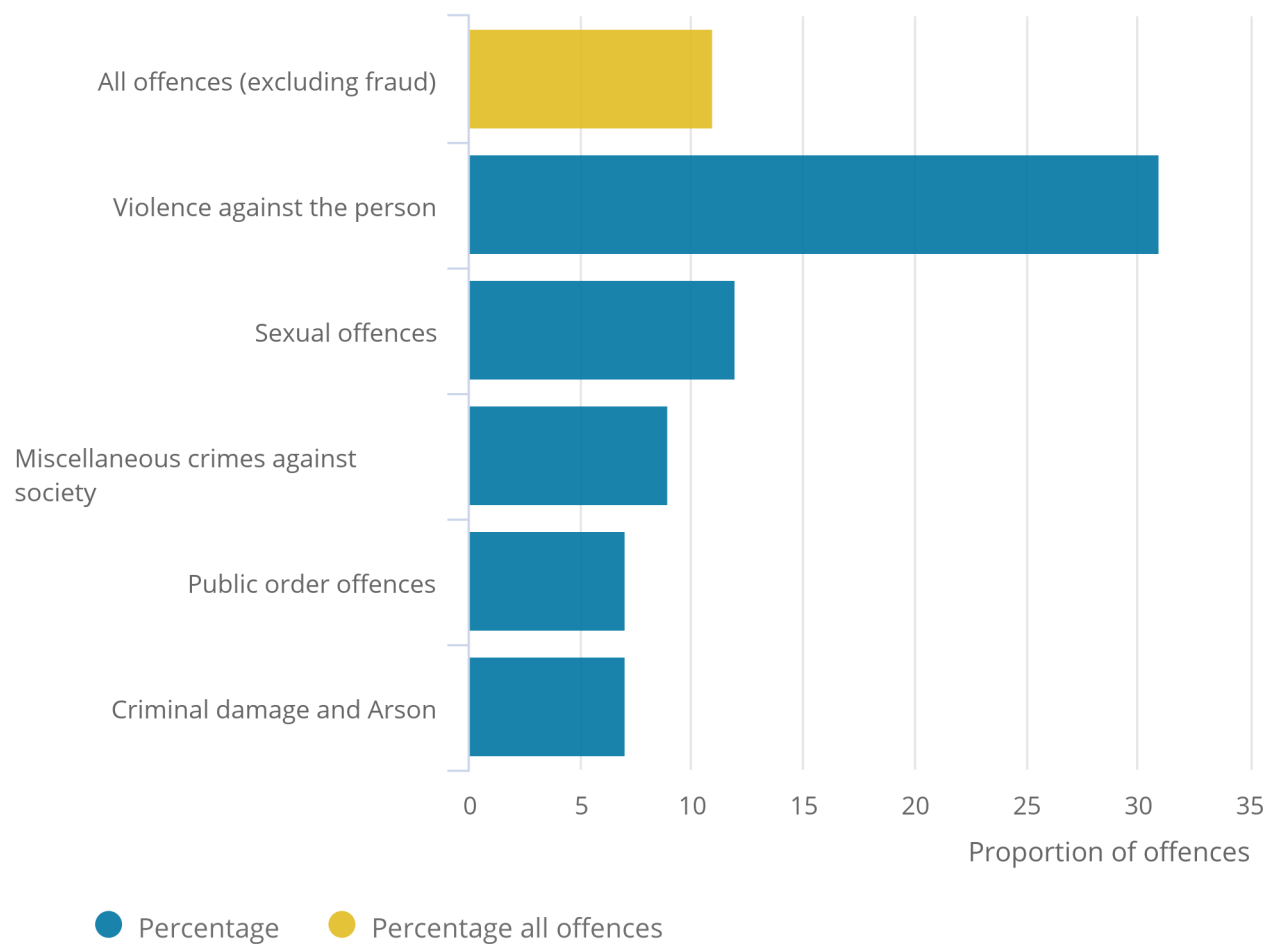
## 8 . Police recorded domestic abuse rises due to recording improvements

Another possible factor behind the rise in police recorded violent offences is forces experiencing an increase in the reporting of domestic abuse and the subsequent recording of these offences by the police. A 2015 [Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary \(HMIC\) report](#) concluded that recent increases in the number of domestic abuse-related crimes were due, in part, to police forces improving their recording of domestic abuse incidents as crimes and to forces actively encouraging victims to come forward to report these crimes.

The Home Office has been collecting information from the police, since April 2015, on whether recorded offences are related to domestic abuse. Crimes should be “flagged” as being domestic abuse-related by the police if the offence meets the government definition of domestic violence and abuse<sup>1</sup>. Data for the year ending March 2017 showed that violence against the person offences were the most likely to be flagged (31%), followed by sexual offences (12%) (Figure 4).

**Figure 4: Proportion of offences recorded by the police in England and Wales that were flagged as domestic abuse-related, selected offence groups, year ending March 2017**

Figure 4: Proportion of offences recorded by the police in England and Wales that were flagged as domestic abuse-related, selected offence groups, year ending March 2017



Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

Notes:

- 1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics.
- 2. Data are provisional and have not been reconciled with police forces.

Now that there are 2 years of data on offences flagged by the police as being domestic abuse-related, it is possible to compare year-on-year change. The police recorded 464,886 offences that were domestic-abuse related in the year ending March 2017, a 10% increase on the 421,185<sup>2</sup> offences recorded the previous year. However, it is important to note that the increase is likely to be driven by improvements in crime recording by the police. As well as general improvements, the police may have improved their identification of which offences are domestic abuse-related and more victims may be coming forward to report these crimes. The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW), as shown in this section, does not show an increase in the prevalence of domestic abuse in the latest survey year.

Included in the rise in domestic abuse-related crimes are offences of coercive or controlling behaviour in an intimate or family relationship<sup>3</sup>. This became a new criminal offence as part of the Serious Crime Act 2015 and came into force on 29 December 2015. Information on the number of coercive control offences is available for the police forces that have moved onto the Home Office Data Hub. Of the 38 forces for which data was available, 4,246 offences of coercive control were recorded in the year ending March 2017.

The number of these offences that have been recorded has increased over the last year as the police have become more aware of how to recognise such criminality and how to use the new law. Additionally, from 1 July 2016, the Home Office Counting Rules (HOCR) were amended so that such offences should take precedence over other offences (except for assaults where there is intent to cause serious harm). This change is likely to have led to an increase in the number of coercive control offences recorded by the police. However, it is likely that the number of such offences recorded is an underestimation of the number of such cases dealt with by the police until the rule changes have bedded-in across all forces.

Since the year ending March 2005, the CSEW has included a self-completion questionnaire module on intimate violence, for persons aged 16 to 59 years only<sup>4</sup>, which provides a measure of the proportion of people who have been victims of domestic abuse in this age group over time.

The estimates from this module for the latest survey year showed that the proportion of all adults aged 16 to 59 years who had been victims of domestic abuse in the last year (including attempted offences) has shown no change from the previous year (the apparent decrease to 5.7% from 6.1% was not statistically significant). Since the year ending March 2009, changes in prevalence from year to year have been small and not statistically significant, although the cumulative effect of these changes over a number of years has resulted in a statistically significant lower prevalence for the year ending March 2017 (5.7%) compared with the year ending March 2005 (8.9%) ([Table S39](#)).

As in previous years, data from the year ending March 2017 survey year showed that women (7.3%) were more likely to be victims of domestic abuse than men (4.2%) in the last year ([Table S37](#)). More detailed information on victimisation from the year ending March 2016 survey can be found in the [Focus on violent crime and sexual offences, England and Wales: year ending March 2016](#) publication.

Further details on domestic abuse will be published in the “Domestic abuse in England and Wales, year ending March 2017” release, which is due to be published towards the end of 2017.

## **Notes for: Police recorded domestic abuse rises due to recording improvements**

1. Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality.
2. This figure differs to the one previously published due to data reconciliation.
3. This offence is constituted by behaviour on the part of the perpetrator, which takes place “repeatedly or continuously”. The victim and alleged perpetrator must be “personally connected” at the time the behaviour takes place. The behaviour must have had a “serious effect” on the victim, meaning that it has caused the victim to fear violence will be used against them on “at least two occasions”, or it has had a “substantial adverse effect on the victims’ day to day activities”. The alleged perpetrator must have known that their behaviour would have a serious effect on the victim, or the behaviour must have been such that he or she “ought to have known” it would have that effect.
4. The upper age limit of 59 years was increased to 74 years in April 2017.

## 9 . Rise in police recorded sexual offences slowing

### Crime Survey for England and Wales

Due to the small number of sexual offences identified in the face-to-face interview section of the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW), estimates of the volume of incidents are prone to fluctuation and therefore not included in the main CSEW estimate of crime. Since the year ending March 2005, the CSEW has included a self-completion module on intimate violence, for persons aged 16 to 59 years only<sup>1</sup>, which provides an improved measure of the proportion of people in this age group who have been victims of sexual offences.

The estimates from this module for the latest survey year showed that 1.9% of adults aged 16 to 59 years had been victims of sexual assaults in the last year (including attempted offences), no significant change from the previous year’s estimate (2.0%). These figures have fluctuated between 1.5% and 2.4% since the survey year ending March 2009, but the underlying trend since the survey year ending March 2012 has been downwards ([Table S39](#)).

More detailed data from the self-completion module is published with the [Focus on violent crime and sexual offences, England and Wales: year ending March 2016](#) release; however, these are not the latest statistics.

### Police recorded crime

There was an increase of 14% in the number of sexual offences recorded by the police in the latest year compared with the previous year (up to 121,113, [Tables F6a and F6b](#)). This is the highest volume recorded since the introduction of the National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS) in April 2002, following year-on-year increases since the year ending March 2012. The rate of year-on-year increases, however, has slowed over recent years and the latest increase is considerably less than that seen in the previous 2 years (38% and 20% respectively).

Police recorded rape increased by 15% (to 41,150 offences) compared with the previous year, while other sexual offences increased by 14% (to 79,963). The 15% increase in police recorded rape seen in the latest year is considerably less than that seen between the year ending March 2014 and the year ending March 2015 (42%), and the year ending March 2015 and the year ending March 2016 (21%). This trend can also be seen in the slowing of increases in other sexual offences. Offence categories that directly relate to sexual offences against children<sup>2</sup> contributed over one-third (40%) to the total increase in the number of sexual offences recorded by the police.



A contributing factor to the increase is an increased willingness of victims to come forward and report these crimes to the police. High-profile coverage of sexual offences and the police response to reports of non-recent sexual offending, for example, Operation Yewtree, which began in 2012, and more recently, allegations by former footballers, alongside a [dedicated police operation](#) set up to investigate these, is likely to have an ongoing influence on victims' willingness to come forward to report both recent and non-recent offences.

In the year ending March 2017, of all sexual offences recorded by the police, 26% were non-recent offences (25,776 non-recent offences<sup>3</sup>). Non-recent offences increased by 14% compared with the year ending March 2016. While non-recent offences remain an important contributor to the latest rise in sexual offences (25%<sup>4</sup>), the rise was largely due to increases in current offences (those that took place within 12 months of being recorded by the police).

An important factor in the latest rise is improvements made by the police in the recording of sexual offences. However, the latest Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) [inspection reports](#) suggest that whilst improvements in the recording of sexual offences by the police have been made in recent years, these offences are still significantly under-recorded<sup>5</sup>. Given the different factors affecting the reporting and recording of these offences, we feel these data do not currently provide a reliable indication of current trends in sexual offences.

More information on interpreting longer-term trends in these offences can be found in [Focus on violent crime and sexual offences, England and Wales: year ending March 2016](#), however, this does not include the most recent statistics for the year ending March 2017.

## Notes for: Rise in police recorded sexual offences slowing

1. The upper age limit of 59 years for the self-completion module was increased to 74 years in April 2017 following [new development work](#).
2. This includes "rape of a male or female child under 16", "rape of a male or female child under 13", "sexual assault on a male or female child under 13", "sexual activity involving a child under 13 or under 16" and "abuse of children through sexual exploitation".
3. Offences that took place more than 12 months before being recorded by the police.
4. Based on findings from the Home Office Data Hub (HODH) from a subset of forces.
5. The [Crime-recording: making the victim count](#) report, published by HMIC in late 2014, found that sexual offences had been substantially under-recorded (by 26% nationally) and led to police forces reviewing and improving their recording processes.

## 10 . Police recorded offences involving weapons continue to rise

Some of the more serious offences in the police recorded crime data where we have seen increases (including some violence against the person categories, robbery and some sexual offences) can be broken down further by whether or not a knife or sharp instrument was involved<sup>1</sup>.

Data are also available for police recorded crimes involving the use of firearms (that is, if a firearm is fired, used as a blunt instrument, or used as a threat).

As offences involving the use of weapons are relatively low in volume, the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) is not able to provide reliable estimates for numbers of such incidents.

## Offences involving knives or sharp instruments<sup>2</sup>

The police recorded 34,703 offences involving a knife or sharp instrument in the latest year, a 20% increase compared with the previous year (28,875<sup>3</sup>) and the highest number in the 7-year series (from year ending March 2011), the earliest point for which comparable data are available<sup>4</sup> (Table 3). The past 2 years have seen a rise in the number of offences involving a knife or sharp instrument recorded, following a general downward trend in this series since the year ending March 2011.

The offence “assault with injury and assault with intent to cause serious harm” accounted for over half (51%) of total selected offences (including homicide) involving a knife or sharp instrument. All offence categories for which data are collected showed increases, except for homicide. The category of “assault with injury and assault with intent to cause serious harm” showed the largest rise in terms of volume of offences (from 15,143 to 17,800, up 18%), followed by robbery (from 10,527 to 12,991, up 23%). The rise in robbery was more pronounced than that seen in the last quarter (14%), mirroring recent increases in the category as a whole.

Rape and sexual assaults where a knife or other sharp instrument was used showed large percentage increases (rape 25%, sexual assaults 50%). However, due to the small number of these offences that involve the use of a knife or other sharp instrument, these increases were relatively low volume (rape 82 offences, sexual assault 60 offences). Other large percentage increases were seen in threats to kill (from 2,195 to 2,753, up 25%).

The majority of police forces (37 of the 44) recorded a rise in offences involving knives and sharp instruments, which shows no change from the previous year ([Table P5](#)). The force that showed the largest volume increase was the Metropolitan Police (accounting for 40% of the increase in England and Wales). In the previous year, the largest contributor was West Midlands Police (accounting for 17% of the increase). A breakdown of offences for each police force can be found in [Table P4](#), with the time series for this data published in the Home Office’s [knife crime open data table](#)<sup>5</sup>.



**Table 3: Selected violent and sexual offences involving a knife or sharp instrument recorded by the police in England and Wales, year ending March 2011 to year ending March 2017 and percentage change**  
1,2,3,4,5,6

England and Wales

	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	Apr '15 to Mar '16	Apr '16 to Mar '17 <sup>7</sup>	Apr '16 to Mar '17 compared with previous year
	Number of selected offences involving a knife or sharp instrument							Percentage change
Attempted murder	240	246	198	248	273	344	357	4
Threats to kill	1,462	1,183	1,188	1,317	1,718	2,195	2,753	25
Assault with injury and assault with intent to cause serious harm <sup>8</sup>	13,941	12,621	11,343	11,551	13,115	15,143	17,800	18
Robbery	16,438	16,417	13,194	11,910	10,324	10,527	12,991	23
Rape	258	237	190	261	321	334	416	25
Sexual assault <sup>9</sup>	93	72	88	97	127	120	180	50
Total selected offences	32,432	30,776	26,201	25,384	25,878	28,663	34,497	20
Homicide <sup>10</sup>	237	211	196	204	187	212	206	-3
Total selected offences including homicide	32,669	30,987	26,397	25,588	26,065	28,875	34,703	20
Rate per million population - selected offences involving a knife or sharp instrument								
Total selected offences including homicide	587	552	467	449	454	503	600	

Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

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. Data from Surrey Police include unbroken bottle and glass offences, 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. Numbers differ from those previously published due to Sussex Police revising their figures to exclude unbroken bottles.

6. An audit of Thames Valley Police into the recording of knife and sharp instrument offences since the introduction of their new recording system in April 2014 has revealed that they were previously under-counting these offences. Data for the year ending March 2016 have been revised, but data for the year ending March 2015 have not; it is likely that the percentage changes presented are slightly higher than they would be once the year ending March 2015 data are revised.

7. These figures do not yet include murders and attempted murders related to the Westminster Bridge terrorist-related incident in March 2017 as these numbers had not been confirmed at the time the data was compiled for publication.

8. 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.

9. Sexual assault includes indecent assault on a male/female and sexual assault on a male/female (all ages).

10. Homicide offences are those currently recorded by the police as at 17th May 2017 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 Appendix table A4). There may therefore be differences in the total homicides figure used to calculate these proportions and the homicide figure presented in Appendix table A4.

While in the past offences involving a knife were generally not thought to be prone to changes in recording practices due to the severity of these offences, some forces have suggested that recording practice improvements may have been a factor contributing to the recent increases.

However, there has also been some indication, particularly in relation to more serious offences involving an injury to the victim, that the latest rise may represent a real change to the downward trend seen in recent years. Admissions data for NHS hospitals in England<sup>6</sup>, for example, showed a 13% increase in admissions for assault by a sharp object, from 3,590 in the year ending March 2015 to 4,054 in the year ending March 2016<sup>7</sup>.

Police recorded “possession of an article with a blade or point” offences also rose by 23% to 14,183 offences in the latest year. This rise is consistent with increases seen over the last 3 years, but this is the highest figure since the series began in the year ending March 2009. This figure can often be influenced by increases in targeted police action in relation to knife crime, which is most likely to occur at times when rises in offences involving knives are seen.

The Mayor of London recently launched [The London Knife Crime Strategy](#), which provides evidence to support that improvements in police practices could be a contributor to the increase in “possession of an article with a blade or point”. The strategy highlights that officers are making better use of intelligence to target their resources more effectively, with 31% of all stops and searches carried out by the Metropolitan Police resulting in a positive outcome, up from 13% in 2012. The increase seen in “possession of an article with a blade or point” could be influenced by increases in targeted police action, with better use of intelligence to more successfully identify these types of crimes.

The category of “aggravated burglary”, which captures offences of burglary involving the use of a weapon, also increased over this period (up by 33% to 2,263).

Taking everything into account, the picture is a complex one, with rises in offences involving knives possibly reflecting both improvements in recording practices and targeted police action, but also a genuine rise in knife crime in some areas such as London.

Further analysis on offences involving knives or sharp instruments in the previous year can be found in [Focus on violent crime and sexual offences, England and Wales: year ending March 2016](#); however, this does not include the most recent statistics for the year ending March 2017.

## Offences involving firearms

Offences involving firearms<sup>8</sup> increased by 23% (to 6,375) compared with the previous year (5,182 offences). This was largely driven by a 24% increase in offences involving handguns (up to 2,685 from 2,157) and partly by a 15% increase in offences involving imitation weapons such as BB guns<sup>9</sup> (up to 1,642 from 1,431), a 44% increase in offences involving shotguns (up to 592 from 411) and a 27% increase in offences involving unidentified firearms (up to 844 from 666). The latest rise continues an upward trend seen in firearms offences in the last few years, however, offences are still 34% below a decade ago (in the year ending March 2007; Figure 5).

Over the last year, over two-thirds (30 of the 43<sup>10</sup>) of police forces recorded a rise in offences involving firearms. The force that showed the largest volume increase was the Metropolitan Police (accounting for 50% of the increase in England and Wales).

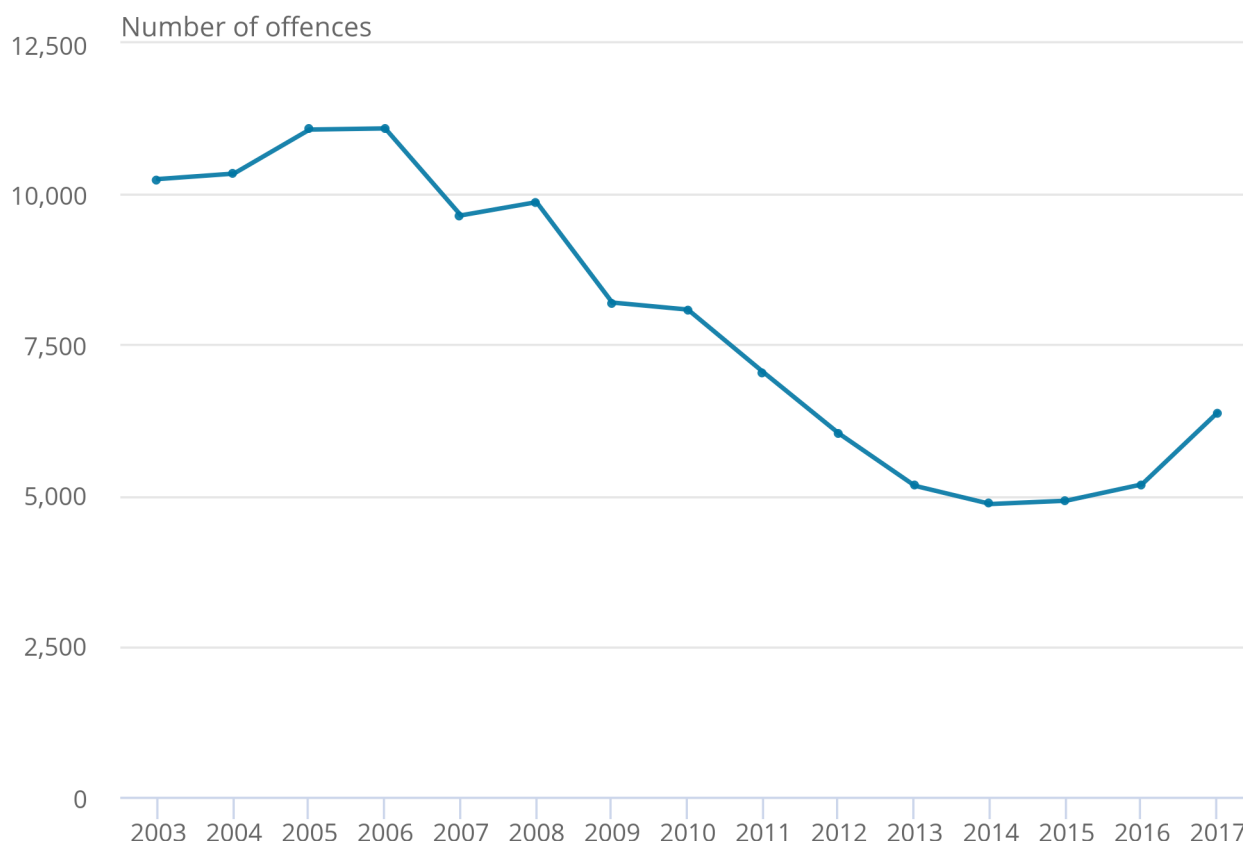
The coverage of the firearms collection is wide, covering offences involving serious weapons such as handguns or shotguns as well as less serious weapons such as BB guns and CS gas. While some of the increase in the number of offences involving firearms will be a genuine rise, it is likely that improvements in crime recording will also be a factor. For example, around one-quarter (24%<sup>11</sup>) of the increase is in offences involving some of these less serious weapons<sup>12</sup>. It is likely that the police are now including these offences in their returns when previously they were being excluded. Furthermore, around one-fifth (21%<sup>13</sup>) of the rise is due to an increase in possession of firearms offences with intent. It is possible that previously these offences would have been recorded as simple possession offences, which are not covered by this collection.

Evidence of some genuine increase in offences involving firearms can be seen in admissions data for NHS hospitals in England<sup>14</sup>, which showed increases in all three categories of assault by firearm discharge<sup>15</sup>, from 86 admissions in the year ending March 2015 to 109 admissions in the year ending March 2016<sup>16</sup>.

[Focus on violent crime and sexual offences, England and Wales: year ending March 2016](#) has more detailed information on trends and the circumstances of offences involving firearms, including figures based on a broader definition of the types of firearm involved<sup>17</sup>; however, this does not include the most recent statistics for the year ending March 2017.

**Figure 5: Trends in police recorded crime in England and Wales involving the use of firearms, year ending March 2003 to year ending March 2017**

Figure 5: Trends in police recorded crime in England and Wales involving the use of firearms, year ending March 2003 to year ending March 2017



Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

**Notes:**

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics.
2. Firearms include: shotguns; handguns; rifles; imitation weapons such as BB guns or soft air weapons; other weapons such as CS gas, pepper spray and stun guns; and unidentified weapons. They exclude conventional air weapons, such as air rifles.

**Notes for: Police recorded offences involving weapons continue to rise**



1. These are: homicide; attempted murder; threats to kill; assault with injury and assault with intent to cause serious harm; robbery; rape; and sexual assault.
2. 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.
3. This number differs from the number previously published due to revisions made to data for the year ending March 2016.
4. The [Focus on violent crime and sexual offences](#) publication includes data on offences involving a knife or sharp instrument going back to the year ending March 2009; however, this excludes data for West Midlands and Sussex due to inconsistencies in their recording practices, which did not change until the year ending March 2011.
5. This source excludes homicides committed using a knife or sharp instrument.
6. [NHS Hospital Episode Statistics, Admitted Patient Care - England, 2014 to 2015; NHS Hospital Admitted Patient Care Activity, 2015 to 2016.](#)
7. The 2016 to 2017 financial year report from NHS Hospital Episode Statistics will not be published until the end of 2017 to early 2018.
8. Firearms include: shotguns; handguns; rifles; imitation weapons such as BB guns or soft air weapons; other weapons such as CS gas or pepper spray and stun guns; and unidentified weapons. These figures exclude conventional air weapons, such as air rifles.
9. A type of air gun that fires spherical projectiles.
10. Data are not collected from the British Transport Police.
11. Data not shown.
12. BB guns, soft air weapons, CS Gas and pepper spray.
13. Data not shown.
14. Data are from [NHS Hospital Episode Statistics, Admitted Patient Care - England, 2014 to 2015 and NHS Hospital Admitted Patient Care Activity, 2015 to 2016.](#)
15. Firearm discharge admissions categories are: "assault by handgun discharge", "assault by rifle, shotgun and larger firearm discharge" and "assault by other and unspecified firearm discharge."
16. The report for the year ending March 2017 from NHS Hospital Episode Statistics will not be published until the end of 2017 to early 2018.
17. The broader definition of firearms includes conventional air weapons, such as air rifles.

## 11 . What is happening to trends in fraud?

This section focuses on the latest findings and available trends gathered from three main sources of data on fraud:

- incidents of fraud reported to the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW), including both the existing plastic card fraud series and newly introduced questions on fraud and computer misuse
- police recorded fraud referred to the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau (NFIB) by Action Fraud (the national fraud and cybercrime reporting centre) as well as two industry bodies, Cifas and Financial Fraud Action UK (FFA UK)
- additional data collected by FFA UK on a broader range of bank account and plastic card frauds than those referred to the NFIB, using a system referred to as CAMIS<sup>1</sup>

In interpreting these data it is important to bear in mind that each source varies in its coverage. CSEW estimates encompass a broad range of fraud offences, including attempts as well as completed ones involving a loss. The number of incidents of fraud estimated by the CSEW is substantially higher than the number of incidents referred to the NFIB, as the survey is able to capture a large volume of lower-harm cases that are less likely to have been reported to the police.

In contrast, incidents of fraud referred to the NFIB by Action Fraud, Cifas and FFA UK will tend to be focused on cases at the more serious end of the spectrum, as by definition they will only include incidents that the victim considers serious enough to report to the police or where there are viable lines of investigation. As a result, police recorded fraud offences make up a relatively small proportion of the overall volume of fraud. The CSEW suggests that only 17% of victims of fraud who are resident in households report to the police or Action Fraud.

However, additional administrative data from FFA UK on bank account and plastic card frauds (sourced from their CAMIS system) is able to give us a fuller picture of the extent of fraud that has been identified by financial institutions. These data help us to bridge the gap between the broad coverage provided by the CSEW and the narrow focus of offences referred to the NFIB. Most of the additional offences covered in the CAMIS data fall into the category of “remote purchase fraud”<sup>2</sup> and lost or stolen cards, which account for a high proportion of plastic card fraud that is excluded from the NFIB figures.

It is not yet possible to analyse trends in fraud from the new elements of the CSEW as we do not have 2 full years of data. However, the available evidence from other sources suggests a general rise in the level of fraud in the last year in England and Wales<sup>3</sup>. In particular, rising trends were evident in the existing estimates of plastic card fraud from the CSEW and in CAMIS data from FFA UK.

Each of the three sources will now be discussed in turn. Further information on these sources and the differences between them can be found in Section 5.4 of the [User Guide](#) and also in the [Overview of fraud statistics, year ending March 2016](#) article.

## Crime Survey for England and Wales

New questions on fraud and computer misuse were introduced to half of the CSEW sample from October 2015 and are published as [Experimental Statistics](#)<sup>4</sup>. Fraud and computer misuse estimates have been incorporated within headline CSEW estimates since the year ending September 2016, when a full year's data had been collected.

Adults aged 16 and over experienced an estimated 3.4 million incidents of fraud in the survey year ending March 2017 (Table 4), with over half of these (57%; 1.9 million incidents) being cyber-related<sup>5</sup> ([Table E8](#)).

“Bank and credit account” fraud was the most common type of fraud experienced (2.5 million incidents; 74% of total fraud), followed by “non-investment” fraud – such as fraud related to online shopping or fraudulent computer service calls (0.7 million incidents; 22% of total fraud).

In addition, adults experienced an estimated 1.8 million computer misuse incidents; around two-thirds (66%; 1.2 million incidents) of these were computer virus-related and around one-third (34%; 0.6 million incidents) were related to unauthorised access to personal information (including hacking).

**Table 4: Crime Survey for England and Wales fraud and computer misuse - numbers of incidents for year ending March 2017 (Experimental Statistics)<sup>1,2</sup>**

England and Wales	Adults aged 16 and over
Offence group	Number of incidents (thousands)
Fraud	3,370
Bank and credit account fraud	2,489
Non-investment fraud	737
Advance fee fraud	76
Other fraud	68
Computer misuse	1,795
Computer virus	1,193
Unauthorised access to personal information (including hacking)	603
Unweighted base - number of adults	17,171

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

1. Experimental Statistics are those which are in the testing phase and not yet fully developed. They are published in order to involve users and stakeholders in their development, and as a means to build in quality at an early stage.

2. New victimisation questions on fraud and computer misuse were incorporated into the CSEW from October 2015. The questions are currently asked of half the survey sample to test for detrimental effects on the survey as a whole and help to ensure that the historical time series is protected.

Further findings from the CSEW fraud and computer misuse questions for the year ending March 2017 are presented in Tables E1 to E10<sup>6</sup>. In particular:

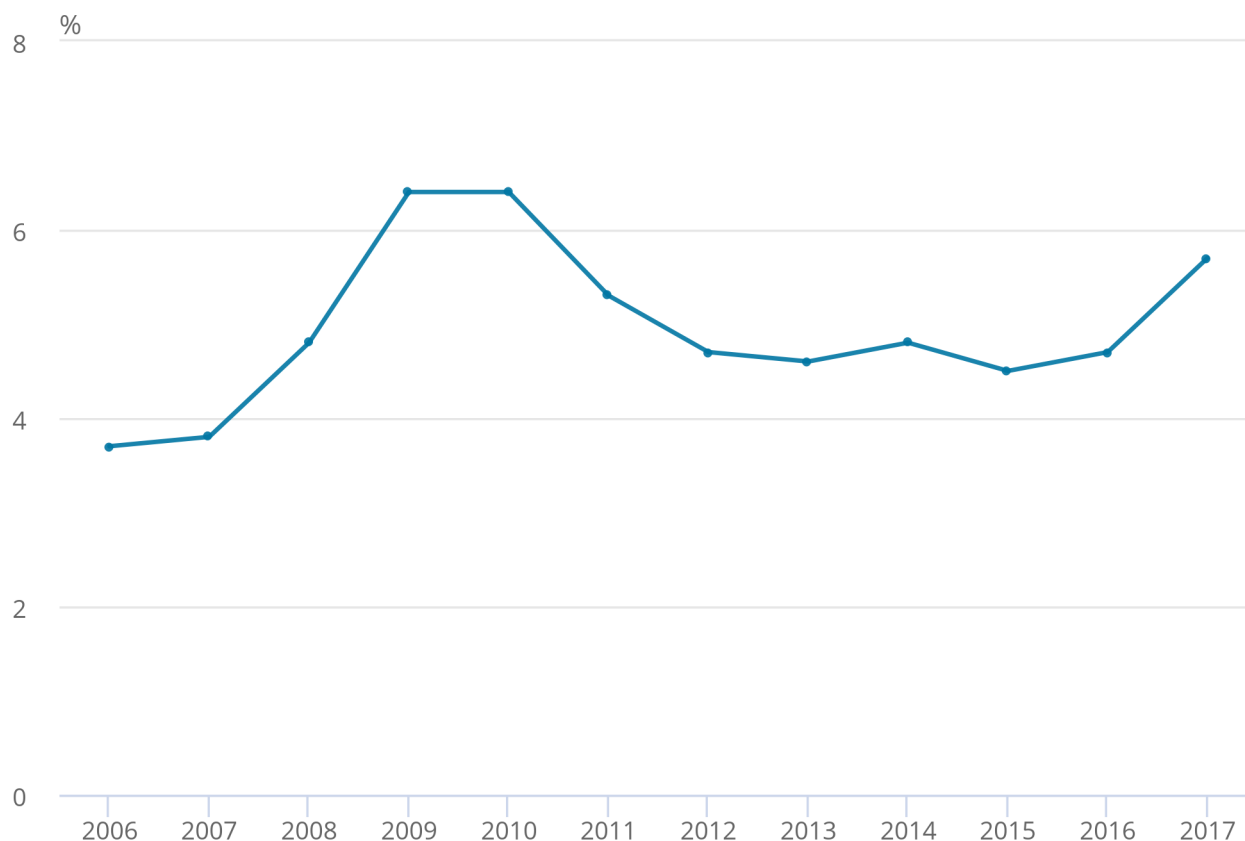
- there was typically less variation for fraud than other types of crime in the rate of victimisation across different groups in society, although some personal and household characteristics were associated with being a victim of fraud, for example, those in higher income households and individuals in managerial and professional occupations; this differs from other crime types such as violence and property crimes<sup>7</sup> (Experimental tables E3 and E4)<sup>8</sup>
- the large majority of victims of fraud had been a victim only once (86%), with repeat victimisation (within the same 12-month crime reference period) more common among victims of bank and credit account fraud (15%) than non-investment fraud (5%) (Experimental table E5)
- almost three-quarters of fraud incidents involved initial loss of money or goods to the victim (73%), independent of any reimbursement received<sup>9</sup>. This equates to an estimated 2.4 million offences, compared with 0.9 million incidents of fraud involving no loss (Experimental table E1)
- where money was taken or stolen from the victim, in just under two-thirds of incidents the victim lost less than £250 (63%, Experimental table E2)
- incidents of bank and credit account fraud were more likely to result in initial loss to the victim (78%, 1.9 million incidents) than other types of fraud; in the majority of these incidents, the victim received a full reimbursement (84%), typically from their financial services provider
- the extent of cyber crime<sup>10</sup> varied by type of offence, with over three-quarters of non-investment frauds indicated by victims to have involved the use of the internet in some way (80%), compared with half of all bank and credit account frauds (50%, Experimental table E8)

Questions on plastic card (bank and credit card) fraud have been included in a supplementary module of the CSEW since 2005 but do not collect enough detail to be added to the main crime estimates<sup>11,12</sup>. The results from this supplementary module showed a statistically significant increase of one percentage point in the proportion of plastic card owners who were victims of card fraud in the latest year, increasing to 5.7% in the survey year ending March 2017 (Figure 6).

This follows a relatively stable trend in levels of plastic card fraud measured by this module over the last few years, although it is still lower than the 2009 and 2010 peaks. The significant rise recorded by this module is consistent with rises in data referred by Cifas and by other industry data from the FFA UK CAMIS system. More information is available in the “Recorded fraud offences” section.

**Figure 6: Proportion of Crime Survey for England and Wales plastic card users who had been a victim of plastic card fraud in the last year, year ending March 2006 to year ending March 2017**

Figure 6: Proportion of Crime Survey for England and Wales plastic card users who had been a victim of plastic card fraud in the last year, year ending March 2006 to year ending March 2017



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

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

**Notes:**

1. The data in this table refer to crimes experienced in the 12 months before interview, based on interviews carried out in that year.

New Experimental Statistics on bank and credit account fraud indicate that these types of offence comprise just under three-quarters (74%) of the new fraud estimate. With this in mind, in the absence of a back series from the new questions, the trends in plastic card fraud from the existing supplementary module give an indication of recent trends in fraud.

## Recorded fraud offences

The police recorded crime series incorporates fraud offences collated by the NFIB from Action Fraud, Cifas and FFA UK<sup>13</sup>. In the latest year, there was a 5% increase in the number of fraud offences recorded in England and Wales (up to 649,770<sup>14</sup> offences) compared with the previous year, and this continues the year-on-year increases seen over the last 5 years ([Tables F18a and 18b](#)).

This latest increase was largely owing to offences reported to Action Fraud, which rose by 20% (up to 264,056) as well as offences referred by Cifas, which increased by 2% (up to 306,195). FFA UK reported reduced figures for the year ending March 2017 due to a problem uploading data to the NFIB system for the period January to March 2017<sup>15</sup>.

In July 2015, the company that was contracted to provide the Action Fraud call centre service went into administration, following which Action Fraud recorded lower than normal monthly volumes of fraud offences between July 2015 and April 2016<sup>16</sup>. As volumes have recovered in recent months and because the lower-volume months now form part of the comparator year (year ending March 2016), the latest 20% rise will have been influenced by the changes in the operation of the Action Fraud call centre and thus figures should be interpreted with caution. We expect the effect on the Action Fraud data will continue over the next few quarters.

The number of fraud offences recorded by Action Fraud (and the police<sup>17</sup>) for the year ending March 2017 is more than double the number recorded in the year ending March 2012, a rise of approximately 145,000 incidents (Table F18a). Likewise, Cifas have seen a 30% increase in recorded incidents of fraud compared with 5 years ago (a rise of approximately 71,000 incidents). In contrast, FFA UK data indicate more year-on-year fluctuation in their recorded incidents, but show an 18% decrease between the years ending March 2012 and March 2016<sup>15</sup>.

One of the largest increases in the separate categories of fraud referred to the NFIB in the latest year was seen in “banking and credit industry” fraud (up 3% to 377,012 offences). This was caused by the volume increase in offences reported to the NFIB by Cifas (up 9% to 264,583 offences) and Action Fraud (up 29% to 32,914 offences). This was largely driven by an increase in application fraud, for example, opening up an account using the identity of an innocent party, usually in relation to hire purchase agreements or loans<sup>18</sup>. Other notable increases compared with the previous year were also seen for:

- “non-investment fraud” (increased by 16%, equivalent to 14,762 offences)
- “advance fee payment” fraud (increased by 34%, equivalent to 11,385 offences)
- “computer misuse crime” (increased by 48%, equivalent to 6,327 offences)

These categories of fraud are only referred to the NFIB by Action Fraud.

Several major categories of fraud continued to fall in the latest year, for example:

- “telecom industry fraud (misuse of contracts<sup>19</sup>)” fell by 26% (equivalent to 12,256 offences), continuing the downward trend seen in the previous quarter, with the decrease largely accounted for by a fall in these types of offences reported by Cifas
- “insurance fraud” fell by 20% (equivalent to 2,158 offences) following a period of increase, due largely to a decrease in the number of such offences reported by Cifas, although it is too early to say at this stage if this reflects a genuine reduction
- “financial investments” fraud fell by 22% (equivalent to 1,198 offences)

A full breakdown of the types of fraud offences referred to the NFIB by Action Fraud, Cifas and FFA UK in the latest year is presented in [Table A5](#).

A police force area breakdown of Action Fraud data based on where the individual victim resides, or in the cases of businesses, where the business is located, has now been produced, available from the year ending March 2016 only<sup>20</sup> (Experimental Statistics, Table E11). In contrast with most other crimes, the latest data show there was generally less variation in rates of fraud by police force area, although rates for forces in southern England were slightly higher than those among forces in Wales or northern England.

## **Additional administrative data on card and bank account fraud**

In the latest year, FFA UK reported 1.9 million cases of frauds on UK-issued cards, cheque fraud and remote banking fraud via their CAMIS system<sup>21</sup>, an increase of 11% from the previous year ([Table F20](#)).

Importantly, trends can differ between the FFA UK data collected via CAMIS and the FFA UK data referred to the NFIB. This is partly because the cases referred to the NFIB are a subset of the CAMIS data and include only those with intelligence value to the police. As a result, they are less likely to include incidences of “remote purchase” fraud, which was one of the main drivers in the overall increase in FFA UK data from CAMIS.

The FFA UK publication [Fraud the Facts 2017](#) concluded that “impersonation and deception scams, as well as digital attacks, continue to be the primary factor behind fraud losses<sup>22</sup>.”

In general, the FFA UK CAMIS figures have been consistent with those shown by the CSEW trend in plastic card fraud, with levels peaking around 2008 to 2010, followed by falls in subsequent years that were thought to be related to the introduction of chip and pin technology.

For more information on the differences between the main sources of fraud and their strengths and limitations, please see the [Overview of fraud statistics, year ending March 2016](#) article.

### **Notes for: What is happening to trends in fraud?**

1. For more information on FFA UK and CAMIS, please see Section 5.4 of the [User Guide](#) and also the [Overview of fraud statistics](#), year ending March 2016 article.
2. Remote purchase frauds refer to frauds where the cardholder and card are not present at the point of sale, such as use of the card online, over the phone or by mail order.
3. Recent large-scale cyber attacks such as the NHS global ransomware attack in May 2017 are not featured in either the CSEW or the police recorded crime data for the year ending March 2017, as they occurred outside of the period of coverage of this bulletin.
4. These data build upon the findings from the field trial of the newly developed survey questions – which can be found in the methodological note [CSEW fraud and cyber-crime development: field trial – October 2016](#). These findings should not be directly compared with the published Experimental Statistics as methodological refinements were made following the trial.
5. Based on whether the internet or any type of online activity was related to any aspect of the offence.
6. Additional [User Guide tables](#) (UG2a, UG3a, UG4a and UG5a) provide 95% confidence intervals around fraud and computer misuse estimates, for incidents of crime and victimisation by age and sex, for the year ending March 2017.
7. Some of the characteristics may be closely associated with each other, so caution is needed in the interpretation of the effect of these different characteristics when viewed in isolation (for example, employment and household income are closely related).

8. Additional experimental tables showing the proportion of adults who were victims of all CSEW crime and personal crime, including fraud and computer misuse, by personal and household characteristics, are presented in tables E9 and E10.
9. This refers to both money taken or stolen by the fraudster as well as any additional costs or charges as a consequence of the fraud, for example, bank charges, repair costs, and replacement costs.
10. Cyber crimes defined by the CSEW represent cases where the internet or any type of online activity was related to any aspect of the offence.
11. These questions continue to be included in the survey while new questions on all fraud are bedded in.
12. Data from these questions provide an indication of whether an individual has been a victim of plastic card fraud, but do not provide any information on the number of times this occurred or the scale of any loss that may have been experienced.
13. For further information on these sources and their strengths and weaknesses, please see Section 5.4 of the [User Guide](#) and also the [Overview of fraud statistics, year ending March 2016](#) article.
14. This figure is taken from [Table A4](#) and includes four fraud offences recorded by the police. The total fraud offences recorded in England and Wales reported in [Table A5](#) differs slightly, as it excludes these four offences.
15. A technical fault occurred in June 2017, which led to an error in the data upload of FFA UK data to the NFIB system and therefore not all data were successfully transferred. The figure for the year ending March 2017 is therefore incomplete and will be revised in the year ending June 2017 publication.
16. For further information, please see Section 5.4 of the [User Guide](#).
17. Fraud offences recorded by the police are included as the process for Action Fraud taking over responsibility for centrally recording fraud began in April 2011 and was not fully rolled out to all police forces until March 2013.
18. The latest increase in application frauds recorded by Action Fraud is expected to be lower than 128% due to a number of application frauds being incorrectly recorded by Action Fraud as crime reports instead of information reports during the period September 2016 to December 2016.
19. Frauds within the telecoms sector that are reported to Cifas are subject to a lot of fluctuation, as they use a batch reporting system whereby they submit multiple reports in one go, which can refer to incidents occurring over a period of time.
20. For more information, please see Section 5.4 of the [User Guide](#).
21. It is important to note that number of cases relates to the number of accounts defrauded, rather than the number of victims.
22. Further information on trends in payment industry fraud based on industry data collated by FFA UK is available in [Fraud the Facts 2017](#).

## 12 . Upcoming changes to this bulletin

The briefing note [Improving crime statistics for England and Wales – progress update](#) provides an overview of our plans to improve the design, coverage and presentation of crime statistics in England and Wales over the next few years. In addition, details of a number of specific changes are outlined in this section, including new articles focusing on particular crime types, changes to the categorisation of police recorded crime, and an ongoing consultation on the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW).



## New overview articles focusing on specific crime types

We are in the process of producing a series of overview articles, each focusing on a specific crime type, that will provide information on long-term trends, victim profiles and the nature of incidents (where available). The first of these, [an overview of fraud statistics](#), was published alongside the quarterly report [Crime in England and Wales: year ending March 2016](#). Overview articles on [Bicycle theft](#), [Vehicle-related theft](#), [Robbery and theft from the person](#) and [Burglary and other household theft](#) have been published alongside this bulletin and other topical articles will continue to be published alongside the quarterly bulletins in the future.

These articles have also been designed to replace the existing “Focus on property crime” statistical bulletin normally published in November each year. While this bulletin will no longer be published, the [data tables](#) that have accompanied previous editions of the bulletin will continue to be released in the autumn, including a full set of “Nature of crime” data on the nature and circumstances of property crime incidents.

## Changes to the categorisation of police recorded crime

In future releases we will be using a slightly revised categorisation of police recorded crime statistics, with changes affecting violence against the person and burglary offences. It is important to stress that these are changes to categorisation only and will not impact on the total number of recorded crimes. It is intended that all of the changes outlined will be implemented in the next quarterly release, Crime in England and Wales, year ending June 2017, which is due to be published in October 2017.

Within “violence against the person” we will be creating a new subcategory to cover offences of stalking and harassment. As well as encompassing the offence classifications of harassment (8L and 8M) and stalking (8Q), this new subcategory will include the new offence classification of malicious communications (8R), which came into effect as a separate classification from April 2017. All stalking and harassment offences currently sit within the subcategory of violence without injury.

Also within violence against the person, where currently we present a single total for all homicide, in future we will be publishing separate figures for all of the component classifications of murder (1), manslaughter (4.1), corporate manslaughter (4.10) and infanticide (4.2).

We are also considering the merit of creating a new subcategory within violence against the person to cover deaths on the road resulting from dangerous or careless driving. Such offences are currently included within the subcategory of violence with injury. The new subcategory would encompass the following offence classifications: causing death or serious injury by dangerous driving (4.4), causing death by careless driving when under the influence of drink or drugs (4.6), causing death by careless or inconsiderate driving (4.8), causing death by driving: unlicensed or disqualified or uninsured drivers (4.9). We would welcome views from users on this proposed change.

Reflecting changes made to the [Home Office Counting Rules for police recorded crime](#) we will also be updating the categorisation used in the presentation of statistics on burglary. Prior to April 2017, police recorded burglary offence categories were split such that dwellings (domestic burglary) and buildings other than dwellings (non-domestic burglary) were separately identifiable, where:

- domestic burglary covers residential premises, including attached buildings such as garages
- non-domestic burglary covers non-residential premises, including businesses and public buildings, as well as non-attached buildings within the grounds of a dwelling, such as sheds and detached garages

From April 2017 onwards, a new classification of police recorded burglary was introduced, dividing offences into two categories of “residential” and “business and community”, where:

- “residential” burglary includes all buildings or parts of buildings that are within the boundary of, or form a part of, a dwelling and includes the dwelling itself, vacant dwellings, sheds, garages, outhouses, summer houses and any other structure that meets the definition of a building; it also includes other premises used for residential purposes such as houseboats, residential care homes and hostels
- “business and community” burglary includes all buildings or parts of buildings that are used solely and exclusively for business purposes or are otherwise entirely outside the classification of residential burglary

## Consultation on the Crime Survey for England and Wales

In the context of public sector financial constraints, the future level of funding for the CSEW will be reduced with effect from October 2017. Therefore we have drawn up a range of proposals to reduce the cost of the CSEW in the current and future survey years. As previously notified, full details and information on the likely impacts of the potential solutions are set out in a [consultation document](#), seeking user feedback on the different options to inform our decision on how best to achieve the required cost savings. The consultation will be ending on 23 July 2017.

We would welcome feedback on any aspect of our improvement programme by email at [crimestatistics@ons.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:crimestatistics@ons.gsi.gov.uk).

## 13 . Quality and methodology

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 assure the overall content of the bulletin.

[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.

The [UK Statistics Authority](#) has designated this statistical bulletin as a National Statistics output, in accordance with the [Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007](#) and signifying compliance with the [Code of Practice for Official Statistics](#).

However, 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.

Table 5 summarises the strengths and weaknesses of the two main sources of data used in this bulletin.

**Table 5: Strengths and limitations of the Crime Survey for England and Wales and Police recorded crime**

Crime Survey for England and Wales	Police recorded crime
Strengths	Strengths
Large nationally representative sample survey that provides a good measure of long-term crime trends for the offences and the population it covers (that is, those resident in households)	Has wider offence coverage and population coverage than the CSEW
Consistent methodology over time	Good measure of offences that are well-reported to the police
Covers crimes not reported to the police and is not affected by changes in police recording practice; therefore is a reliable measure of long-term trends	Primary source of local crime statistics and for lower-volume crimes (for example, homicide)
Coverage of survey extended in 2009 to include children aged 10 to 15 (years) resident in households	Provides whole counts (rather than estimates that are subject to sampling variation)
Independent collection of crime figures	Time lag between occurrence of crime and reporting results tends to be short, providing an indication of emerging trends
Limitations	Limitations
Survey is subject to error associated with sampling and respondents recalling past events	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)
Excludes crimes against businesses and those not resident in households (for example, residents of institutions and visitors)	Trends can be influenced by changes in recording practices or police activity
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)	Not possible to make long-term comparisons due to fundamental changes in recording practice introduced in 1998 and the year ending March 2003 [2]
Previously, excluded fraud and cybercrime[1]	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

Source: Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. From 1 October 2015, the offence coverage of the CSEW was extended to include fraud experienced by the adult population. Estimates from these new questions were published for the first time in the "Crime in England and Wales, year ending March 2016" release.

2. Section 3.3 of the User Guide has more information.

The [Crime in England and Wales Quality and Methodology Information](#) report contains important information on:

- the strengths and limitations of the data and how it compares with related data
- uses and users of the data
- how the output was created
- the quality of the output including the accuracy of the data

Unless stated otherwise, all changes in Crime Survey for England and Wales (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 and can be found in the [User Guide tables](#). Further information on statistical significance can be found in Chapter 8 of the [User Guide](#).

More information regarding the coverage, coherence and accuracy of the CSEW and police recorded crime can be found in the [User Guide to Crime Statistics for England and Wales](#), the [Crime in England and Wales Quality and Methodology Information report](#) and (for CSEW only) the [CSEW technical report](#).