

Article

Overview of burglary and other household theft: England and Wales

A summary of the long-term trends in burglary and other household theft, including demographic and nature of crime data.

Contact:
John Flatley
crimestatistics@ons.gsi.gov.uk
+44 (0)20 7592 8695

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1 . Introduction

This article is intended to provide information on long-term trends alongside additional data on the characteristics of victims and nature of crime. It may not include the most recent published data, which can be found in the latest quarterly [Crime in England and Wales](#) release.

2 . How are burglary and other household theft defined and measured?

Broadly speaking, a person commits burglary if they enter any building or part of a building as a trespasser and, having done so, steal or attempt to steal anything.

“Other household theft” is a category that relates to instances where theft occurred immediately outside a dwelling, or within a dwelling but where the perpetrator had the right to be there.

These offences are included in the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) and police recorded crime data, although the information available from each source and their coverage differ.

Burglary – CSEW

The CSEW is a survey of the population resident in households and, as such, information collected on burglary offences only relates to domestic burglary; that is, unauthorised entry into the victim’s dwelling or non-connected building to a dwelling (for example, a shed or a non-connected garage). Non-domestic burglary (for example, theft from business properties) is not covered by the CSEW.

The main CSEW estimates differentiate between burglary in a dwelling and a non-connected building to a dwelling. Subcategories are defined as follows:

- “burglary with entry” comprises burglary where a building was successfully entered, regardless of whether something was stolen or not
- “burglary with loss” comprises burglary where a building was successfully entered and something was stolen
- “burglary with no loss” comprises burglary where a building was successfully entered but nothing was stolen
- “attempts” comprises incidents where there is clear evidence that the offender made an actual, physical attempt to gain entry to a building (for example, damage to locks, or broken doors) but was unsuccessful

Domestic burglary does not include theft by a person who was entitled to be in the dwelling at the time the offence occurred (for example, a party guest or worker); such offences are classified as theft from a dwelling and are included in the separate category of “other household theft”.

Burglary – police recorded crime

The police record an incident of burglary if a person enters any building as a trespasser with the intent to commit an offence of theft; this includes dwellings and other properties, such as sheds, garages not connected to dwellings and businesses.

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”.

“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.

Since the latest period for which data are presented is the year ending March 2017, this article does not include any further information regarding the new “residential” and “business and community” burglary categories.

Offence categories for attempted burglary are separately identifiable.

An offence of aggravated burglary is recorded if, while committing the burglary, the offender is in possession of a weapon (for example: firearm, imitation firearm, knife or sharp instrument, explosive).

For domestic burglary, police recorded crime data also separately identify “distraction burglary”; that is, where a falsehood, trick or distraction is used on an occupant of a dwelling to gain, or try to gain, access to the premises to commit burglary. It includes cases where the offender first enters the premises and subsequently uses distraction methods in order to remain on the premises or gain access to other parts of the premises in order to commit burglary (for example, by posing as a tradesperson).

On balance, the CSEW currently provides a better measure of long-term national trends in domestic burglary. But, given the high level of reporting of burglary offences to the police and the scale of the under-recording of burglary not being as high as for other offences, the police recorded crime data also provide a good measure. Police recorded crime data also provide a better measure of burglary at subnational level where the sample size of the CSEW is not large enough to yield estimates with reasonable levels of precision.

Other household theft – CSEW

The main CSEW estimates split “other household theft” into two subcategories:

- “theft from a dwelling” – thefts committed inside the victim’s dwelling by someone who had the right to be there at the time the offence occurred (for example, a party guest or worker)
- “theft from outside a dwelling” – thefts that occurred on the victim’s property outside the dwelling, typically thefts from gardens

“Theft from a dwelling” does not include theft by someone who was not entitled to be in the dwelling at the time the offence was committed; such offences are classified as burglary.

There is no distinction made in the CSEW for theft from outside a dwelling with regard to whether the perpetrator had the right to be on the property.

Other household theft – police recorded crime

The only related category of police recorded crime for which data are separately identifiable is theft inside a dwelling (other than from an automatic meter or machine).

Data for theft outside a dwelling offences are included within an “other theft” category but are not separately identifiable.

The CSEW currently provides a better measure of long-term national trends in “other household theft”, especially for theft outside a dwelling that is not separately identifiable in the police recorded crime data. But, police recorded crime data are available for theft in a dwelling offences at subnational level, where the sample size of the CSEW is not large enough to yield estimates with reasonable levels of precision.

Further discussion on the strengths and limitations of the two main sources is available in the “Which source provides the better measure of these offences?” section.

3 . What are the long-term trends?

The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) has collected information on crimes, including burglary and other household theft, experienced by respondents in a consistent manner since the survey first ran in 1981. Estimates are therefore directly comparable across the history of the survey.

Care should be taken with regard to historical police recorded crime data, as changes to recording practices following the introduction of the new Home Office Counting Rules (HOCR) in April 1998 and the National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS) in April 2002 typically resulted in an increase in the number of crimes recorded.

Burglary

The long-term trends in burglary as measured by the CSEW and police recorded crime are broadly similar.

The estimated number of CSEW domestic burglary incidents rose sharply through the 1980s and early 1990s (peaking at 2,445,000 in the year to December 1993) and then fell steeply until the survey year ending March 2005 (to 1,057,000¹). The underlying trend in domestic burglary remained fairly flat between the year ending March 2005 and year ending March 2011 surveys. However, there have been general year-on-year decreases from the survey year ending March 2011 onwards, down to a record low 650,000² incidents in the survey year ending March 2017.

In the survey year ending March 2017, around 2 in 100 households had been victims of domestic burglary; this compares with around 9 in 100 households in the year ending December 1995, meaning that households are currently four times less likely to be a victim of burglary than in 1995.

Over time, the subcategories of CSEW “domestic burglary in a dwelling” and “domestic burglary in a non-connected building to a dwelling” have followed similar patterns to that of domestic burglary overall. The more marked declines in domestic burglary in a dwelling have driven the overall decline in all domestic burglary.

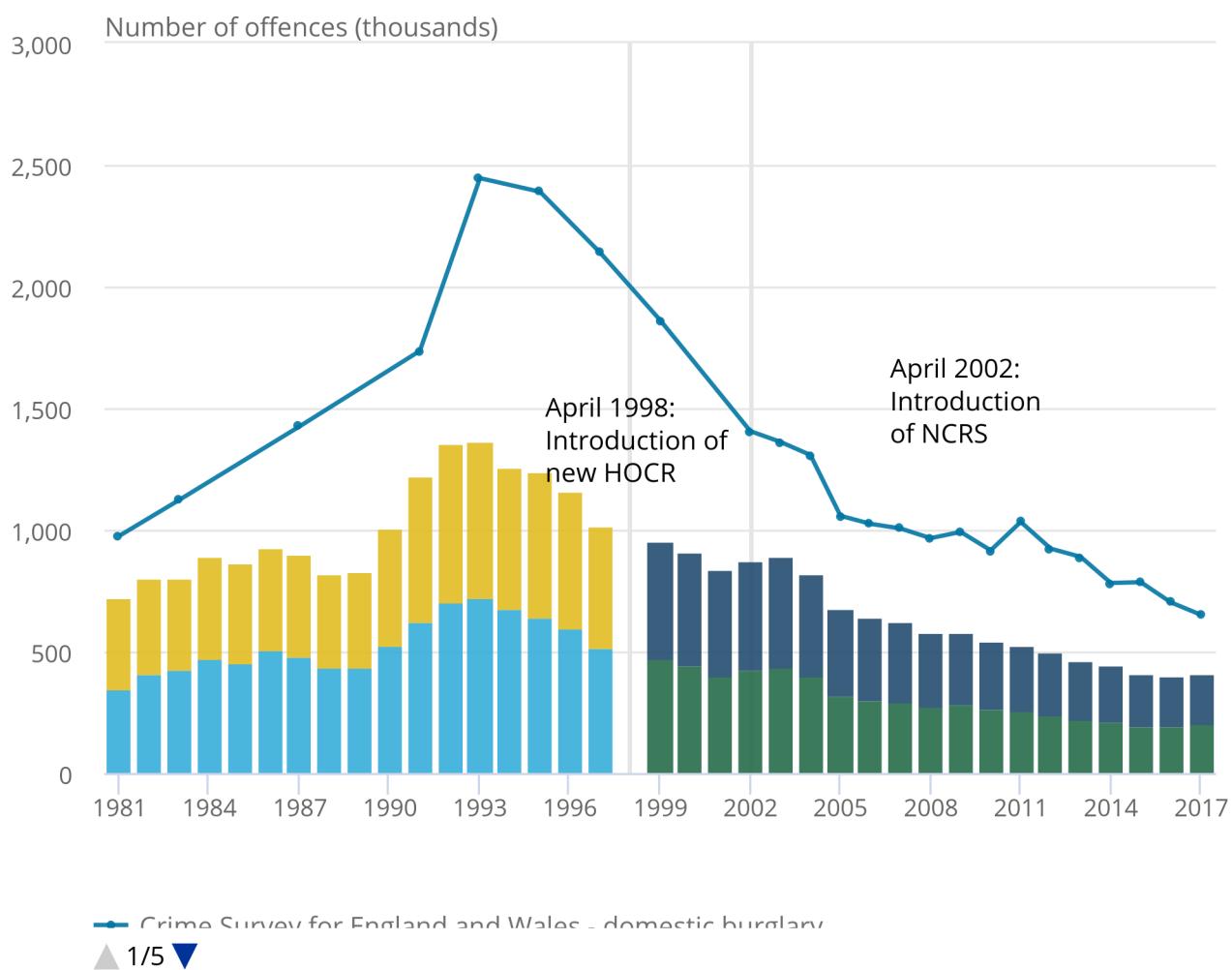
Domestic burglary in a dwelling comprises the majority of all CSEW domestic burglary incidents, ranging from between 67% and 83% across the history of the CSEW.

Police recorded burglary has fallen year-on-year between the year ending March 2003 (890,099 offences) – the earliest time period for which data are directly comparable – and the year ending March 2016 (401,001 offences), but slightly increased in the year ending March 2017 (411,536 offences). Police recorded burglary has more than halved in volume over the last decade.

Domestic burglary and non-domestic burglary make up a relatively equal proportion of all burglary offences recorded by the police over this period.

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

Figure 1: Trends in Crime Survey for England and Wales and police recorded burglary, 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. Police recorded crime data prior to the year ending March 1999 are based on the old Home Office Counting Rules (HOCR); data for the year ending March 1999 to the year ending March 2002 (inclusive) are based on the new HOCR but prior to the introduction of the National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS); data from the year ending March 2003 onwards are based on the new HOCR and NCRS.
3. 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).
4. CSEW data relate to adults aged 16 and over.

It is widely accepted that improvements to home security have been an important factor in the reduction seen in domestic burglary offences. Other potential factors are discussed in the “Existing theories on why property crime has fallen” section of the [Focus on: Property Crime](#) release. For example, research ([Morgan, 2014](#)) has mapped the growth and decline in domestic burglary during the 1980s and 1990s with heroin and crack cocaine misuse, which follows a similar pattern and may have also been a contributory factor.

Other household theft

The estimated numbers of CSEW “other household theft” incidents rose sharply through the early 1990s (peaking at 1,647,000 in the year to December 1993) and then fell steeply until the survey year ending March 2006 (halving to 812,000³). There was another period of sharp increase in “other household theft” offences between the survey years ending March 2008 and March 2012 before they again fell steeply, down to 587,000⁴ incidents in the survey year ending March 2017.

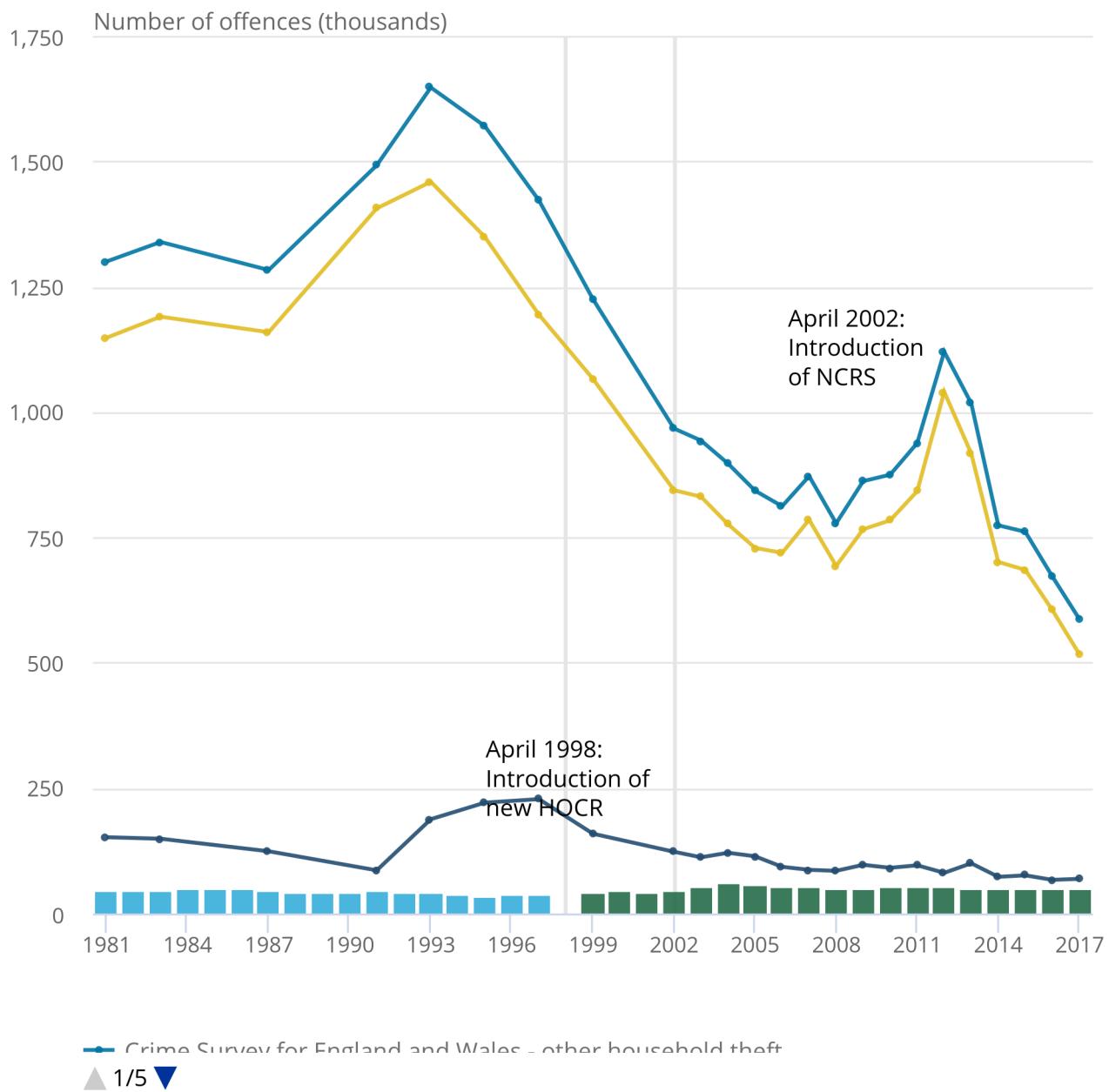
Theft from outside a dwelling comprises the large majority of all CSEW “other household theft” incidents, ranging from between 84% and 94% across the history of the CSEW. Consequently, the subcategory of theft from outside a dwelling has followed an extremely similar trend to that of “other household theft” overall.

Meanwhile, the subcategory of theft from a dwelling has remained relatively flat, apart from a period of increase between the years ending December 1991 and December 1997 followed by decreases until the survey year ending March 2002.

Police recorded theft in a dwelling has remained fairly stable since the early 1980s and especially since the year ending March 2003, with the number of offences typically only fluctuating between 50,000 and 60,000.

Figure 2: Trends in Crime Survey for England and Wales other household theft and police recorded theft in a dwelling, year ending December 1981 to year ending March 2017

Figure 2: Trends in Crime Survey for England and Wales other household theft and police recorded theft in a dwelling, 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

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1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics.
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3. 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).
4. CSEW data relate to adults aged 16 and over.

Notes for: What are the long-term trends?

1. The 95% confidence interval around this estimate is [989,000 to 1,125,000]. Any sample survey may produce estimates that differ from the figures that would have been obtained if the whole population had been interviewed. The confidence interval provides a range of values around an estimate (also referred to as the margin of error of the estimate). Section 8.1 of the [User Guide to Crime Statistics for England and Wales](#) has more information about confidence intervals and statistical significance.
2. The 95% confidence interval around this estimate is [583,000 to 716,000].
3. The 95% confidence interval around this estimate is [750,000 to 873,000].
4. The 95% confidence interval around this estimate is [529,000 to 645,000].

4 . Which groups in society are most likely to be victims?

Burglary

Police force area recorded crime data reveal that a large proportion of burglary offences are concentrated in a few predominantly urban areas. The Metropolitan Police along with Greater Manchester, West Yorkshire and West Midlands police forces consistently account for over 40% of domestic burglaries and around 35% of all burglaries recorded by the police.

While there have been widespread decreases in the likelihood of experiencing domestic burglary in the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW), some demographic groups have been consistently more likely to be victims, including:

- where the household reference person¹ was a younger adult (aged 16 to 24), households tend to be more likely victims of domestic burglary than those where the household reference person was in older age groups
- single parent households tend to be more likely victims than two (or more) adult households or households without children
- households in urban areas tend to be more likely victims than households in rural areas

Other household theft

Police force area recorded crime data reveal that a large proportion of “theft in a dwelling” offences are concentrated in a few predominantly urban areas. The Metropolitan Police along with Greater Manchester, West Yorkshire and West Midlands police forces consistently account for around one-third of all “theft in a dwelling” offences recorded by the police.

While there have been widespread decreases in the likelihood of experiencing “other household theft” in the CSEW, similar to patterns of burglary, some demographic groups have been consistently more likely to be victims, including:

- where the household reference person was a younger adult (aged 16 to 24), households tend to be more likely victims of “other household theft” than those where the household reference person was in older age groups
- single parent households tend to be more likely victims than two (or more) adult households or households without children
- households in urban areas tend to be more likely victims than households in rural areas

Notes for: Which groups in society are most likely to be victims?

1. The household reference person is the member of the household in whose name the accommodation is owned or rented, or is otherwise responsible for the accommodation. Where this responsibility is joint within the household, this is the person with the highest income. If incomes are equal, then this is the oldest person.

5 . What is known about the nature and circumstances of such incidents?

Burglary

The headline Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) estimates for domestic burglary indicate that between around a third and two-fifths of incidents were unsuccessful attempts (where the offender was not able to gain entry into the dwelling or non-connected building to the dwelling).

The CSEW [Nature of Crime](#) tables provide further information about the circumstances surrounding incidents of domestic burglary over the last decade, including:

- in incidents of domestic burglary in a dwelling where the offender entered the dwelling, the offender gained entry through a door around 70% of the time and through a window around 30% of the time
- purses, wallets and money have typically been the most frequently stolen items in domestic burglaries in dwellings, with jewellery and watches, computer equipment and other electronic goods (for example, cameras) also being commonly stolen
- around 70% of domestic burglaries in dwellings take place during the week (equivalent to 16% per weekday) and around 30% take place during the weekend (equivalent to 12% per weekend day)
- approximately two-fifths of domestic burglaries in dwellings take place during the morning or afternoon (6am to 6pm) and three-fifths take place during the evening or night (6pm to 6am)
- in over half of incidents of domestic burglary in a dwelling where an offender gained entry into the dwelling, someone was at home at the time
- in the majority of years, it was almost equally likely in incidents of domestic burglary in a dwelling that the offender(s) was a stranger or known¹ by the victim

In each year since the year ending March 2004 (when data were first available), less than 5% of domestic burglaries recorded by the police are classified as “distraction burglaries”; this proportion has been declining for much of the last decade (reaching a low of 1% in the year ending March 2014).

Other household theft

The [Nature of Crime](#) tables provide further information about the circumstances surrounding incidents of CSEW “other household theft”. Findings over the last decade include:

- purses, wallets and money have consistently been the most stolen items in thefts from a dwelling and garden furniture has consistently been the overwhelmingly most stolen item in thefts from outside a dwelling
- around 70% of “other household thefts” take place during the week (equivalent to around 16% per weekday) and 30% take place during the weekend (equivalent to 12% per weekend day)
- approximately three-fifths of thefts from dwellings take place during the morning or afternoon (6am to 6pm) and two-fifths take place during the evening or night (6pm to 6am)
- in comparison, approximately two-fifths of thefts from outside dwellings take place during the morning or afternoon and three-fifths take place during the evening or night, reflecting the increased likelihood of invited guests being present during daylight hours
- victims have consistently rated thefts from a dwelling as a more serious crime (an average score of around 7, on a scale of 1 to 20) than thefts from outside a dwelling (an average score of around 3.5); this is likely to reflect the greater value of items stolen and the increased perceived betrayal of trust by someone who was permitted to be on their property

Further information about the nature of incidents is currently restricted to the CSEW; only limited data are currently available on the circumstances surrounding offences in the main recorded crime collection. It is anticipated that in the future we may be able to provide further information about crime incidents recorded by the police as more detailed data sources become available centrally.

Notes for: What is known about the nature and circumstances of such incidents?

1. Known well or known by sight or to speak to casually.

6 . Which source provides the better measure of these offences?

The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) has collected information on crimes, including domestic burglary and “other household theft”, experienced by respondents in a consistent manner since the survey first ran in 1981. It captures incidents that are not reported to the police and is not affected by changes in police recording practices; it is therefore a reliable measure of long-term trends.

However, the survey will not capture crimes against businesses, so data on non-domestic burglary are not available, or offences committed against people not resident in households (for example, students in halls of residence or overseas visitors). While estimates at the national level (England and Wales) are of good quality, lower-level geography estimates are not robust.

Police recorded crime data have a wider offence coverage – including both domestic burglary and non-domestic burglary – and a greater population coverage, with crimes committed against people not resident in private households included. Lower-level geography data (police force and community safety partnership areas) are also available.

However, while police recorded crime data are available for theft in a dwelling offences, thefts from outside a dwelling are encompassed within an “other theft” category and are not separately identifiable.

The police recorded crime data do not include offences that do not come to the attention of the police or are not recorded by them. According to the CSEW, burglary is one of the offences more commonly reported to the police (consistently around three-fifths of victims do so), reflecting the severity of the offence. But “other household thefts” tend to be reported to the police less frequently; these are consistently reported by between an estimated one-fifth and one-quarter of victims.

Also, due to changes in recording practices introduced in 1998 and 2002, it is not possible to directly compare police recorded crime data for any period prior to the year ending March 2003 with subsequent years.

Additionally, there are currently concerns about the quality of crime recording; crimes may not be recorded consistently across police forces and so the true level of recorded crime may be understated. Following an [assessment of crime statistics](#) by the UK Statistics Authority, published in January 2014, the statistics based on police recorded crime data have been found not to meet the required standard for designation as [National Statistics](#).

Since the UK Statistics Authority assessment decision, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) has undertaken an inspection of the integrity of police recorded crime. The [Crime-recording: making the victim count](#) report, published by HMIC found that, an estimated 11% of burglary offences that should have been recorded as a crime were not. However, this level of under-recording was lower than for all offences on average (19%).

The renewed focus on the quality of crime recording means that caution is needed when interpreting statistics on police recorded crime. While it is likely that improvements in compliance with the National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS) may have led to increases in the number of crimes recorded by the police, it is not possible to quantify the scale of this, or assess how this effect varied between different police forces. However, the effect of improved compliance with recording standards is thought to have been more pronounced for violent and sexual offences rather than burglary and household theft offences.

Therefore, on balance, the CSEW provides a better measure of long-term national trends in (domestic) burglary and “other household theft”. Police recorded crime provides a better source for subnational data for these offences, where available, and can provide a better indication of emerging trends. Police recorded crime is also the only source for data on non-domestic burglary.

7 . Where can more information be found?

Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW)

[Crime in England and Wales](#) (quarterly publication) – the preferred source for latest trends:

- [Appendix tables](#) A1, A2, A3 and A8 include data on numbers of incidents, incidence rates, prevalence rates and numbers of victims for the complete survey time series (starting from the year ending December 1981)
- [Quarterly table](#) QT2 includes data on numbers of incidents in the previous 3 survey years, broken down by quarter of interview
- Open data tables ([Personal Crime – Incidence](#) and [Personal Crime – Prevalence](#)) include data broken down by demographic information
- [Annual trend and demographic tables](#) D5, D6, D7 and D8 include data on repeat victimisation and incidents reported to the police – note: only published alongside “Year ending March” releases
- [Annual supplementary table](#) S14 includes data on victim satisfaction with police handling of incidents – note: only published alongside “Year ending March” releases
- [Annual supplementary tables](#) S34, S35 and S36 include data on worry about being a victim of burglary – note: only published alongside “Year ending March” releases

[Focus on: Property Crime](#) (annual publication; latest edition published in November 2016) – the preferred source for more detailed analysis, including victim characteristics and details regarding the circumstances of offences:

- commentary in overview chapter on time-series trends and more detailed findings from the latest financial year
- [Appendix tables](#) 1 and 2 include data on household demographics
- [Nature of crime tables](#) 3.1 to 3.14 include data about the circumstances surrounding incidents of burglary, including time, point and method of entry, item(s) stolen, contact with offenders and more
- [Nature of crime tables](#) 6.1 to 6.5 include data about the circumstances surrounding incidents of “other household theft”, including time, item(s) stolen and more

Police recorded crime

[Crime in England and Wales](#) (quarterly publication):

- [Appendix table](#) A4 includes data on numbers of incidents since the year ending March 2003, following the introduction of the National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS) in April 2002; this is the earliest time period for which the data are directly comparable
- [Quarterly table](#) QT1 includes data on numbers of incidents in the previous 2 years, broken down by quarter
- [Police force area tables](#) P1, P2 and P3 include data on numbers of incidents and rates per 1,000 population in the latest 12-month period and percentage changes with the previous 12-month period, broken down at police force area level
- [Police force area open data](#) include a time series of numbers of incidents back to the year ending March 2003 by police force area
- [Community safety partnership data](#) include a time series of numbers of incidents back to the year ending March 2003 by community safety partnership

[Focus on: Property Crime](#) (annual publication; latest edition published in November 2016):

- commentary in overview chapter on time-series trends and more detailed findings from the latest financial year

8 . What other sources of information are available?

Crime outcomes (Home Office)

The Home Office publishes data on the outcomes of crimes recorded by the 43 territorial police forces in England and Wales, plus the British Transport Police. The latest publication is available from the Home Office [Crime outcomes in England and Wales statistics](#) web pages.

Commercial Victimisation Survey (Home Office)

The Commercial Victimization Survey (CVS) is a telephone survey in which respondents from a representative sample of business premises in certain sectors in England and Wales are asked about crimes experienced at their premises in the 12 months prior to interview. In 2016, for example, three sectors were surveyed: "Wholesale and retail", "Transportation and storage" and "Administration and support".

The CVS is run by the Home Office and data are published on the Home Office's [Crime against businesses statistics](#) web pages.

Data are available on the proportion and number of premises that experienced burglary, as well as the incidence rates and number of incidents of burglary in the year prior to interview, by industry sector. Estimates for burglary with entry and attempted burglary are separately identifiable.

Being a survey of business premises, the CVS does not collect information on "other household theft".

Sentencing data (Ministry of Justice)

The Ministry of Justice publishes data tools on prosecutions and sentencing that provide offence-level breakdowns (in most of their headline data, it is not possible to separately identify burglary or other household theft offences from within "Theft offences").

The latest Criminal Justice Statistics Quarterly (CJSQ) publication containing these data tools is the [year ending December 2016](#) release.

Scotland

Crime statistics for Scotland are collected and published separately.

The term “Burglary” is not used in Scotland. There are separate crimes for “Housebreaking” (“Domestic – dwelling”, “Domestic – non-dwelling” or “Other”; the latter including business premises) and “In building with intent to steal” (where the building is not actually broken into; for example, where the intruder walks through an open door).

Thefts inside (where the offender had the right to be there) and outside dwellings are not separate offences in Scotland; these are included in an “Other theft” category and are not separately identifiable within the published statistics.

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

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

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

The Scottish Crime and Justice Survey (SCJS), however, does follow a similar format to the Crime Survey for England and Wales, having a shared antecedence in the British Crime Survey (whose sample during some rounds of the survey in the 1980s covered Scotland, south of the Caledonian Canal). So, while there are differences in the crimes or offence classifications to reflect the differing legal systems, the data are broadly comparable.

Police recorded crime and SCJS data are published by the [Scottish Government](#).

Northern Ireland

Crime statistics for Northern Ireland are collected and published separately.

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

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

Police recorded crime data are published by the [PSNI](#) and NICS data are published by the [Department of Justice \(Northern Ireland\)](#).

9 . Annex: Legal definitions

The basic definition of theft is laid out in section 1 of the Theft Act 1968:

[1] A person is guilty of theft if he dishonestly appropriates property belonging to another with the intention of permanently depriving the other of it; and “thief” and “steal” shall be construed accordingly.

[2] It is immaterial whether the appropriation is made with a view to gain, or is made for the thief’s own benefit.

The offence of theft (which includes theft from inside a dwelling and theft from outside a dwelling) is laid out in section 7 of the Theft Act 1968:

[1] A person guilty of theft shall on conviction on indictment be liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 7 years.

The offence of burglary is laid out in section 9 of the Theft Act 1968:

[1] A person is guilty of burglary if:

(a) he enters any building or part of a building as a trespasser and with intent to commit any such offence as is mentioned in subsection below; or

(b) having entered any building or part of a building as a trespasser he steals or attempts to steal anything in the building or that part of it or inflicts or attempts to inflict on any person therein any grievous bodily harm

[2] The offences referred to in subsection [1], (a) above are offences of stealing anything in the building or part of a building in question, of inflicting on any person therein any grievous bodily harm... therein and of doing unlawful damage to the building or anything therein.

[3] A person guilty of burglary shall on conviction on indictment be liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding:

(a) where the offence was committed in respect of a building or part of a building which is a dwelling, 14 years

(b) in any other case, 10 years

[4] References in subsections [1] and [2] above to a building and the reference in subsection [3] above to a building which is a dwelling, shall apply also to an inhabited vehicle or vessel and shall apply to any such vehicle or vessel at times when the person having a habitation in it is not there as well as at times when he is.

The additional offence of aggravated burglary is laid out in section 10 of the Theft Act 1968:

[1] A person is guilty of aggravated burglary if he commits any burglary and at the time has with him any firearm or imitation firearm, any weapon of offence, or any explosive; and for this purpose:

(a) "firearm" includes an airgun or air pistol and "imitation firearm" means anything which has the appearance of being a firearm, whether capable of being discharged or not

(b) "weapon of offence" means any article made or adapted for use for causing injury to or incapacitating a person, or intended by the person having it with him for such use

(c) "explosive" means any article manufactured for the purpose of producing a practical effect by explosion, or intended by the person having it with him for that purpose

[2] A person guilty of aggravated burglary shall on conviction on indictment be liable to imprisonment for life.