Office for National Statistics

Statistical bulletin

Crime in England and Wales: year ending June 2019

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

Overall levels of crime showed falls in recent decades, but have remained broadly stable in recent years. While in the last year there has been no change in overall levels of crime, this hides variation seen in individual crime types. The latest figures show a mixed picture, with continued rises in some types of theft, “bank and credit account fraud” and falls in “computer viruses”. There were also increases in some of the less frequently occurring but higher-harm types of violence, including offences involving knives or sharp instruments.

Headline figures

The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) indicated a continuing rise in fraud with the latest estimates showing a 15% increase, driven by a 17% rise in “bank and credit account fraud”.

All other main crime types measured by CSEW showed no change, including lower-harm violent offences (for example, violence without injury and assault with minor injury). However, police recorded crime gives more insight into the lower-volume but higher-harm violence that the survey either does not cover or does not capture well. These data show:

- a 5% decrease in the number of homicides following a period of increases over the last four years
- a 4% increase in the number of police recorded offences involving firearms
- a 7% increase[1] in the number of police recorded offences involving knives or sharp instruments

Many of these lower-volume, higher-harm types of violence tend to be concentrated in metropolitan areas such as London, the West Midlands, West Yorkshire and Greater Manchester.

While the total number of offences involving knives or sharp instruments increased in England and Wales, the number of homicides where a knife or sharp instrument was involved decreased by 14%. This decrease was mainly driven by falls in London. There is a mixed picture in the total number of offences involving knifes or sharp instruments across different police force areas, with the Metropolitan Police recording little change in the last year.

Although the latest estimate of theft offences measured by CSEW showed no change in the last year, there was an 11% increase when compared with the year ending March 2017. While CSEW provides the better indication of overall trends in theft offences, police recorded crime data can help identify short-term changes in individual offences that are thought to be well-reported and accurately recorded by the police. In the latest year these data show:

- a 3% increase in vehicle offences, which includes a 7% rise in the subcategory of “theft or unauthorised taking of a motor vehicle”
- an 11% increase in robbery
- a 4% decrease in burglary

Notes for: Main points

1. Excludes Greater Manchester Police (GMP) because of a technical issue that resulted in previous undercounting of crimes involving a knife or sharp instrument. GMP have now changed their methodology and data from December 2017 onwards have been revised. As a result of these changes data for GMP are not comparable over this time.

2 . Latest figures

A summary of the latest figures for a selection of crime types is given in Table 1, using the most appropriate data source for each. More detailed analysis by crime type is provided in Sections 6 to 11.

A rise or fall in police recorded crime does not necessarily mean the actual level of crime in society has changed. The data can be affected by changes in recording practices, policing activity and victims' willingness to report crime.

Table 1: What do the latest figures show?

	Figures for year ending June 2019, compared with previous survey year	Things to note
Computer misuse	No change in computer misuse offences as estimated by CSEW, although there was a 27% decrease in “computer viruses” to 442,000 offences.	The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) is the best source for measuring the volume of computer misuse offences as it captures offences that go unreported. However, as computer misuse is a recent addition to the CSEW and only limited time series data are available, caution must be taken in interpreting early trends. Computer misuse offences include computer viruses as well as "unauthorised access to personal information (including hacking)".
Criminal damage and arson	No change in overall criminal damage and arson estimated by the CSEW (1,082,000 offences).	Police recorded criminal damage and arson offences have seen little change in the last year (3% decrease to 568,131 offences).
Domestic abuse	According to the CSEW, there was no change in the proportion of adult victims experiencing domestic abuse in the year ending March 2019 (6.3%) compared with the previous year (6.1%).	Given the different factors affecting the reporting and recording of these offences, the police figures do not provide a reliable measure of current trends.
	Of all crimes recorded by the police, 14% were flagged as domestic abuse-related.	The CSEW is the better source for domestic abuse victimisation.
Fraud	The CSEW estimated a 15% increase in fraud offences (to 3,863,000 offences). This increase is driven mainly by increases in bank and credit account fraud (17%, to 2,666,000 offences) and “other fraud” (183%, to 188,000 offences).	The CSEW provides the best indication of the volume of fraud offences experienced by individuals as it captures the more frequent lower-harm cases that are likely to go unreported to the authorities. However, as fraud is a recent addition to the CSEW and only limited time series data are available, caution must be taken in interpreting early trends.
Homicide	There was a 5% decrease in police recorded homicide offences (from 719 to 681 offences). There was a 14% decrease in police recorded homicides involving a knife or sharp instrument (287 to 248 offences).	Trends in homicide can be affected by events with multiple homicide victims, such as the recorded victims of Harold Shipman. No such events occurred in the year ending June 2018 or June 2019.
Public order offences	Police recorded public order offences increased by 9% (to 445,945 offences).	A large part of this increase is likely to reflect improvements to recording practices. For example, incidents that may have previously been recorded as an anti-social behaviour incident may now be recorded as a public order offence. It is also possible that genuine increases in public disorder may also have contributed to the rise.

Robbery	Police recorded robbery offences saw an 11% increase (to 88,177 offences).	This increase is likely to reflect some real change in these crimes. Recording improvements are likely to have contributed, but the impact is thought to be less pronounced than for some other crime types. The CSEW does not provide a robust measure of short-term trends in robbery as it is a relatively low-volume crime. The offence of robbery involves theft (or attempted theft) with the use or threat of force. However, it forms a standalone category, separate from theft.
Sexual offences	According to the CSEW, there was no change in the proportion of adults who experienced sexual assaults in the year ending March 2019 (2.9%) compared with the previous year (2.7%). Over the longer-term, there was a rise in sexual assault estimated by the survey over the past five years, with the latest estimate returning to levels similar to those around a decade ago.	Given the different factors affecting the reporting and recording of these offences, the police figures do not provide a reliable measure of current trends. The CSEW is the better source of victimisation data on sexual offences.
Theft Offences	No change in overall theft offences estimated by the CSEW (3,690,000 offences) in the latest year, but an 11% rise compared with the year ending March 2017. Vehicle offences recorded by the police increased by 3% to 469,915. This was mainly the result of increases in “theft or unauthorised taking of a motor vehicle” (7%, to 115,777) and “theft from a vehicle” (2%, to 284,225). Burglary offences recorded by the police saw a 4% decrease to 417,416, driven mainly by decreases in “residential burglary” (5%, to 291,816). There was a 10% increase in “theft from a person” offences recorded by the police, to 109,096.	The CSEW provides the better indication of overall trends in theft offences. It better captures more minor thefts, such as from outside a dwelling, which are less likely to be reported to the police. However, police recorded crime data can help identify short-term changes in individual offences. Vehicle offences and burglary offences are thought to be generally well-reported by victims and well-recorded by the police Additionally, as with “robbery”, “theft from the person” is also a low-volume crime. Therefore, CSEW estimates are prone to greater fluctuations than estimates for more frequently occurring offences. Although this offence is prone to changes in recording practices, the police recorded data can often be a better measure of short term trends than CSEW.

Violence and weapons offences	No change in overall violent offences estimated by the CSEW (1,327,000 offences). Police recorded offences involving a knife or sharp instrument increased by 7% (to 44,076 offences). This figure excludes Greater Manchester Police (GMP). The rate of increase has fallen from 14% in the year ending June 2018. Police recorded offences involving firearms saw a 4% increase (to 6,734 offences), driven by rises in offences involving weapons such as stun guns, CS gas and pepper spray, partly reflecting improvements in identifying these cases.	The CSEW provides the better indication of overall trends in violent crime, giving a good measure of the more common but less harmful offences. Police recorded crime provides a better measure of the more harmful but less common offences. Such offences are not well-measured by the survey because of their relatively low volume GMP have changed their methodology after identifying an undercount of crimes involving a knife or sharp instrument. Data for GMP are not comparable over this time period. Including GMP, there were 47,513 knife or sharp instrument offences. It is possible that recording improvements in other forces have also contributed to the increase.

Source: Office for National Statistics

3 . Statistician's comment

Commenting on today’s figures, Joe Traynor from the Office for National Statistics Centre for Crime and Justice said:

“In the last year there has been no change in overall levels of crime. However, this hides variations in different types of crime, in particular continued rises in bank and credit account fraud and falls in computer viruses.

“While overall levels of violence have remained steady, the number of offences involving a knife has continued to increase across England and Wales. However, the number of homicides where a knife or sharp instrument was involved decreased, driven by falls in London. There is a mixed picture in the total number of knife crime offences across police forces with the Metropolitan Police recording little change in the last year.”

4 . Things you need to know about this release

How do we measure crime?

Crime covers a wide range of offences, from the most harmful such as murder and rape through to more minor incidents of criminal damage or petty theft. In general, the most serious crimes tend to be relatively low in volume and trends in total crime are often mainly influenced by changes in the levels of higher volume but less harmful crimes. Crime is often hidden and different types of offence occur in different circumstances and at different frequencies. This means crime can never be measured entirely by any single source.

Data sources included

This bulletin reports on two main sources of crime data: the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) and police recorded crime. Where possible, we refer to other sources of data to support our findings.

The CSEW is a face-to-face victimisation survey. 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.

Police recorded crime is the number of notifiable [1] crimes reported to and recorded by the 44 police forces in England and Wales. For some types of crime, owing to ongoing changes in police recording practices, an increase in the number of offences recorded by the police is unlikely to indicate a real rise in these types of crime.

For an overview of general data quality and specific quality issues to be aware of for this release, see the Quality and methodology section.

Detailed information on the CSEW can be found in Section 2 of the User guide to crime statistics for England and Wales. Detailed information on police recorded crime can be found in Section 3.

Time periods covered

The latest CSEW figures presented in this release are based on interviews conducted between July 2018 and June 2019, 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 June 2019 (July 2018 to June 2019). A "snapshot" of police recorded crime data for the year ending June 2019 was taken on 6 September 2019 to ensure the data do not change during the analysis period [2] .

Other crime statistics and the wider criminal justice system

In this bulletin we present the latest crime figures and trends. It provides a general overview, with more detailed discussion for certain types of crime where findings need a fuller explanation. If you are looking for a more in-depth analysis of specific types of offences, you may be interested in other articles and research that we produce throughout the year. To access these articles, see our main crime and justice webpage.

The crime statistics reported in this release relate to only a part of the wider set of official statistics available on crime and other areas of the criminal justice system. This wider context includes statistics on the outcomes of police investigations, the judicial process including charges, prosecutions and convictions, through to the management of prisons and prisoners.

Some of these statistics are published by the Home Office or the Ministry of Justice. We have produced a flowchart showing the connections between the different aspects of crime and justice, as well as the statistics available for each area.

Statistics in this bulletin are used to help monitor progress towards the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16, "Peace, justice and strong institutions". Explore the UK data on our SDGs reporting platform.

Notes for: Things you need to know about this release

1. The coverage of police recorded crime figures is defined by the Notifiable Offence List.
2. See Section 3.6 of the User guide for more information

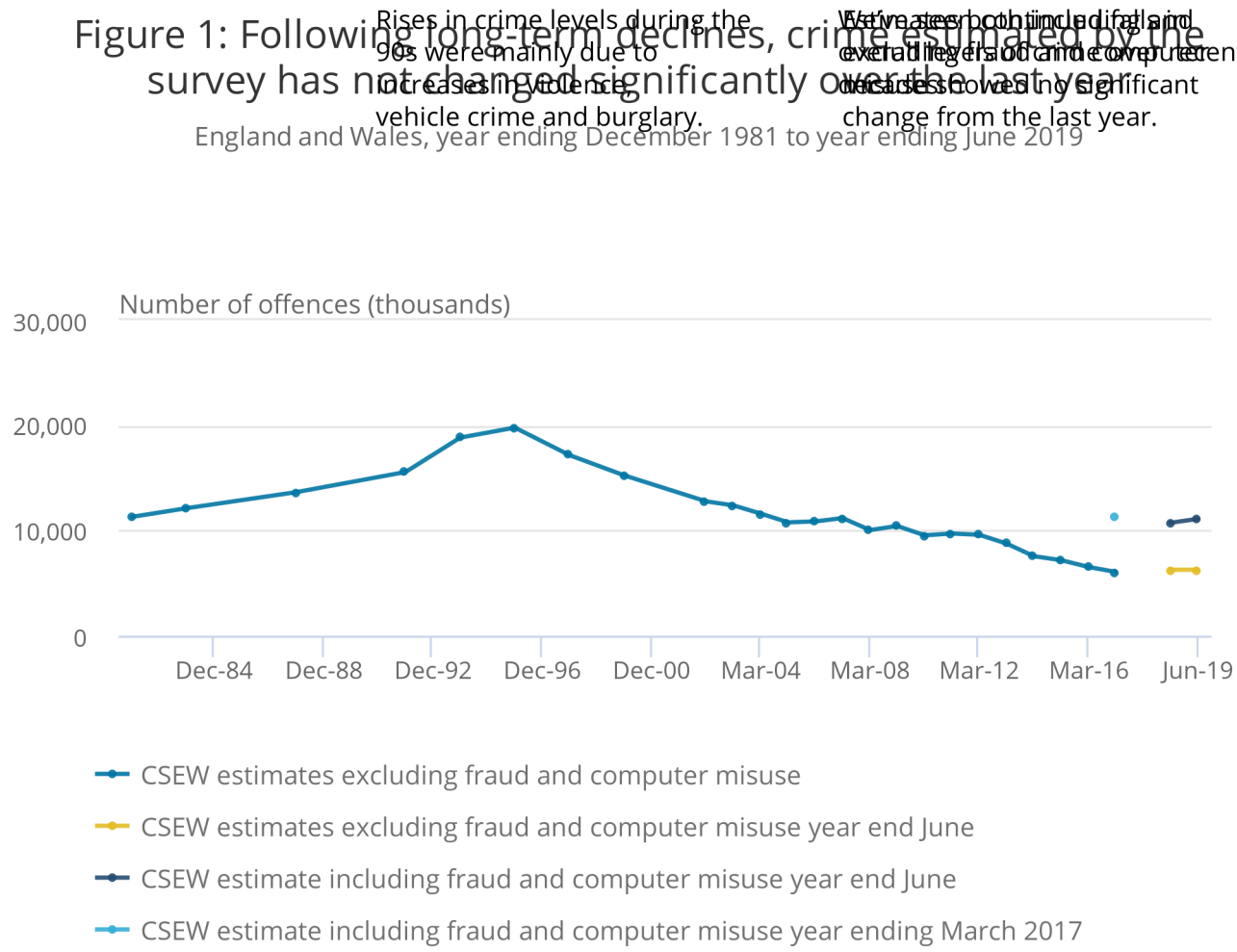
5 . Overview of crime

This section provides an overview of findings across our two main data sources. Some of these findings are discussed in more detail in later sections.

The latest estimates from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) for the year ending June 2019 show that there was no change in all CSEW crime (including fraud and computer misuse) compared with the previous year (11.1 million offences, Figure 1). Despite some apparent fluctuation over the last two years, there have been no statistically significant changes in all CSEW crime during this period. It is important to look at individual crime types, as the relatively stable overall picture hides variation both within and across crime types.

Figure 1: Following long-term declines, crime estimated by the survey has not changed significantly over the last year

England and Wales, year ending December 1981 to year ending June 2019



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

Notes:

1. Following a methodological change to the handling of repeat victimisation in the CSEW, these data are not comparable with data published before January 2019. For more information see Improving victimisation estimates derived from the Crime Survey for England and Wales.

2. Data on this chart refer to different time periods: 1981 to 1999 refer to crimes experienced in the calendar year (January to December); and 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. Data relate to adults aged 16 years and over or to households.

4. New victimisation questions on fraud and computer misuse were incorporated into the CSEW from October 2015. The questions were asked of half the survey sample initially, and have been asked of the full sample since October 2017. These offences need to be excluded when looking at changes over the long-term to make figures comparable.

The CSEW shows changes in fraud, computer misuse and theft

When looking at the main types of crime, the CSEW shows:

- fraud offences increased by 515,000 offences (15%, to 3.9 million offences); this was driven mainly by an increase in the bank and credit account fraud offence category, which saw a volume increase of 390,000 offences (17%, to 2.7 million offences).

- computer viruses fell for the second consecutive year (by 27%, to 442,000 offences), however, there was no significant change in overall computer misuse offences. In addition to computer viruses, computer misuse offences also include “unauthorised access to personal information (including hacking)”.

- the latest estimate of theft offences showed no change in the last year, however, there was an 11% increase (to 3.7 million offences) compared with the year ending March 2017 while the most recent estimate of vehicle-related thefts showed no change, there was a 15% rise over the same two-year period, a volume increase of 787,000 to 908,000 offences

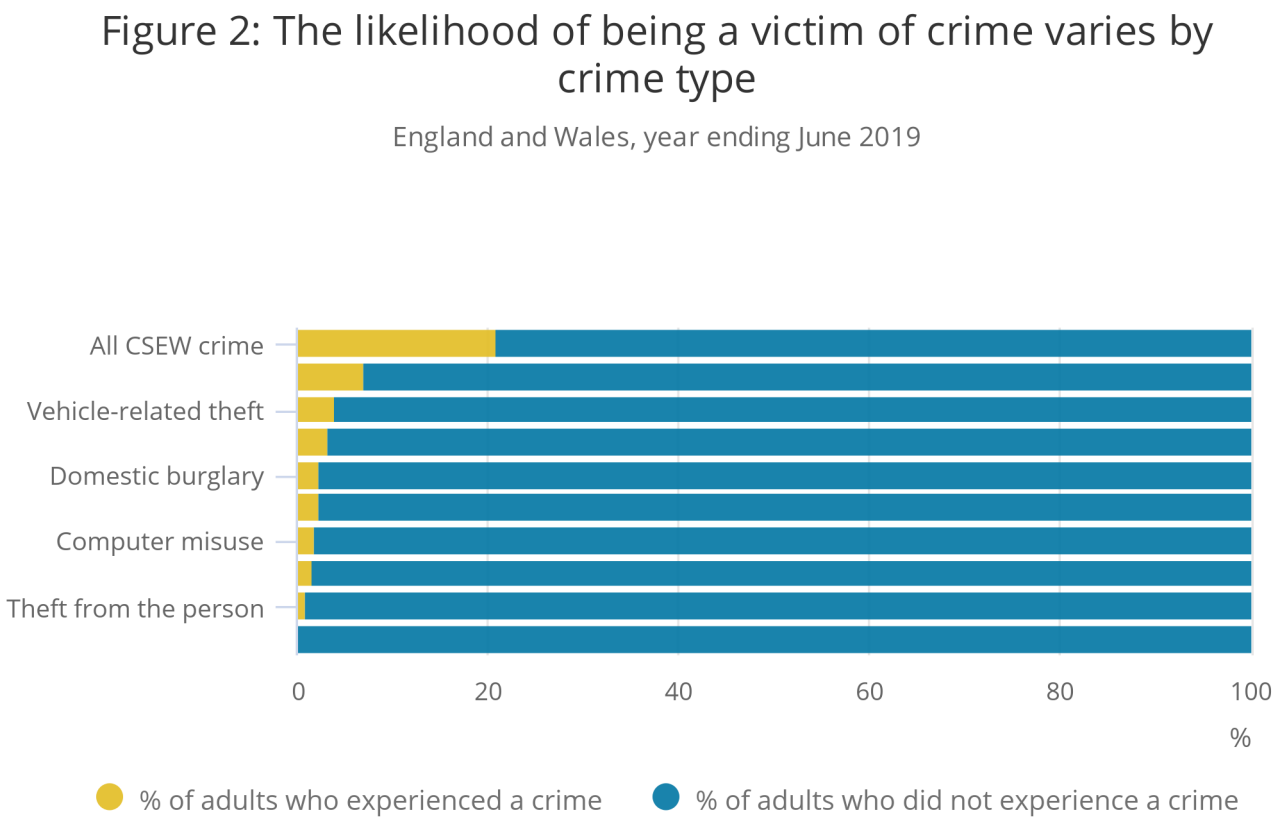
- all other main types of crime measured by the survey showed no statistically significant change in the number of offences (see Appendix Table A1 for details)

Most people are not victims of crime

The latest survey estimates show that 8 in 10 adults did not experience any of the crimes asked about in the survey in the previous 12 months[1] . This figure has remained stable since the introduction of fraud and computer misuse offences into the CSEW. It is much more likely for an adult in England and Wales to experience fraud, than a violent offence (Figure 2). However, likelihood of victimisation varies by personal and household characteristics (for more information, see the Property crime tables and Nature of violent crime: appendix tables)

Figure 2: The likelihood of being a victim of crime varies by crime type

England and Wales, year ending June 2019



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

Notes:

1. Following a methodological change to the handling of repeat victimisation in the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW), these data are not comparable with data published before January 2019. For more information see Improving victimisation estimates derived from the Crime Survey for England and Wales.

2. Percentages for violence, robbery, theft from the person, fraud and computer misuse are quoted for adults. Percentages for domestic burglary and criminal damage are quoted for households. Percentage for vehicle-related theft and bicycle theft are quoted for vehicle or bicycle owning households.

3. For all CSEW crime including fraud and computer misuse this is the estimated percentage 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.

Police recorded crime data show a continued, but smaller, rise in offences involving knives or sharp instruments

Offences involving knives or sharp instruments figures (unless otherwise stated) exclude Greater Manchester Police (GMP) owing to their previous undercounting of these offences. Improvements by GMP to address this led to a sharp increase in these offences. Data from January 2018 onwards are not comparable with earlier figures.

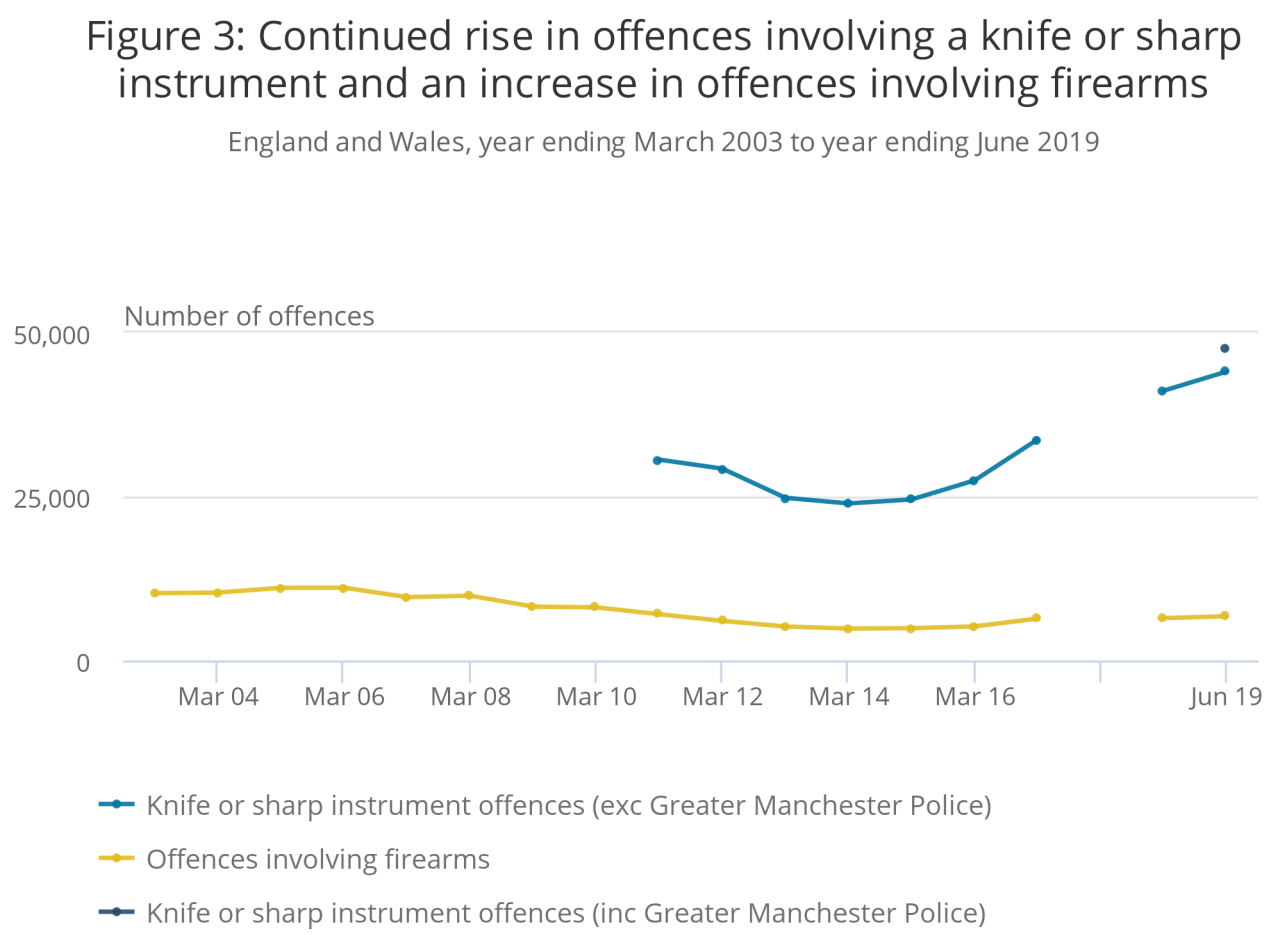
Over the last year, police figures indicated rises in some higher-harm violent offences involving the use of weapons[2] . Recorded offences involving knives or sharp instruments increased by 7% to 44,076 offences[3]. Notably, this latest rise is smaller than that seen a year ago (up 14% in the year ending June 2018). While the total number of offences in England and Wales increased, there was a mixed picture across the different police force areas, with the Metropolitan Police recording little change in the number of offences in the last year, an increase of 17 from 14,949 to 14,966 offences.

Although less prevalent than offences involving knives or sharp instruments, offences involving firearms recorded by the police rose by 4% (to 6,734 offences). Following previous decreases these offences have seen rises over the last five years when comparing the year ending March figures (Figure 3). Figures reported in the year ending December 2018 bulletin showed a small fall (2%) in the number of offences involving firearms but this has not continued over the latest two quarters.

We are aware of improvements in recording practices by police to better identify the involvement of a firearm, which may have contributed to this latest rise. However, the scale of the effect is unclear. These improvements are thought to have most affected those offences involving “other firearms”, which include weapons such as stun guns, CS gas and pepper spray.

Figure 3: Continued rise in offences involving a knife or sharp instrument and an increase in offences involving firearms

England and Wales, year ending March 2003 to year ending June 2019



Source: Home Office – Police recorded crime

Notes:

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

2. Police recorded knife or sharp instrument offences data are submitted via a special collection which includes the offences: homicide; attempted murder; threats to kill; assault with injury and assault with intent to cause serious harm; robbery; rape; and sexual assault.

3. Information on previous recording issues for individual police forces can be found in table P4 published alongside this bulletin.

4. Lancashire could not supply data, for offences involving knives or sharp instruments, in time for publication for April to June 2019 as a result of technical issues. Data for Lancashire have been imputed using national trends and will be corrected in future publications when data are submitted by this force

5. 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.

6. Data on firearms offences are provisional and have not been reconciled with police forces

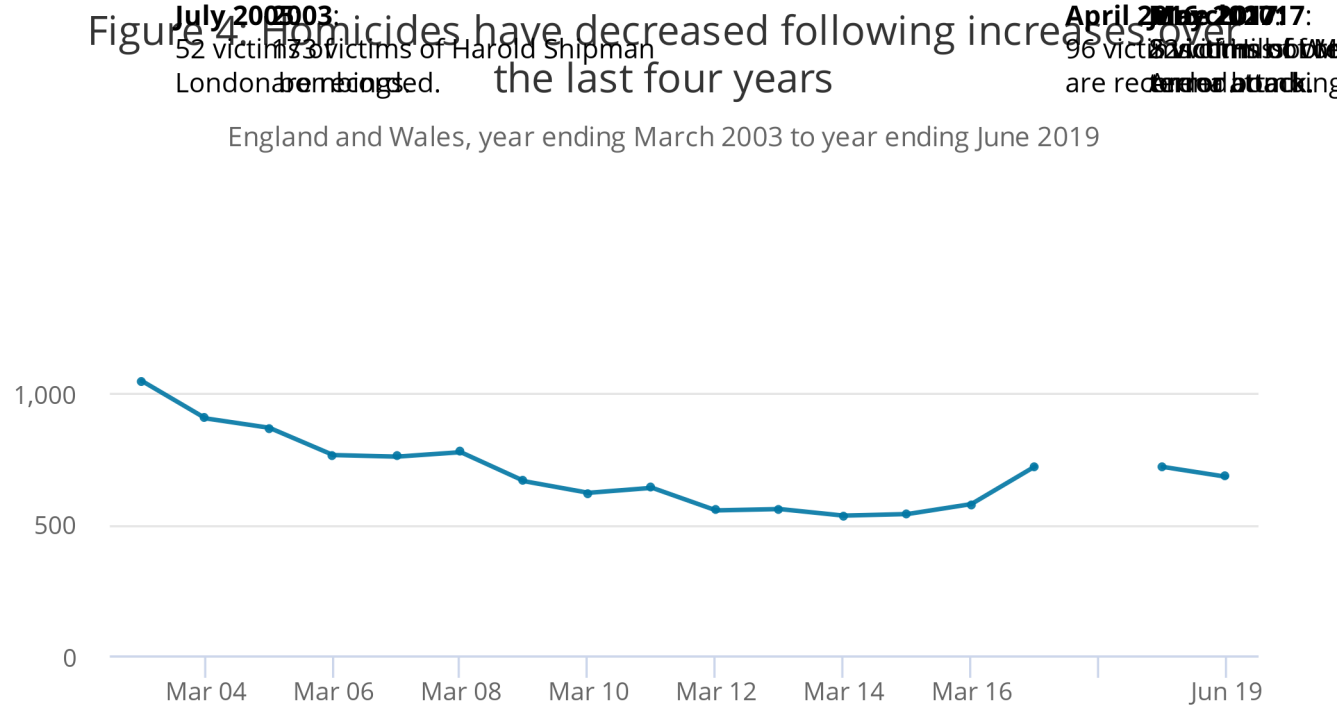
Further discussion about offences involving knives or sharp instruments can be found in Rises in offences involving knives or sharp instruments and firearms offences.

Homicides falling after consistent rises in recent years

The total number of homicides recorded by the police fell by 5% in the last year (from 719 to 681 offences). This fall comes after a series of consecutive annual increases in homicides since the year ending March 2014 (Figure 4). There has also been a 14% decrease in homicides where a knife or sharp instrument was involved (to 248 offences); this decrease was mainly driven by falls in London.

Figure 4: Homicides have decreased following increases over the last four years

England and Wales, year ending March 2003 to year ending June 2019



Source: Home Office – Police recorded crime

Notes:

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

2. Data on homicide offences given in these police recorded crime data will differ from data from the Home Office Homicide Index, which are published annually by the Office for National Statistics, last released as part of Homicide in England and Wales: year ending March 2018. Police recorded crime data on homicide represent the recording decision of the police based on the available information at the time the offence comes to their attention. Homicide Index data take account of the charging decision and court outcome in cases that have gone to trial. It is not uncommon for offences initially recorded as murder by the police to be charged or convicted as manslaughter at court.

3. Some forces have revised their data and police recorded crime totals may not agree with those previously published.

4. The dates shown for the London and Manchester terrorist attacks in 2005 and 2017 correspond to when the events occurred, rather than when the homicides were recorded by the police.

5. The time series does not include data for April to June 2017. Full data are available in Appendix table A4.

6. Lancashire changed recording systems in November 2018, this led to some technical difficulties in processing data. There are a number of offences with unallocated Community Safety Partnership (CSP) which have been excluded, this will be rectified in subsequent quarters

Robberies continue to increase

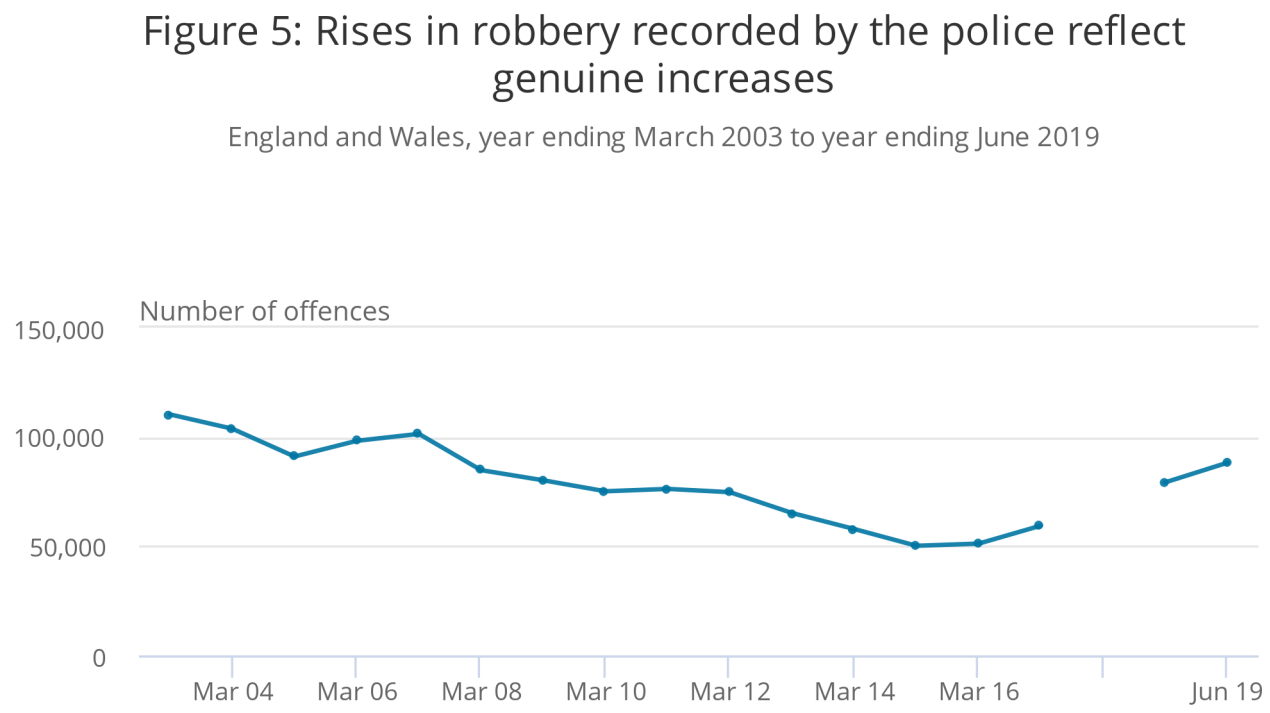
The police recorded an 11% rise in robbery in the last year (to 88,177 offences; Figure 5), following consistent increases since the year ending March 2015. Over this period the number of recorded robbery offences has increased by 76%. Robbery offences are disproportionately concentrated in London, accounting for 41% of all recorded robberies in the year ending June 2019. In comparison, over the same time period, London accounted for 17% of all recorded crimes in England and Wales[4] .

The rise seen in robbery is likely to reflect a real increase in these crimes. While it is likely that robbery is influenced by some recording effects, this is thought to be less pronounced than for other crime types (see What's happened to the volume of crime recorded by the police?).

While the CSEW does show a significant rise in robbery since the year ending March 2015, there was no change in the latest year. However, the CSEW does not provide a robust measure of short-term trends in robbery as a result of it being a relatively low-volume crime.

Figure 5: Rises in robbery recorded by the police reflect genuine increases

England and Wales, year ending March 2003 to year ending June 2019



Source: Home Office – Police recorded crime

Notes:

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

2. Lancashire changed recording systems in November 2018, this led to some technical difficulties in processing data. There are a number of offences with unallocated Community Safety Partnership (CSP) which have been excluded, this will be rectified in subsequent quarters.

More detailed analysis by crime type is provided in Sections 6 to 11 of this bulletin and further breakdowns are provided in the Appendix tables published alongside this bulletin.

Rises in vehicle-related theft continue, but at a slowing rate

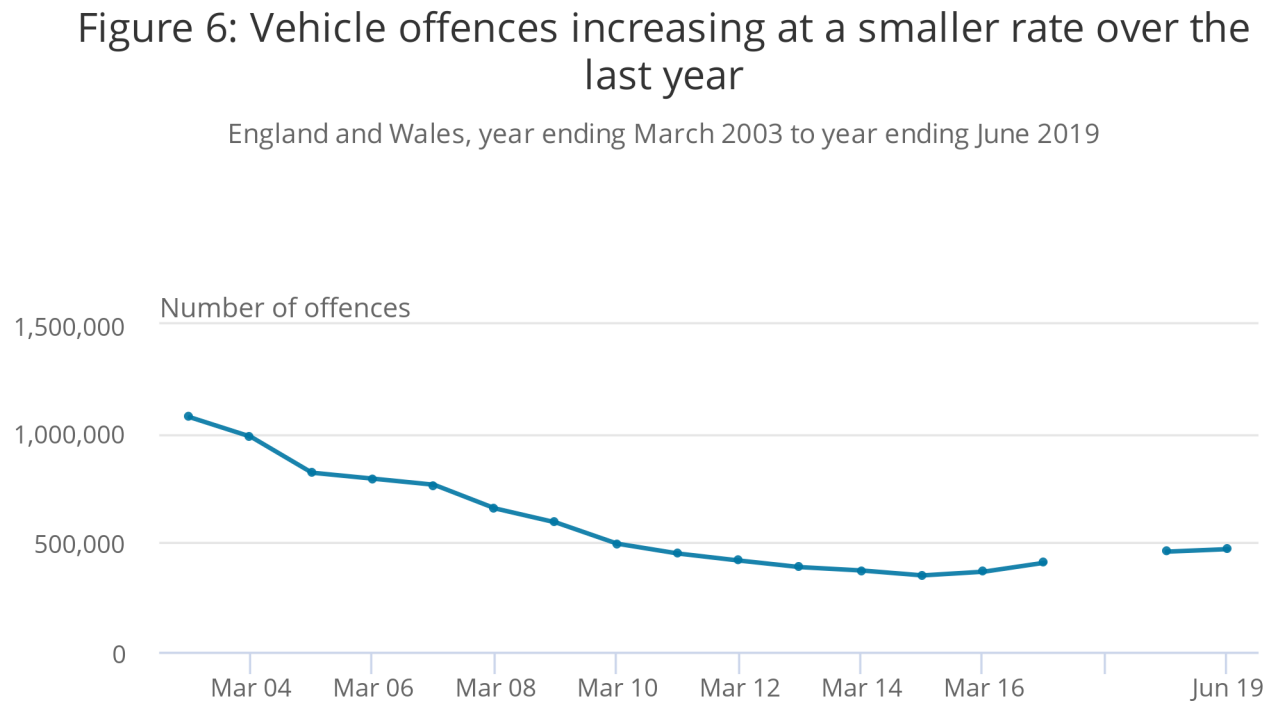
Police recorded crime figures showed a 3% increase in vehicle offences in the year ending June 2019 (to 469,915 offences). These offences have been increasing in each of the last four years but the latest annual increase is smaller than previously seen (for example, the increase in the year ending March 2018 was 12%; Figure 6).

The increase in vehicle offences in the latest year was mainly the result of a 7% increase in the subcategory “theft or unauthorised taking of a motor vehicle” (to 115,777 offences). However, this is the smallest increase seen in recent years compared with a 20% rise in the year ending March 2017 and a 16% rise in the year ending March 2018. The subcategory “theft from a vehicle”, which accounted for more than half of vehicle offences, showed a 2% increase.

We believe the recent increases in police recorded vehicle offences reflect genuine rises as these offences are thought to be generally well-reported by victims and well-recorded by the police. This is supported by the CSEW. While the latest estimate from the crime survey showed no change in the last year, vehicle-related theft showed a 15% increase when compared with the year ending March 2017. This is similar to the increase in police recorded vehicle offences over the same period.

Figure 6: Vehicle offences increasing at a smaller rate over the last year

England and Wales, year ending March 2003 to year ending June 2019



Source: Home Office – Police recorded crime

Notes:

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

2. Lancashire changed recording systems in November 2018, this led to some technical difficulties in processing data. There are a number of offences with unallocated Community Safety Partnership (CSP) which have been excluded, this will be rectified in subsequent quarters.

CSEW and police recorded crime figures for main crime types

Table 2a: Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) incidence rates and numbers of incidents for year ending June 2019 and percentage change[1,2,3]

England and Wales | **Adults aged 16 and over or households**

July 2018 to June 2019 compared with:

		July 2018 to June 2019		**January 1995 to December 1995**		**July 2017 to June 2018**	
Offence group		**Rate per 1,000 population**	**Number of incidents (thousands)**	**Number of incidents - percentage change and significance**			
Violence		28	1,327	-70	*	-7	
Robbery		4	166	-48	*	-13	
Theft offences		..	3,690	-68	*	4	
	Theft from the person	10	456	-33	*	11	
	Other theft of personal property	15	683	-67	*	-1	
Unweighted base - number of adults		33,876	33,876				
	Domestic burglary	28	687	-71	*	7	
	Other household theft	26	633	-59	*	5	
Unweighted base - number of households		33,808	33,808				
	Vehicle-related theft	47	908	-79	*	2	
Unweighted base - number of vehicle owners		27,188	27,188				
	Bicycle theft	26	323	-51	*	6	
Unweighted base - number of bicycle owners		15,667	15,667				
Criminal damage		44	1,082	-68	*	-2	
Unweighted base - number of households		33,808	33,808				
All CSEW crime excluding fraud and computer misuse		..	6,264	-68	*	0	
Fraud and computer misuse,[1]		103	4,840		:	8	*
	Fraud	82	3,863		:	15	*
	Computer misuse	21	977		:	-13	
Unweighted base - number of adults		33,876	33,876				

All CSEW crime excluding fraud and computer misuse, [1,11]	..	11,105	: 3

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

Notes:

1. Following a methodological change to the handling of repeat victimisation in the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW), these data are not comparable with data published before January 2019. For more information see Improving victimisation estimates derived from the Crime Survey for England and Wales.
2. More detail on further years can be found in Appendix Tables A1 and A2.
3. : denotes not applicable as data not collected.
4. Section 5 of the User Guide provides more information about the crime types included in this table.
5. Rates for violence, robbery, theft from the person, other theft of personal property, fraud and computer misuse 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.
6. Data may not sum to totals shown as a result of rounding.
7. Statistically significant change at the 5% level is indicated by an asterisk.
8. .. denotes not available. 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.
9. New victimisation questions on fraud and computer misuse were incorporated into the CSEW from October 2015. Up to the year ending September 2017 the questions were asked of half the survey sample. From October 2017 onwards, the questions are being asked of a full survey sample.
10. In March 2018 the new CSEW estimates on fraud and computer misuse were assessed by the Office for Statistics Regulation against the Code of Practice for Statistics and were awarded National Statistics status.
11. 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 since year ending March 2017.

Table 2b: Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) prevalence rates and numbers of victims for year ending June 2019 and percentage change[1,2,3]

England and Wales | **Adults aged 16 years and over or households**

July 2018 to June 2019 compared with:

Offence group		**July 2018 to June 2019**		**January 1995 to December 1995**	**July 2017 to June 2018**	
		Percentage, victims once or more	**Number of victims (thousands)**	**Numbers of victims - percentage change and significance**		
Violence		1.7	811	-58	* -3	
Robbery		0.3	156	-41	* 4	
Theft offences		10.4	4,894	-62	* 3	
	Theft from the person	0.9	415	-36	* 9	
	Other theft of personal property	1.4	634	-62	* 2	
Unweighted base - number of adults		33,876	33,876			
	Domestic burglary	2.4	579	-67	* 8	
	Other household theft	2.1	515	-51	* 6	
Unweighted base - number of households		33,808	33,808			
	Vehicle-related theft	4.0	778	-74	* 4	
Unweighted base - number of vehicle owners		27,188	27,188			
	Bicycle theft	2.3	287	-49	* 0	
Unweighted base - number of bicycle owners		15,667	15,667			
Criminal damage		3.3	810	-61	* -2	
Unweighted base - number of households		33,808	33,808			
All CSEW Crime excluding fraud and computer misuse		14.6	6,851	-57	* 1	
Fraud and computer misuse[1,11]		8.5	3,998	:	9	*
	Fraud	7.0	3,290	:	16	*
	Computer misuse	1.8	842	:	-11	
Unweighted base - number of adults		33,876	33,876			
All CSEW Crime including fraud and computer misuse[11,12]		20.9	9,813	:	3	*

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

Notes:

1. Following a methodological change to the handling of repeat victimisation in the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW), these data are not comparable with data published before January 2019. For more information see Improving victimisation estimates derived from the Crime Survey for England and Wales .
2. More detail on further years can be found in Appendix Tables A3 and A8.
3. : denotes not available as data not collected.
4. Section 5 of the User Guide provides more information about the crime types included in this table.
5. Percentages for violence, robbery, theft from the person, other theft of personal property, fraud and computer misuse 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.
6. Where applicable, numbers in subcategories will not sum to totals, because adults or households may have been a victim of more than one crime.
7. Statistically significant change at the 5% level is indicated by an asterisk.
8. This is the estimated percentage or 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.
9. This is the estimated percentage or 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.
10. New victimisation questions on fraud and computer misuse were incorporated into the CSEW from October 2015. Up to the year ending September 2017 the questions were asked of half the survey sample. From October 2017 onwards, the questions are being asked of a full survey sample.
11. In March 2018 the new CSEW estimates on fraud and computer misuse were assessed by the Office for Statistics Regulation against the Code of Practice for Statistics and were awarded National Statistics status.
12. 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 since year ending March 2017.

Rises in some offence types for police recorded crime need to be interpreted with caution

A rise or fall in police recorded crime does not necessarily mean the level of crime in society has changed, but they provide a good measure of crime-related demand on the police. Changes in policing activity, recording practices and victims' willingness to report can affect recorded crime.

Over recent years, most crime types have been affected by improved police recording and changes in police priorities. This effect is particularly pronounced for:

- violent crime, particularly violence without injury offences
- sexual offences
- stalking and harassment
- public order offences
- modern slavery

It is thought that increases in these crime types largely reflect changes in reporting and recording practices. These are discussed in more detail in What's happened to the volume of crime recorded by the police? . Links to further information on the quality of police recorded crime can be found in Quality and methodology.

Table 3: Police recorded crimes - rate, number and percentage change for year ending June 2019[1],[2] ,[3] , ,

England and Wales

Offence group		July 2018 to June 2019		July 2018 to June 2019 compared with:	
		Rate per 1,000 population	Number of recorded offences	April 2008 to March 2009	July 2017 to June 2018
				Number of recorded offences - percentage change	
Victim-based crime		77	4,523,153	11	5
Violence against the person offences		29	1,694,644	139	15
	Homicide	<0.1	681	3	-5
	Death or serious injury - unlawful driving	<0.1	727	58	-2
	Violence with injury	9	543,089	29	3
	Violence without injury	12	691,266	192	13
	Stalking and harrassment	8	458,881	804	38
Sexual offences		3	163,076	225	5
	Rape	1	58,947	350	7
	Other sexual offences	2	104,129	181	5
Robbery offences		1	88,177	10	11
Theft offences		34	2,009,125	-13	0
	Burglary	7	417,416	-28	-4
	Vehicle offences	8	469,915	-21	3
	Theft from the person	2	109,096	22	10
	Bicycle theft	2	97,512	-6	0
	Shoplifting	6	368,745	15	-4
	All other theft offences	9	546,441	-14	2
Criminal damage and arson		10	568,131	-39	-3
Other crimes against society		13	756,803	40	10
	Drug offences	3	159,615	-34	15
	Possession of weapons offences	1	46,956	32	16
	Public order offences	8	445,945	118	9
	Miscellaneous crimes against society	2	104,287	87	8
Total recorded crime - all offences excluding fraud and computer misuse		89	5,279,956	14	6

Total fraud and computer misuse offences[1],[11],[12],[13]	13	740,845	..	16
Total recorded crime - all offences including fraud and computer misuse[1]	102	6,020,801	..	7

Source: Home Office – Police recorded crime

Notes:

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

2. Police recorded crime statistics based on data from all 44 forces in England and Wales (including the British Transport Police).

3. Appendix tables A4 and A7 provide detailed footnotes and further years.

4. Lancashire changed recording systems in November 2018, this led to some technical difficulties in processing data. There are a number of offences with unallocated Community Safety Partnership (CSP) that have been excluded, this will be rectified in subsequent quarters.

5. .. denotes data not available.

6. Includes causing death or serious injury by dangerous driving, causing death by careless driving when under the influence of drink or drugs, causing death by careless or inconsiderate driving, causing death by driving: unlicensed or disqualified or uninsured drivers and causing death by aggravated vehicle taking.

7. Includes attempted murder, intentional destruction of viable unborn child, more serious wounding or other act endangering life (including grievous bodily harm with and without intent) and less serious wounding offences.

8. Includes threat or conspiracy to murder, other offences against children and assault without injury (formerly common assault where there is no injury).

9. Includes harassment, racially or religiously motivated harassment, stalking and malicious communications.

10. 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 the year ending March 2009 are not presented, as fraud figures 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 years prior to year ending March 2012.

11. In October 2018, Action Fraud launched a new fraud and cyber-crime reporting service. The transition to the new system is not yet complete and there has been a pause in the data feed from Cifas to the NFIB. Although fraud continues to be recorded by Cifas, cases from December 2018 have not yet been ‘referred’ to the NFIB. Therefore the Cifas figures and any NFIB totals presented in this bulletin and accompanying data tables are based on provisional data provided by Cifas. Once the issue has been resolved the NFIB will hold a full copy of the data, allowing Cifas figures to be treated as confirmed and recognised as ‘referred’ to the NFIB.

12. The UK Finance figures and NFIB totals presented in this bulletin and accompanying data tables are supplemented by provisional data provided by UK Finance. This is as a result of a small percentage of the records supplied by UK Finance having not been successfully processed by NFIB systems. The NFIB is working to ensure that all referrals from UK Finance are successfully processed, at which point the need for provisional data will be removed.

13. Following the introduction of Action Fraud's new fraud and cyber-crime reporting service in October 2018, there was a technical issue whereby an increased number of reports were not allocated to a police force area. As a result, an increased number of fraud and computer misuse offences with postcodes belonging to areas outside of England and Wales may have been included in the England and Wales figures in the year to December 2018 publication. This issue has now been resolved and the figures have been revised since the year to March 2019 publication.

Notes for: Overview of crime

1. This figure excludes domestic abuse and sexual assault measured by the self-completion module of the survey. Any domestic violence reported in the face-to-face interview is included.

2. In this bulletin we discuss weapons offences as a whole, alongside violent offences. However, we note that sexual offences and robbery are defined as separate categories to that of violence.

3. Excludes Greater Manchester Police (GMP); there was a total of 47,513 offences including GMP.

4. Excluding fraud offences.

6 . No change in the most common types of violent crime, but a fall in homicides

This section examines the most recent findings on violent crime and includes:

- the more frequently-occurring types of violent crime measured by the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW), such as assault
- some of the relatively low-volume types of violent crime recorded by the police, such as homicide, and death or serious injury caused by unlawful driving

Violent crime is a broad term that covers a wide variety of offences, including minor assaults such as pushing and shoving, harassment and psychological abuse (that result in no physical harm) and attempted offences, through to wounding, physical assault and murder.

The CSEW data include incidents of physical violence with and without injury. Violent offences in police recorded data are referred to as “violence against the person” [1] and include:

- homicide
- death or serious injury caused by unlawful driving
- violence with injury
- violence without injury
- stalking and harassment

While the CSEW provides a good picture of the overall trend in violent crime, police recorded crime is a better measure of higher-harm but less common types of violence.

The latest trends in violent crime varied across different types of violence. The CSEW showed no change in the overall level of violence in recent years. Conversely, police recorded crime has seen some rises in the higher-harm but less common types of violence, including offences that involve knives or sharp instruments. Recent rises in police recorded homicide and attempted murder have not continued in the latest data, with both falling by 5%. Crimes involving weapons are discussed in Rises in offences involving knives or sharp instruments and firearms offences.

CSEW shows no change in the level of violence in recent years

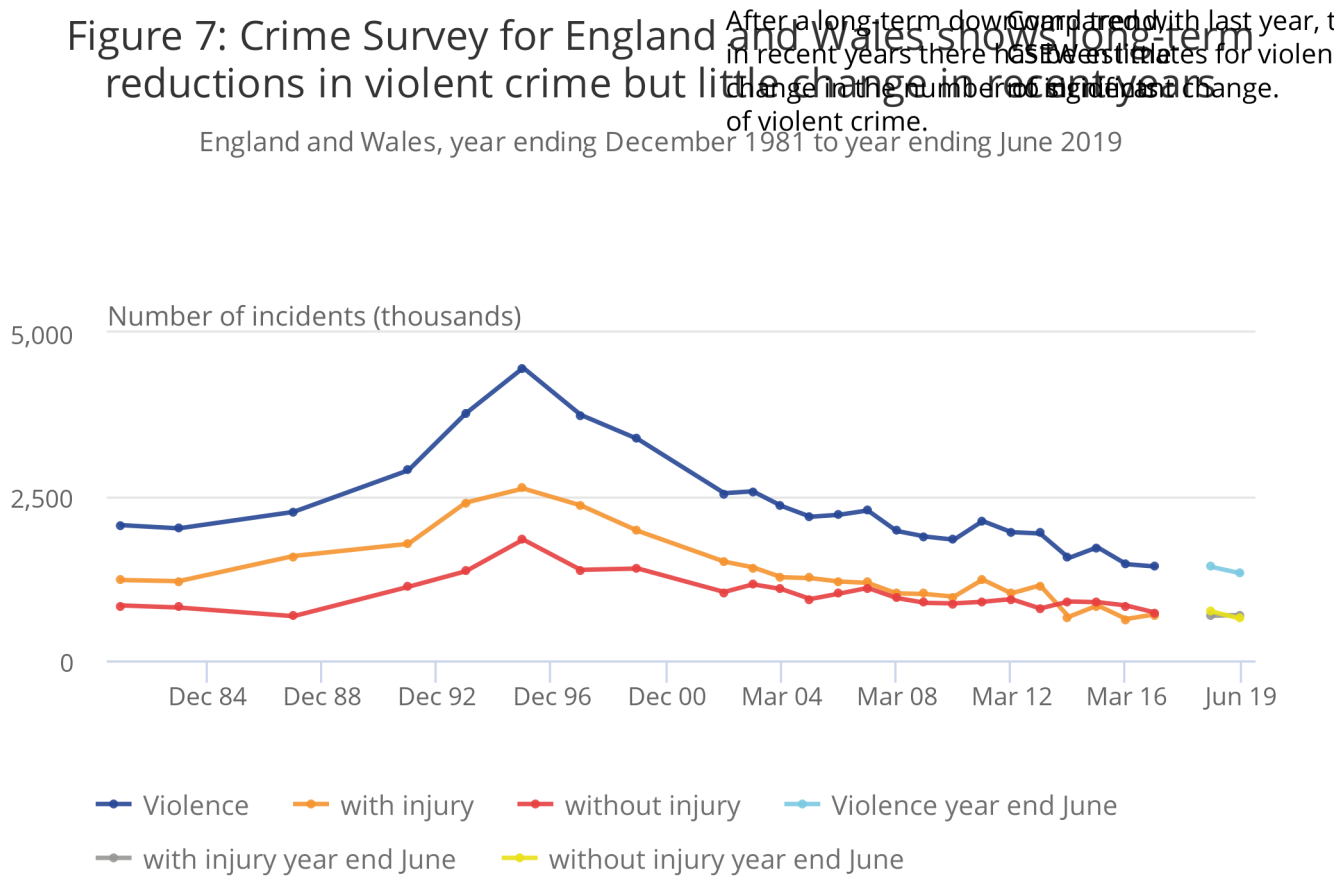
For the offences and population that it covers, the CSEW provides the best measure of trends for overall violent crime. It has used a consistent methodology across the time series back to 1981. The survey covers crimes that are not reported to or recorded by the police and so tends to provide the better measure of more common but less harmful crimes. Unlike police recorded crime statistics, the CSEW is not affected by changes in recording practices and police activity.

Factors influencing changes in police recorded crime are described in more detail in What's happened to the volume of crime recorded by the police?

There were an estimated 1.3 million incidents of violence experienced by adults aged 16 years and over in the CSEW for the year ending June 2019. This figure has not changed significantly since the year to March 2015 and continues the relatively stable trend seen in recent years, following long-term decreases since the peak in 1995 (Figure 7).

Figure 7: Crime Survey for England and Wales shows long-term reductions in violent crime but little change in recent years

England and Wales, year ending December 1981 to year ending June 2019



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

Notes:

1. Following a methodological change to the handling of repeat victimisation in the Crime Survey in England and Wales (CSEW), these data are not comparable with data published before January 2019. For more information see Improving victimisation estimates derived from the Crime Survey for England and Wales.

2. Data on this chart refer to different time periods: 1981 to 1999 refer to crimes experienced in the calendar year (January to December); and 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. Data relate to adults aged 16 years and over.

Long-term reductions in violent crime supported by other data

The longer-term reductions in violent crime, as shown by the CSEW, are reflected in research conducted by the Violence Research Group at Cardiff University (PDF, 653KB)[2] . Their annual survey covers a sample of hospital emergency departments, minor injury units and walk-in centres in England and Wales. Results showed that the number of violence-related attendances in 2018 was 41% lower than in 2010.

In addition, findings from the most recent admissions data for NHS hospitals in England showed that assault admissions for the year ending March 2019 were 28% lower than the year ending March 2009 (41,494 admissions). This is despite a recent increase of 6% in assault admissions for the year ending March 2019 [3] compared with the year ending March 2018 (a volume increase of 1,573 to 29,752 admissions). This increase was driven largely by admissions for assault by bodily force.

Homicides have decreased, following four consecutive years of increases

The police recorded 681 homicides[4] in the year ending June 2019, a 5% fall (from 719) compared with the previous year (Table A4). This includes a decrease recorded by the Metropolitan Police in the latest year following the high number recorded in the previous year. This fall continues the decrease reported last quarter when the number of homicides fell for the first time since the year ending March 2014, following four consecutive year-on-year increases. The rate of homicide in the population remains very low, at 12 homicides per 1 million people. There was also a 5% decrease in attempted murder offences in the latest year (to 1,017 offences). This continues the fall from the previous quarter following five years of successive increases.

The number of homicides where a knife or sharp instrument was involved decreased by 14% in the last year (to 248 offences[5]). Of all recorded homicides in the latest data, 39% involved a knife or sharp instrument [6] (Table P4), the same proportion as the previous year. The recent reduction in such offences was driven by falls seen in London. The Metropolitan Police recorded a 32% reduction to 63 homicides involving a knife or sharp instrument in the year ending June 2019. This figure was down from 93 recorded in the previous year but was higher than the 56 recorded in the year ending March 2017.

For more information on selected violent and sexual crimes involving a knife or sharp instrument, see Table 4 in Rises in offences involving knives or sharp instruments and firearms offences.

Little change in death or serious injury caused by unlawful driving in the latest year

Offences recorded by the police related to death or serious injury caused by unlawful driving have shown a 2% decrease, to 727 offences. There has been little change over the last two years following long term increases between March 2013 and March 2017.

Estimates of violence against children aged 10 to 15 years, as measured by the CSEW, can be found in Appendix Tables A9, A10, A11 and A12. The estimates are not directly comparable with the main survey of adults, so are not included in the headline totals.

There is more detailed information on long-term trends and the circumstances of violence in The nature of violent crime in England and Wales: year ending March 2018 and Homicide in England and Wales: year ending March 2018. Other publications that discuss violent crime can be found via our main crime and justice webpage.

Notes for: No change in the most common types of violent crime, but a fall in homicides

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. Violence in England and Wales in 2018: An Accident and Emergency Perspective was published by Vaseekaran Sivarajasingam, Nicholas Page, Giles Green, Simon Moore and Jonathan Shepherd in April 2019.

3. The “External causes” datasets within Hospital Admitted Patient Care Activity, 2018-19, Hospital Admitted Patient Care Activity, 2017-18 and Hospital Episode Statistics, Admitted Patient Care - England, 2008-09 provided by NHS Digital. Assault admissions do not include sexual offences but include assault codes X85 to Y04, Y08 and Y09 from the dataset. The latest data were published on 19 September 2019.

4. Homicide includes the offences of murder, manslaughter, corporate manslaughter and infanticide.

5. Includes Greater Manchester Police. The recording of homicides involving a knife or sharp instrument was unaffected by their recording review in December 2017.

6. Percentage calculated based on homicides recorded in the Homicide Index; data from this source will often differ from the main police recorded crime collection.

7 . Rise in offences involving knives or sharp instruments and firearms offences

In this section we focus on crimes involving weapons. Police recorded crime data are available for both offences involving knives or sharp instruments and offences involving firearms.

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 trends for such incidents. In this case, police recorded crime is a useful source for measuring these offences, although not all offences will come to the attention of the police.

An offence is recorded as involving a knife or sharp instrument [1] when the weapon is present during the offence or the threat is believed to be real. The weapon does not necessarily have to be used. Offences of “possession of an article with a blade or point” are covered separately by a specific recorded crime category.

Some police forces have encountered issues in identifying all recorded offences involving knives or sharp instruments. This has not had a substantial impact on the national trend, but improvements to flagging of these offences have led to rises in some areas, such as Greater Manchester Police (GMP).

Continued rises in offences involving knives or sharp instruments [2]

The police recorded a total of 47,513 offences involving a knife or sharp instrument in the year ending June 2019 [3] . However, recent trends in offences involving a knife or sharp instrument have been affected by the previous undercounting in Greater Manchester Police (GMP) [4] data. Figures including and excluding GMP can be found in Table F3a and F3b.

In the remainder of this section, unless otherwise stated, offences involving knives or sharp instruments data exclude GMP to allow comparisons over time. In addition, Lancashire could not supply data in time for publication for April to June 2019 because of technical issues. As a result data for Lancashire have been imputed using national trends and will be corrected in future publications when data are submitted by this force.

There was a volume rise in offences involving a knife or sharp instrument of 2,918 (a 7% rise) to 44,076 (Table 4). This was the highest number since the year ending March 2011, the earliest point for which comparable data are available[5] . The past five years have seen a rise in the number of recorded offences involving a knife or sharp instrument, following an initial downward trend (Figure 3). The volume of knife and sharp instrument offences has increased by 44% since the year ending March 2011.

Table 4: Selected violent and sexual offences involving a knife or sharp instrument recorded by the police in England and Wales[1,2,3,,,]
Year ending March 2011 to year ending June 2019 with percentage change

England and Wales (excluding Greater Manchester Police)

	July 2018 to June 2019 compared with:				
	April 2010 to March 2011	**July 2017 to June 2018**	**July 2018 to June 2019**	**April 2010 to March 2011**	**July 2017 to June 2018**
Selected offences involving a knife or sharp instrument	**Number of offences**			**Percentage change**	
Attempted murder	217	338	412	90	22
Threats to kill	1,352	3,145	3,764	178	20
Assault with injury and assault with intent to cause serious harm	13,129	19,583	19,994	52	2
Robbery	15,377	17,199	18,987	23	10
Rape	240	456	503	110	10
Sexual assault	85	168	181	113	8
Total selected offences	30,400	40,889	43,841	44	7
Homicide	220	269	235	7	-13
Total selected offences including homicide	30,620	41,158	44,076	44	7
Total selected offences including Greater Manchester Police[1,11]	32,669	43,711	47,513	..	..
Rate per million population - selected offences involving a knife or sharp instruments					
Total selected offences including homicide	577	736	783		

Source: Home Office – Police recorded crime

Notes:

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

2. Police recorded knife and sharp instrument offences data are submitted via a special collection. Figures presented in this table are based on this special collection. Other offences exist that are not shown in this table that may include the use of a knife or sharp instrument.

3. Police recorded crime statistics are based on data from 43 police forces in England and Wales. Data from Greater Manchester Police (GMP) are excluded. A review revealed that they were undercounting knife or sharp instrument offences. Following this review, there has been a sharp increase in the number of knife or sharp instrument offences recorded by GMP since December 2017. Previous data have not been revised and the data are therefore not comparable

4. Information for individual police forces can be found in Table P4 published alongside this bulletin.

5. Lancashire could not supply data, for offences involving knives or sharp instruments, in time for publication for April to June 2019 as a result of technical issues. Data for Lancashire have been imputed using national trends and will be corrected in future publications when data are submitted by this force.

6. Figures may not match previous releases as a result of a number of police forces revising their data.

7. Changes to offence codes in April 2012 mean the category of assault with injury and assault with intent to cause serious harm is not strictly comparable with previous years although figures would have been similar. Appendix Table A4 contains more details.

8. Sexual assault includes indecent assault on a male or female and sexual assault on a male or female (all ages).

9. Homicide offences are those currently recorded by the police as at 19 September 2019 and are subject to revision as cases are dealt with by the police and by the courts, or as further information becomes available. 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.

10. Includes homicides.

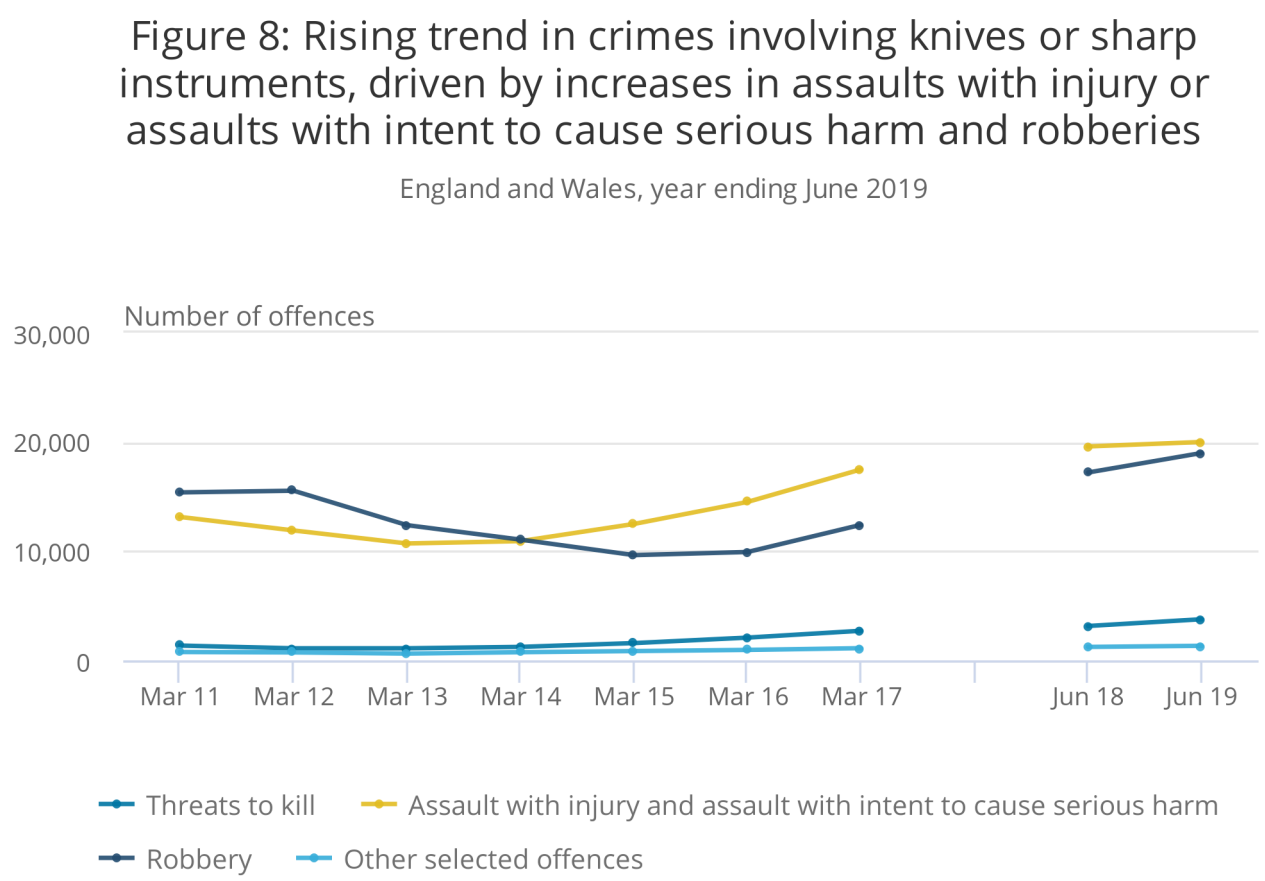
11. .. denotes not calculated as data are not comparable over time.

In the latest year, the offence “assault with injury and assault with intent to cause serious harm” accounted for almost half of all offences involving a knife or sharp instrument (45% or 19,994 out of 44,076 offences). Robberies accounted for a further 43% (18,987 out of 44,076 offences). Rape, attempted murder, sexual assault and homicide accounted for a smaller proportion of offences involving a knife or sharp instrument (3%, or 1,331 out of 44,076 offences; Figure 8).

The volume of robberies involving a knife or sharp instrument has risen for the past four years, following a decreasing trend between 2011 and 2015. A 10% increase in the year ending June 2019 is consistent with the overall increase in robbery recorded by the police during this period (11%). The number of incidents of “assault with injury and assault with intent to cause serious harm” involving knives increased by 2% over the last year, following larger increases seen since 2015 (Figure 8).

Figure 8: Rising trend in crimes involving knives or sharp instruments, driven by increases in assaults with injury or assaults with intent to cause serious harm and robberies

England and Wales, year ending June 2019



Source: Home Office – Police recorded crime

Notes:

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

2. Police recorded knife or sharp instrument offences data are submitted via a special collection. This figure is based on this special collection. Other offences that are not shown in this chart may include the use of a knife or sharp instrument.

3. Police recorded crime statistics are based on data from 43 police forces in England and Wales. Data from Greater Manchester Police (GMP) are excluded. A review revealed that they were undercounting knife or sharp instrument offences. Following this review, there has been a sharp increase in the number of knife or sharp instrument offences recorded by GMP since December 2017. Previous data have not been revised and the data are therefore not comparable.

4. Lancashire could not supply data, for offences involving knives or sharp instruments, in time for publication for April to June 2019 as a result of technical issues. Data for Lancashire have been imputed using national trends and will be corrected in future publications when data are submitted by this force.

5. Information for individual police forces can be found in Table P4 published alongside this bulletin.

6. Changes to offence codes in April 2012 mean the category of assault with injury and assault with intent to cause serious harm is not strictly comparable with previous years although figures would have been similar. Appendix Table A4 contains more details.

7. Other selected offences include rape, attempted murder, homicide and sexual assault.

Higher rates of knife crime seen in urban areas

Knife or sharp instrument offences tend to be concentrated in metropolitan areas. In the year ending June 2019, 32% of all offences recorded by the police (including Greater Manchester) involving a knife or sharp instrument happened in London (169 offences per 100,000 population). The highest rates after London were seen in the urban areas of Greater Manchester, the West Midlands and West Yorkshire (122,122 and 113 offences per 100,000 population, respectively). These areas saw higher rates than the England and Wales average of 80 offences per 100,000 population (Figure 9).

While most police forces (32 of the 43)[6] recorded a rise in offences involving knives or sharp instruments in the year ending June 2019, the rate of this increase has slowed in England and Wales (7% compared with 14% in the year ending June 2018). However this picture is mixed across the different police force areas. The slowing rate is mainly driven by the Metropolitan Police, where there was little change in the number of offences (from 14,949 to 14,966 offences). This compares with a 15% increase in the year ending June 2018 and 24% increase in the year ending March 2017. The rate of increase has also showed signs of slowing in West Yorkshire, where the increase has dropped to 1% compared with 26% in the year ending June 2018.

Although recent increases in recorded knife or sharp instrument offences reflect a real rise in the occurrence of these types of crime, improvements in recording practices to better identify the involvement of a knife or sharp instrument is also a factor.

Figure 9: Offence rates and changes in the volume of crimes involving knives or sharp instruments vary by police force area

England and Wales, year ending June 2019

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics.
2. One police force (Surrey) include unbroken bottle and glass offences in their returns, which are outside the scope of this special collection. As such, data for these forces are not directly comparable with data for other forces.
3. Change in volume on last year excludes Greater Manchester Police (GMP) because of a technical issue that resulted in previous undercounting of crimes involving a knife or sharp instrument.
4. Lancashire could not supply data, for offences involving knives or sharp instruments, in time for publication for April to June 2019 due to IT issues. Data for Lancashire have been imputed using national trends and will be corrected in future publications when data are submitted by this force.
5. Information on recording issues for individual police forces can be found in table P4 published alongside this bulletin.
6. The changes presented are the percentage changes in the volume of offences involving a knife or sharp instrument over the last year.

Download the data

A breakdown of offences for each police force area and the time series for these data are published in Tables P4 and P5.

NHS data provide insight into offences involving knives or sharp instruments

Admissions data for NHS hospitals in England reported 5,069 admissions for assault by a sharp object between April 2018 and March 2019[7] . This is an increase of 2% compared with the previous year.

The number of offences resulting in admission to hospital is substantially lower than the number of recorded offences involving a knife or sharp instrument. This may be explained by differences in the collection of these data:

- the hospital admissions data do not include cases involving more minor injuries where the victim may have attended A&E for treatment but was not admitted to hospital, or homicides where the victim died without being admitted to hospital
- the weapon does not have to have been used in the offence for it to be included in the police recorded special collection, which includes cases where the weapon was simply present or the threat was believed to be real

Possession of an article with a blade or point also increased

Police recorded “possession of an article with a blade or point” offences rose by 22%, to 22,962 offences in the year ending June 2019. This rise is consistent with increases seen over the last six years and is the highest figure since the year ending March 2009, the earliest point for which these offences were separately identifiable [8] . 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.

Additionally, the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) publish figures on knife and offensive weapon sentencing for England and Wales. These figures cover cautions and convictions for possession of a knife or offensive weapon, and includes offences involving threatening with one of these types of weapon. The latest published figures show that the criminal justice system formally dealt with the highest number of knife and offensive weapon offences since 2010. While these figures are not directly comparable with those presented in this bulletin, they do reflect the increases seen in police figures

Rises in offences involving firearms

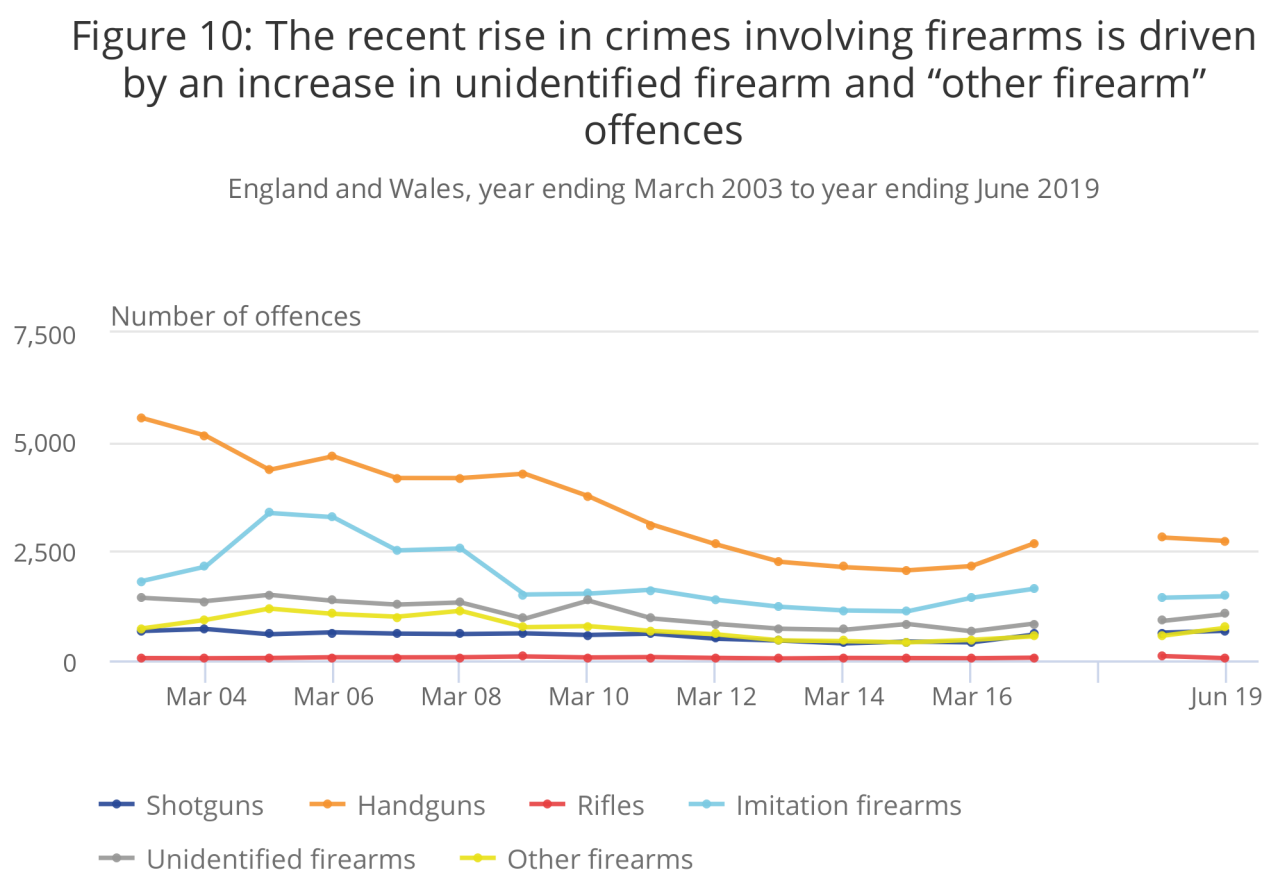
Recorded offences involving firearms[9,10] , increased by 4% to 6,734 in the year ending June 2019 compared with the previous year (6,445 offences), including large increases in unidentified firearms [11] and other firearms[12] (18% and 33% respectively). These increases were balanced by decreases seen in offences involving handguns and rifles (Table F2, Figure 10).

Following previous decreases these offences have seen rises over the last five years when comparing the year ending March figures (Figure 3). Figures reported in the year ending December 2018 bulletin showed a small fall (2%) in the number of offences involving firearms but this has not continued over the latest two quarters.

We are aware of improvements in recording practices by police to better identify the involvement of a firearm which will have contributed to this latest rise. However, the scale of the effect is unclear. These improvements have impacted on offences identified as involving “other firearms” (which include weapons such as stun guns, CS gas and pepper spray).

Figure 10: The recent rise in crimes involving firearms is driven by an increase in unidentified firearm and "other firearm" offences

England and Wales, year ending March 2003 to year ending June 2019



Source: Home Office – Police recorded crime

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics.
2. More explicit guidelines for the classification of weapons introduced on 1 April 2004 may have increased the recording of firearm offences, particularly those committed by imitation weapons.
3. Data are provisional and have not been reconciled with police forces.
4. Imitation firearms include replica weapons, as well as low-powered weapons that fire small plastic pellets, such as BB guns and soft air weapons.
5. Other firearms include CS gas and pepper spray, stun guns and other weapons.
6. Figures exclude conventional air weapons, such as air rifles.

Firearms offences are concentrated in urban areas, with the Metropolitan Police and the West Midlands police force each recording 24 offences per 100,000 population in the year ending March 2018 (latest data available). This compared with 11 offences per 100,000 population in England and Wales in the same period.

Further analysis on offences involving knives or sharp instruments and offences involving firearms, including figures based on a broader definition of the types of firearm involved [13] , can be found in Offences involving the use of weapons: data tables. However, this refers to the year ending March 2018.

Notes for: Rise in offences involving knives or sharp instruments and firearms offences

1. These data are based on a special collection. This covers the offences: attempted murder; threats to kill; assault with injury and assault with intent to cause serious harm; robbery; rape; and sexual assault. Homicide data are provided additionally from the Homicide Index. These selected offences are thought to cover most crimes involving a knife or sharp instrument.

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. Including Greater Manchester Police (GMP).

4. A review identified previous undercounting of crimes involving a knife or sharp instrument in GMP. This occurred because of a technical issue with the identification and extraction of all relevant records from their crime recording system. While offences were recorded, the involvement of a knife or sharp instrument was not identified. GMP have now changed their methodology and data from December 2017 onwards have been revised. Previous data have not been revised and are likely to exclude relevant crimes, so data including GMP are not comparable over time.

5. Data on offences involving a knife or sharp instrument began to be collected in April 2008; however, comparable data are only available from the year ending March 2011. The Offences involving the use of weapons: data tables include data on offences involving a knife or sharp instrument going back to the year ending March 2009.

6. Excludes Greater Manchester Police (GMP) because of a technical issue that resulted in previous undercounting of crimes involving a knife or sharp instrument. GMP have now changed their methodology and data from December 2017 onwards have been revised. However, data for earlier periods have not been revised and are likely to exclude relevant crimes that were recorded in GMP. Data for GMP are therefore not comparable over this time period.

7. Hospital admissions by sharp object provided by NHS Digital. The latest data were published on 19 September 2019.

8. The offences “possession of firearms with intent”, “possession of other weapons” and “possession of article with blade or point” were introduced from 1 April 2008 and had previously been recorded in the classification “possession of weapons”.

9. 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.

10. Offences involving a firearm include: if a firearm is fired, used as a blunt instrument, or used as a threat.

11. If the police do not have sufficient information about the type of firearm used in the offence, or if the firearm was concealed during the offence, then the police will record the weapon as an unidentified firearm.

12. Other firearms include CS gas or pepper spray, stun guns and other weapons.

13. The broader definition of firearms includes conventional air weapons, such as air rifles.

8 . Rises in some types of property crime

In this section we look into both the long-term and short-term trends in theft, robbery [1] , criminal damage and arson.

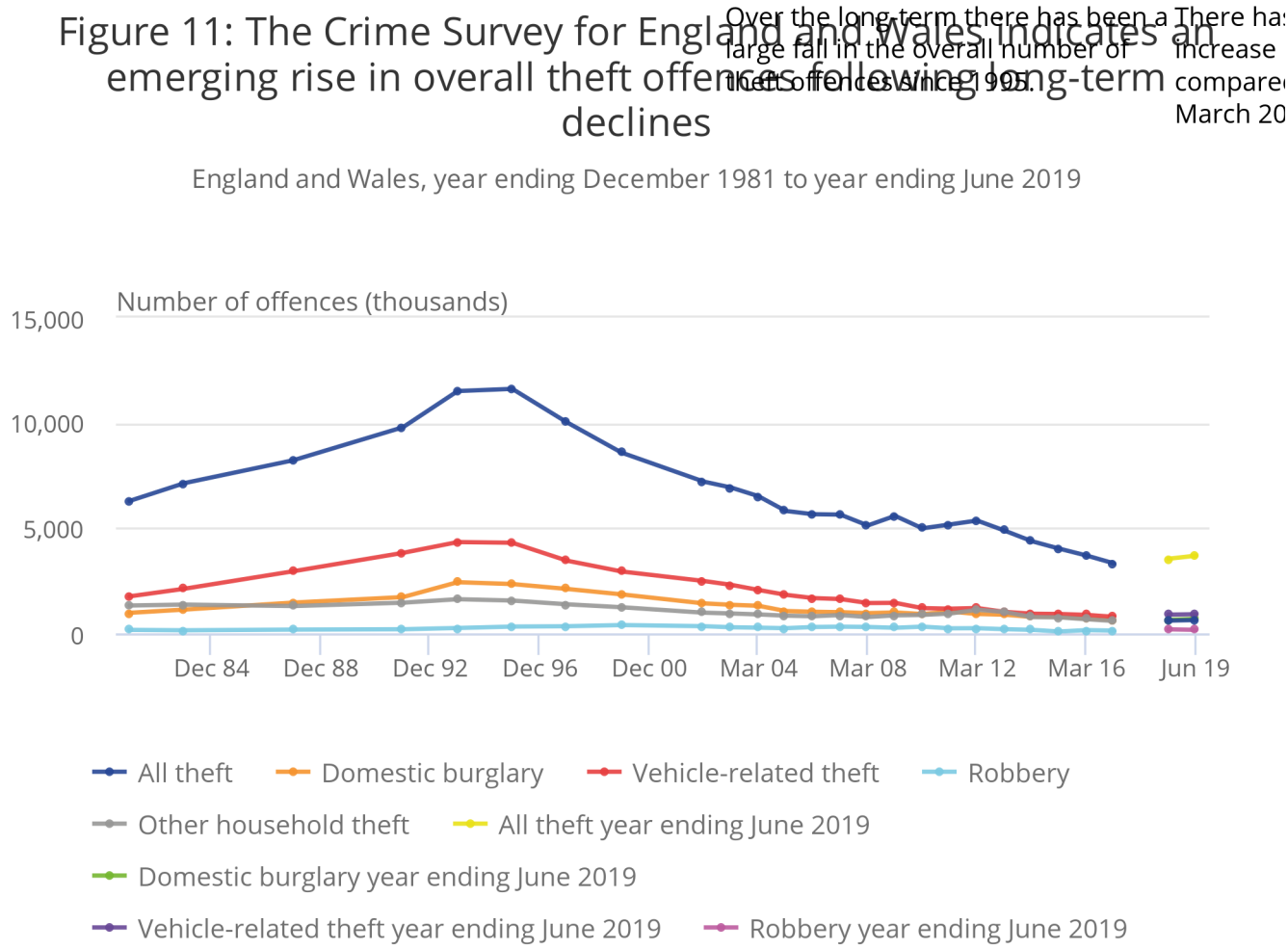
No change in Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) theft offences following a long-term downward trend

The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) is the most reliable indicator for long-term trends, particularly for the more common types of crime experienced by the general population. It has shown long-term reductions in most categories of theft. The overall number of theft offences has fallen by 68% since the year ending December 1995.

Although there was no overall change in the number of theft offences compared with the previous year, there was an 11% increase in theft offences compared with the year ending March 2017 (Figure 11, Table A1). It is too early to say whether this recent rise represents a change in the long-term downward trend.

Figure 11: The Crime Survey for England and Wales indicates an emerging rise in overall theft offences following long-term declines

England and Wales, year ending December 1981 to year ending June 2019



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

Notes:

1. Following a methodological change to the handling of repeat victimisation in the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW), these data are not comparable with data published before January 2019. For more information see Improving victimisation estimates derived from the Crime Survey for England and Wales.

2. Data on this chart refer to different time periods: 1981 to 1999 refer to crimes experienced in the calendar year (January to December); and 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).

For robbery and some types of theft, police recorded crime provides a reliable measure of trends

Robbery and some types of theft, such as domestic burglary and theft of a vehicle, are relatively well-reported to (and subsequently recorded by) the police and less likely to be affected by recording practices. Victims often require a crime reference number to be issued by the police to support an insurance claim. However, more minor thefts such as thefts from a person are less likely to be reported to the police and more prone to changes in recording practices.

Rises in robbery and theft from the person

Police recorded robbery offences have risen in the last year by 11%, from 79,179 to 88,177 offences (Figure 12). This increase is likely to reflect a real change as robbery is a violent offence that is more likely to be reported by the victim and recorded by the police than other theft offences.

There has also been a similar increase in police recorded theft from the person (10% to 109,096). Since the year ending March 2015 there has been a 39% rise, a volume increase of 30,662 offences. Although the CSEW does not measure short term trends in low volume offences well, the survey does show a series of non-significant increases from the year ending March 2016. This supports the idea that the increase may not be as a result of changes in recording practices alone.

Increases in vehicle offences have slowed

Police recorded vehicle offences increased by 3% (to 469,915) in the year ending June 2019, continuing the rising trend seen over the last three years. However, the size of the increase has reduced over the last year. The latest rise compares with an increase of 7% in the year ending June 2018. This is mainly because of a smaller increase in “theft or unauthorised taking of a vehicle” (7%, to 115,777 offences) and “theft from a vehicle” (2%, to 284,225 offences).

The trend in police recorded vehicle offences is also reflected in the CSEW. While there was no significant change in vehicle-related theft offences in the last year, there was a 15% increase, to 908,000 offences, compared with the year ending March 2017. The majority of this rise comes from a 15% increase in “theft from vehicles”, to 656,000 offences. While the change in “theft of vehicles” over the same period is not significant, the overall trend supports what we observe in the police recorded crime data.

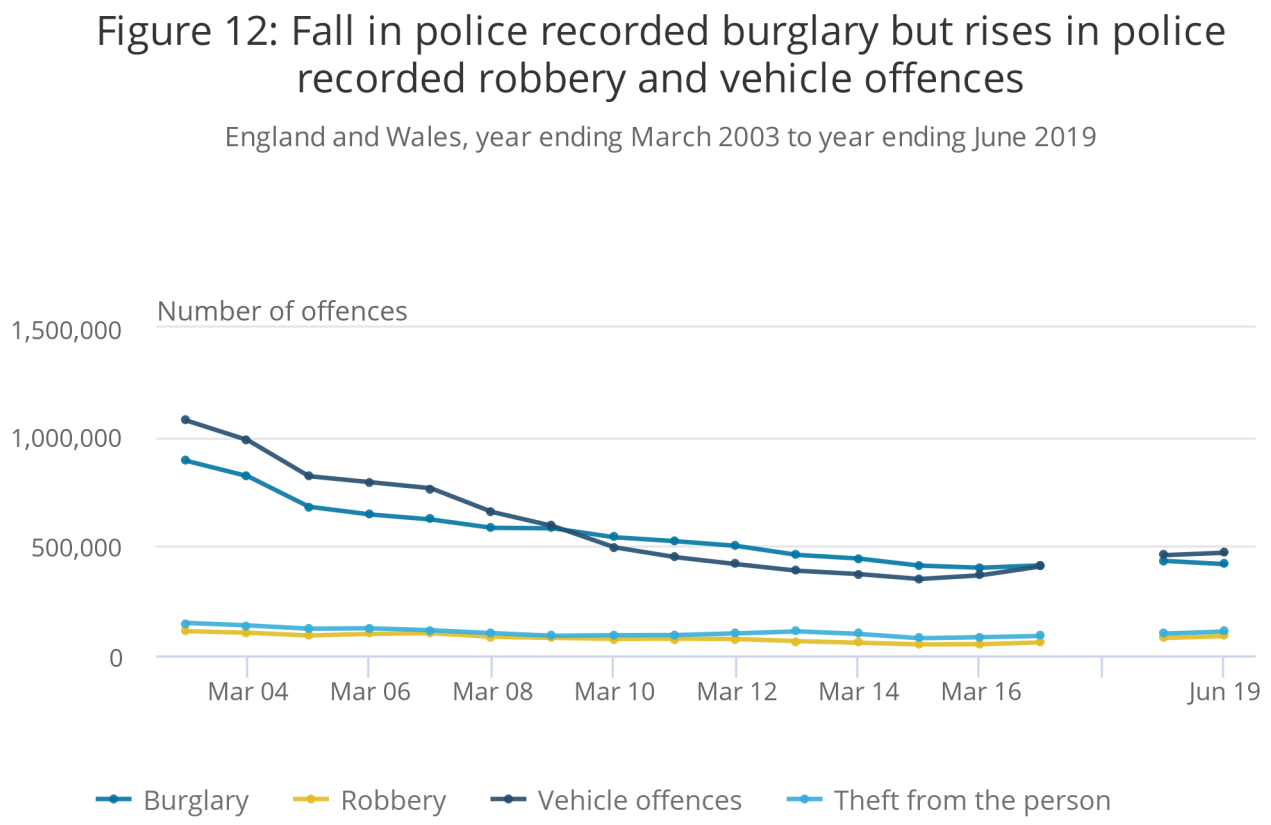
Fall in burglary recorded by the police

Police recorded burglary offences had shown rises in recent years (6% in the year ending March 2018 and 3% in the year ending March 2017). However, figures for the year ending June 2019 show that the number of burglary offences decreased by 4% (to 417,416 offences; Figure 12).

We believe this crime type is less affected by recording improvements than other types of crime, as it is generally well-reported by victims and well-recorded by the police. CSEW domestic burglary has shown no significant change in recent years.

Figure 12: Fall in police recorded burglary but rises in police recorded robbery and vehicle offences

England and Wales, year ending March 2003 to year ending June 2019



Source: Home Office – Police recorded crime

Notes:

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

2. Lancashire changed recording systems in November 2018, this led to some technical difficulties in processing data. There are a number of offences with unallocated Community Safety Partnership (CSP) which have been excluded, this will be rectified in subsequent quarters.

No change in criminal damage measured by CSEW

The overall volume of criminal damage in the CSEW has not changed over the last year (1.1 million offences), despite the long-term downward trend since year ending March 2009.

Following a sustained period of decrease over the last 10 years, the subcategory “criminal damage to a vehicle” shows no change. However, it is too early to say whether this is evidence of a change to the longer-term pattern. The latest figure is at a similar level to that seen in the year ending June 2018 and is less than half the volume it was in the year ending December 1995 (1.8 million offences).

In comparison with the findings from the CSEW, police recorded crime data show a 3% decrease in criminal damage and arson (to 568,131 offences) and an 8% fall in criminal damage to a vehicle. The differences in criminal damage to a vehicle between the CSEW and police recorded crime could be partly explained by a relatively low reporting rate for this type of offence (Table D10).

Notes for: Rises in some types of property crime

1. Robbery, which is theft (or attempted theft) involving the use or threat of force, is included in this section as it is a property crime, but it is not included in the “all theft” category.

9 . Increase in the volume of fraud offences in the last year

This section covers a range of fraudulent activities including bank and credit account fraud, consumer and retail fraud, and advance fee fraud[1]. It reports on findings from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) and police recorded crime.

The recorded crime series incorporates fraud offences collated by the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau (NFIB) from three reporting bodies: Action Fraud (the public-facing national fraud and cybercrime reporting centre) and two industry bodies, Cifas and UK Finance[2] (who report instances of fraud where their member organisations have been a victim[3]).

CSEW provides the best indication of the volume of fraud offences

The CSEW provides the best measure of fraud offences directly experienced by individuals in England and Wales. CSEW estimates cover a broad range of fraud offences, including attempts, involving a loss and incidents not reported to the authorities.

Contrasts in findings between the CSEW and the data collated by the NFIB may be explained, in part, by differences in the coverage of the two sources. The number of incidents estimated by the CSEW is substantially higher than the number of incidents referred to the NFIB. This is because the survey captures a large volume of lower-harm cases that are less likely to have been reported to the authorities. The CSEW estimated 3.9 million incidents of fraud for the year ending June 2019 compared with 0.7 million incidents referred to the NFIB [4,5,6] (see Appendix Tables A1 and A5).

Incidents of fraud referred to the NFIB by Action Fraud, Cifas and UK Finance will include reports from businesses and other organisations, which are not generally included in the CSEW. They also tend to mostly be focused on the more serious cases. This is because they only include crimes that the victim considers serious enough to report to the authorities or where there are viable lines of investigation.

As a result, fraud offences referred to the authorities make up a relatively small proportion of the overall volume of fraud. This is supported by findings from the CSEW, which suggests that fewer than one in six incidents of fraud (15%) were reported by the victim to either the police or to Action Fraud in the year ending March 2019 (Table D10).

Increase in fraud measured by the CSEW

Findings from the year ending June 2019 CSEW estimated that the number of fraud incidents increased by 15% to 3,863,000. The subcategory “bank and credit account fraud” accounted for the majority of the volume increase in total fraud, rising by 17% from 2.3 to 2.7 million offences. The CSEW category of “other fraud” [7] also increased. Although this category represents only a small proportion of fraud offences, the rise accounted for one-quarter of the volume increase in total fraud. “Other fraud” increased from 67,000 to 188,000 offences, a rise of 183%. “Other fraud” includes offences such as application fraud, investment fraud and charity fraud, with the majority of the increase coming from “other fraud – no loss”.

Table 5: Crime Survey for England and Wales fraud – number of incidents for year ending June 2018 and year ending June 2019 with percentage change[1],[2],[3]

England and Wales		Adults aged 16 years and over			
Offence group		**July 2017 to June 2018**	**Jul 2018 to June 2019**	**Percentage change and significance**	
	Number of incidents (thousands)				
Fraud		3,349	3,863	15	*
	Bank and credit account fraud	2,277	2,666	17	*
	Consumer and retail fraud	923	962	4	
	Advance fee fraud	82	47	-43	
	Other fraud	67	188	183	*
Unweighted base - number of adults		30,262	33,876		

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

Notes:

1. Following a methodological change to the handling of repeat victimisation in the CSEW, these data are not comparable with data published before January 2019. For more information see Improving victimisation estimates derived from the Crime Survey for England and Wales.

2. New victimisation questions on fraud and computer misuse were incorporated into the CSEW from October 2015. Up to the year ending September 2017, the questions were asked of half the survey sample. From October 2017 onwards, the questions are being asked of a full survey sample.

3. In March 2018, the new CSEW estimates on fraud and computer misuse were assessed by the Office for Statistics Regulation against the Code of Practice for Statistics and were awarded National Statistics status.

4. Statistically significant change at the 5% level is indicated by an asterisk.

5. Non-investment fraud has been renamed as “Consumer and retail fraud” to reflect the corresponding name change to the Home Office Counting Rules from April 2017.

Recorded crime also shows an increase in fraud offences supporting CSEW estimates

The recorded crime series showed a 16% increase in the total number of fraud offences referred to the NFIB [8,9] in the year ending June 2019 (740,845 offences) compared with the previous year (638,069 offences).

All three fraud reporting bodies (Action Fraud, Cifas, and UK Finance) reported increases in the latest year. Action Fraud reported a 13% rise[10] (to 322,689 offences), Cifas reported a 20% rise (to 328,953 offences) and UK Finance reported a 12% rise (to 89,203 offences) (see Appendix Table A5)[11] . These increases need to be interpreted in the context of differences in coverage and fraud types captured by each reporting body. In addition, because of a temporary problem, the figures referred to the NFIB by UK Finance and Cifas include provisional data and should be treated with caution.

Additional administrative data give a fuller picture of card and bank account fraud

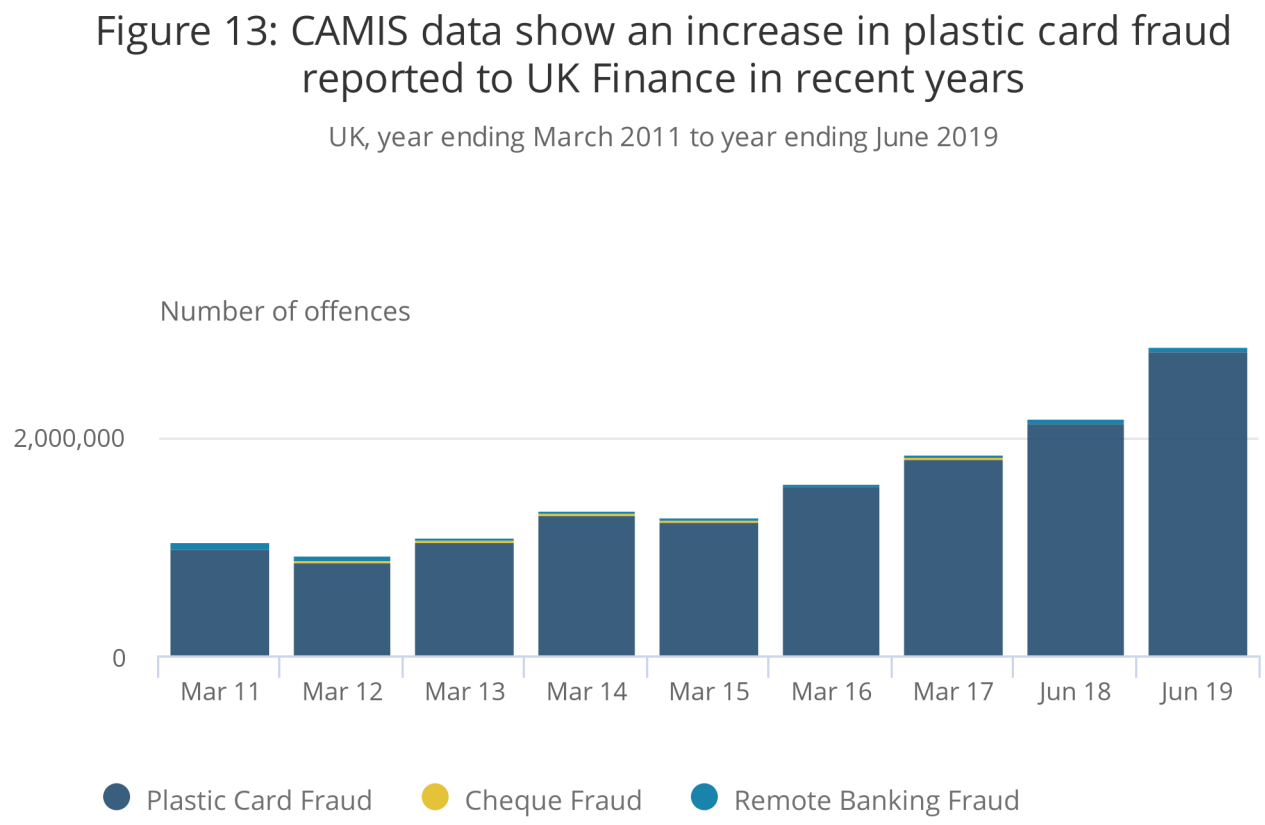
Additional data collected by UK Finance via their CAMIS system [12] provide a broader range of bank account and plastic card frauds than those referred for police investigation [13] to the NFIB. They provide a better picture of the scale of bank account and plastic card fraud identified by financial institutions in the UK. The data also help to supplement the CSEW, possibly giving a better indication of short-term trends and helping to bridge the gap between the broad coverage provided by the survey and the narrower 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 [14] and fraudulent incidents involving lost or stolen cards. These account for a high proportion of plastic card fraud that is not included in the NFIB figures and have consistently accounted for around three-quarters of all plastic card fraud reported to UK Finance.

In the latest year, UK Finance reported 2.8 million cases of fraud (excluding authorised push payments) involving UK-issued payment cards, remote banking and cheques via CAMIS. This is an increase of 31% from the previous year (Table F4), driven largely by a 31% rise in plastic card fraud (Figure 13) and more specifically a 582,172 volume increase (36%) in the subcategory “remote purchase fraud”. The increase in remote purchase fraud is thought to be because of a number of high-profile data breaches affecting UK cardholders in 2018 and lower-profile attacks, with criminals using the stolen data to make unauthorised purchases online.

Figure 13: CAMIS data show an increase in plastic card fraud reported to UK Finance in recent years

UK, year ending March 2011 to year ending June 2019



Source: UK Finance

Notes:

1. All offences are classed under Home Office Counting Rules (HOCR) as National Fraud Intelligence Bureau (NFIB) 5A, cheque, plastic card and online bank accounts (non Payment Service Providers (PSP)). The categories they have been split into are UK Finance's breakdowns.

2. Fraud data are not designated as National Statistics.

3. Remote banking fraud includes telephone and internet banking.

4. These data do not include Authorised Push Payments.

The increase in plastic card fraud also includes a rise in “card ID theft” offences [15] , which have more than doubled (a volume increase of 35,672 offences) from the previous year. The main component of “card ID theft” is data obtained by fraudsters through methods including phishing emails, scam texts and the theft of mail from external mail boxes and multi-occupancy buildings.

The number of “lost and stolen cards” also increased by 13% compared with the previous year (a volume increase of 54,482 offences). This increase is thought to be related to a rise in distraction thefts and courier scams [16]. Distraction thefts are where fraudsters steal cards in shops and at cash machines, and courier scams are where victims are tricked into handing over their cards on the doorstep.

Improvements in the identification of authorised push payment fraud offences lead to rises

Authorised push payment (APP) fraud refers to cases where victims are tricked into sending money directly from their account to an account that the fraudster controls. APP was included for the first time in UK Finance data for the year ending December 2017[17] .

In the year ending June 2019, there were 108,044 cases of APP fraud reported to UK Finance, an 84% increase since year ending June 2018. However, the data for the year ending June 2019 is not directly comparable with previous years as two additional banks began reporting the data to UK Finance from early 2019. In addition, intelligence provided by UK Finance suggests that increased public awareness in the build-up to the introduction of the authorised push payment scams voluntary code has resulted in an increase in reporting by customers who fall victim to this type of fraud.

APP fraud can often involve significant sums of money and have adverse financial and emotional consequences for the victim. Unlike most other types of fraud, victims of APP fraud authorise the payment themselves and this means that they have no legal protection to cover them for losses.

UK Finance reported that £354.3 million was lost in total through such scams in 2018 [18] . In the majority of cases (92%), victims lost savings on personal accounts, losing an average of approximately £2,920, and the remainder were businesses, who lost on average approximately £19,660 per case.

Notes for: Increase in the volume of fraud offences in the last year

1. A full definition of terms is provided in the User guide.
2. 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 and computer misuse statistics article.
3. A full breakdown of the types of fraud offences referred to the NFIB by Action Fraud, Cifas and UK Finance in the latest year is presented in Table A5 and a definition of terms is provided in the User guide.
4. This figure excludes computer misuse offences.
5. In October 2018, Action Fraud launched a new fraud and cyber-crime reporting service. The transition to the new system is not yet complete and there has been a pause in the data feed from Cifas to the NFIB. Although fraud continues to be recorded by Cifas, cases from December 2018 have not yet been referred to the NFIB. Therefore, the Cifas figures and any NFIB totals presented in this bulletin and accompanying data tables are based on provisional data provided by Cifas. Once the issue has been resolved the NFIB will hold a full copy of the data, allowing Cifas figures to be treated as confirmed and recognised as “referred” to the NFIB.
6. The UK Finance figures and NFIB totals presented in this bulletin and accompanying data tables are supplemented by provisional data provided by UK Finance. This is as a result of a small percentage of the records supplied by UK Finance having not been successfully processed by NFIB systems. The NFIB is working to ensure that all referrals from UK Finance are successfully processed, at which point the need for provisional data will be removed.
7. A small change has been applied to the coding of subcategories of “unauthorised access to personal information (including hacking)” and “other fraud”. As a result, these latest estimates will show small differences compared with publications prior to April 2019. Within the coding of offences relating to “unauthorised access to personal information (including hacking)” there were found to be a small number of cases with no evidence that a victim’s personal information had been stolen online.In some cases respondents report receiving new bank cards that they hadn’t ordered, or new accounts in their name that they hadn’t set up. Such cases are now coded as “application frauds” within the “other fraud” category.

8. In October 2018, Action Fraud launched a new fraud and cyber-crime reporting service. The transition to the new system is not yet complete and there has been a pause in the data feed from Cifas to the NFIB. Although fraud continues to be recorded by Cifas, cases from December 2018 have not yet been referred to the NFIB. Therefore the Cifas figures and any NFIB totals presented in this bulletin and accompanying data tables are based on provisional data provided by Cifas. Once the issue has been resolved the NFIB will hold a full copy of the data, allowing Cifas figures to be treated as confirmed and recognised as "referred" to the NFIB.

9. The UK Finance figures and NFIB totals presented in this bulletin and accompanying data tables are supplemented by provisional data provided by UK Finance. This is as a result of a small percentage of the records supplied by UK Finance having not been successfully processed by NFIB systems. The NFIB is working to ensure that all referrals from UK Finance are successfully processed, at which point the need for provisional data will be removed.

10. Following the introduction of Action Fraud's new fraud and cyber-crime reporting service in October 2018, there was a technical issue where an increased number of reports were not allocated to a police force area. As a result, an increased number of fraud and computer misuse offences with postcodes belonging to areas outside of England and Wales may have been included in the England and Wales figures in the year to December 2018 publication. This issue has now been resolved and the figures have been revised since the year to March 2019 publication.

11. 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 and computer misuse statistics article.

12. For more information on UK Finance and CAMIS, please see Section 5.4 of the User guide and also the Overview of fraud and computer misuse statistics article.

13. The CAMIS system contains cases where it has been judged that there is no evidential value and no hope of identifying the offender. CAMIS data include those cases referred by UK Finance to the NFIB.

14. Remote purchase fraud refers to frauds where, in the vast majority of cases, card details have been fraudulently obtained through unsolicited emails or telephone calls or digital attacks, such as malware and data hacks, and then used to undertake fraudulent purchases over the internet, phone or by mail order.

15. "Account takeover" has been renamed to "card ID theft" to more accurately reflect the data captured in this category, which includes third party application fraud and account takeover. Figures continue to be comparable with previously published figures.

16. Further information on trends in payment industry fraud based on industry data collated by UK Finance is available in Fraud the Facts 2019.

17. Following the super-complaint, the Payment Systems Regulator (PSR), the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) and the payments industry (represented by UK Finance) have developed an ongoing programme of work to reduce the harm to consumers from authorised push payment (APP) scams. For more information see the report and consultation published on 7 November 2017, explaining the work the PSR, the FCA and the payments industry have undertaken in the preceding year.

18. Data reported by UK Finance article Fraud the Facts 2019.

10 . Computer virus offences continue to fall

This section covers our findings about computer misuse crime, which includes offences such as computer viruses and hacking[1] .

Data on computer misuse crime are available from two sources:

- questions introduced into the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) in October 2015
- offences referred to the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau (NFIB) by Action Fraud (the public-facing national fraud and cybercrime reporting centre)[2]

CSEW provides the better indication of the volume of computer misuse offences

Action Fraud data on computer misuse represent only a small fraction of all computer misuse crime, as many incidents are not reported. The CSEW is able to capture some of these unreported offences (Table D10). This can be seen by the large difference in volume of computer misuse offences between the two sources – 977,000 offences estimated by the CSEW compared with 20,329 offences referred to the NFIB by Action Fraud.

In addition, the two sources have different coverage. The questions in the CSEW provide fuller coverage of computer misuse crimes against the household population. However, they do not generally include offences committed against businesses and other organisations, which are included in Action Fraud data. As such, it is not possible to make meaningful comparisons between the two sources.

Continued falls in computer viruses

In the year ending June 2019, the CSEW estimated that the volume of computer misuse offences did not change from the previous year. However, variations existed within the subcategories of “computer viruses” and “unauthorised access to personal information (including hacking)”[3] . While “computer viruses” fell by 27% in the last year (to 442,000 offences), incidents involving “unauthorised access to personal information (including hacking)” did not change significantly (535,000 offences).

Table 6: Crime Survey for England and Wales computer misuse – numbers of incidents for year ending June 2018 and year ending June 2019 with percentage change[1],[2],[3]

England and Wales	**Adults aged 16 years and over**			
Offence group	**July 2017 to June 2018**	**July 2018 to June 2019**	**Percentage change and significance**	
	Number of incidents (thousands)			
Computer misuse	1,121	977	-13	
Computer virus	607	442	-27	*
Unauthorised access to personal information (including hacking)	514	535	4	
Unweighted base - number of adults	30,262	33,876		

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

Notes:

1. Following a methodological change to the handling of repeat victimisation in the CSEW, these data are not comparable with data published before January 2019. For more information see Improving victimisation estimates derived from the Crime Survey for England and Wales.

2. New victimisation questions on fraud and computer misuse were incorporated into the CSEW from October 2015. Up to the year ending September 2017, the questions were asked of half the survey sample. From October 2017 onwards, the questions are asked of a full survey sample.

3. In March 2018, the new CSEW estimates on fraud and computer misuse were assessed by the Office for Statistics Regulation against the Code of Practice for Statistics and were awarded National Statistics status.

4. Statistically significant change at the 5% level is indicated by an asterisk.

Falling incidents of computer misuse offences by Action Fraud

All “computer misuse crime”[4] referred to the NFIB by Action Fraud[5] fell by 7% in the year ending June 2019 to 20,329 offences. This decrease follows consecutive rises in the previous two years, and the latest estimate remains 54% higher than in the year ending March 2016. The recent fall in computer misuse recorded by Action Fraud will, to some extent, have been affected by improvements to both internal case review processes and their online reporting tool. These changes took place in October 2018, resulting in some computer misuse offences now being more accurately classified as fraud offences.

Notes for: Decrease in computer viruses continues to drive the fall in computer misuse offences

1. A full definition of terms is provided in Section 5 of the User guide.

2. 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 and computer misuse statistics article.

3. A small change has been implemented to the coding of sub-categories of “Unauthorised access to personal information (including hacking)” and “Other fraud”. As a result, these latest estimates will show small differences compared with publications prior to April 2019. Within the coding of offences relating to “Unauthorised access to personal information (including hacking)” there were found to be a small number of cases with no evidence that a victim’s personal information had been stolen online. Looking in more detail at these, in some cases respondents report receiving new bank cards that they hadn’t ordered, or new accounts in their name that they hadn’t set up. Such cases are now coded as “application frauds” within the “other fraud” category.

4. Computer misuse crime covers any unauthorised access to computer material, as set out in the Computer Misuse Act 1990.

5. Following the introduction of Action Fraud's new fraud and cyber-crime reporting service in October 2018, there was a technical issue whereby an increased number of reports were not allocated to a Police Force Area. As a result, an increased number of fraud and computer misuse offences with postcodes belonging to areas outside of England and Wales may have been included in the England and Wales figures in the year to December 2018 publication. This issue has now been resolved and the figures have been revised since the year to March 2019 publication.

11 . What’s happened to the volume of crime recorded by the police?

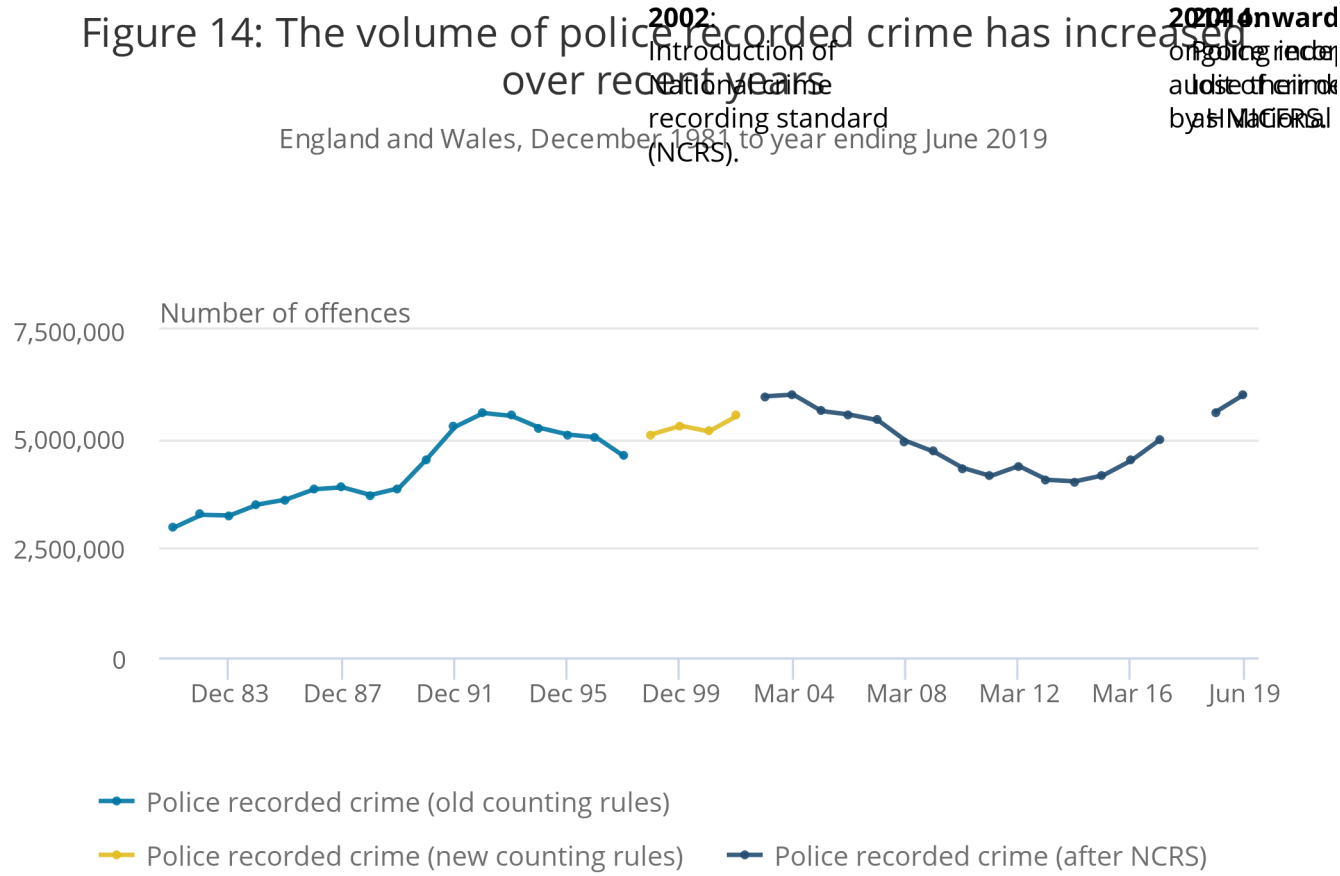
In this section we discuss police recorded crime data in more detail, including how these data have changed over time. Additionally, we focus on particular crimes where an increase in the number of recorded offences is due largely to recording improvements or more victims reporting, rather than a genuine rise in crime (some types of violence, public order offences, domestic abuse and sexual offences).

While these figures do not provide reliable trends in crime for many offence types, they do provide a good measure of the crime-related demand on the police. It is not possible to say how much of the increase in these categories is due to recording improvements. However, for some categories, the increase over the last year is much smaller than in recent years. This provides some evidence that recording improvements are starting to have a smaller year on year impact on these crime types.

Improvements to police recording processes and practices have made substantial contributions to rises in recorded crime over the last five years. This was particularly pronounced in the crime types in this section. The level and speed of improvement has varied across police forces and this could continue for some time.

Figure 14: The volume of police recorded crime has increased over recent years

England and Wales, December 1981 to year ending June 2019



Source: Home Office – Police recorded crime

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics.
2. From the year ending March 2012 onwards, police recorded crime data have included offences from additional sources of fraud data.
3. Some forces have revised their data and police recorded crime totals may not agree with those previously published.
4. Lancashire changed recording systems in November 2018, this led to some technical difficulties in processing data. There are a number of offences with unallocated Community Safety Partnership (CSP) which have been excluded, this will be rectified in subsequent quarters.
5. Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS).

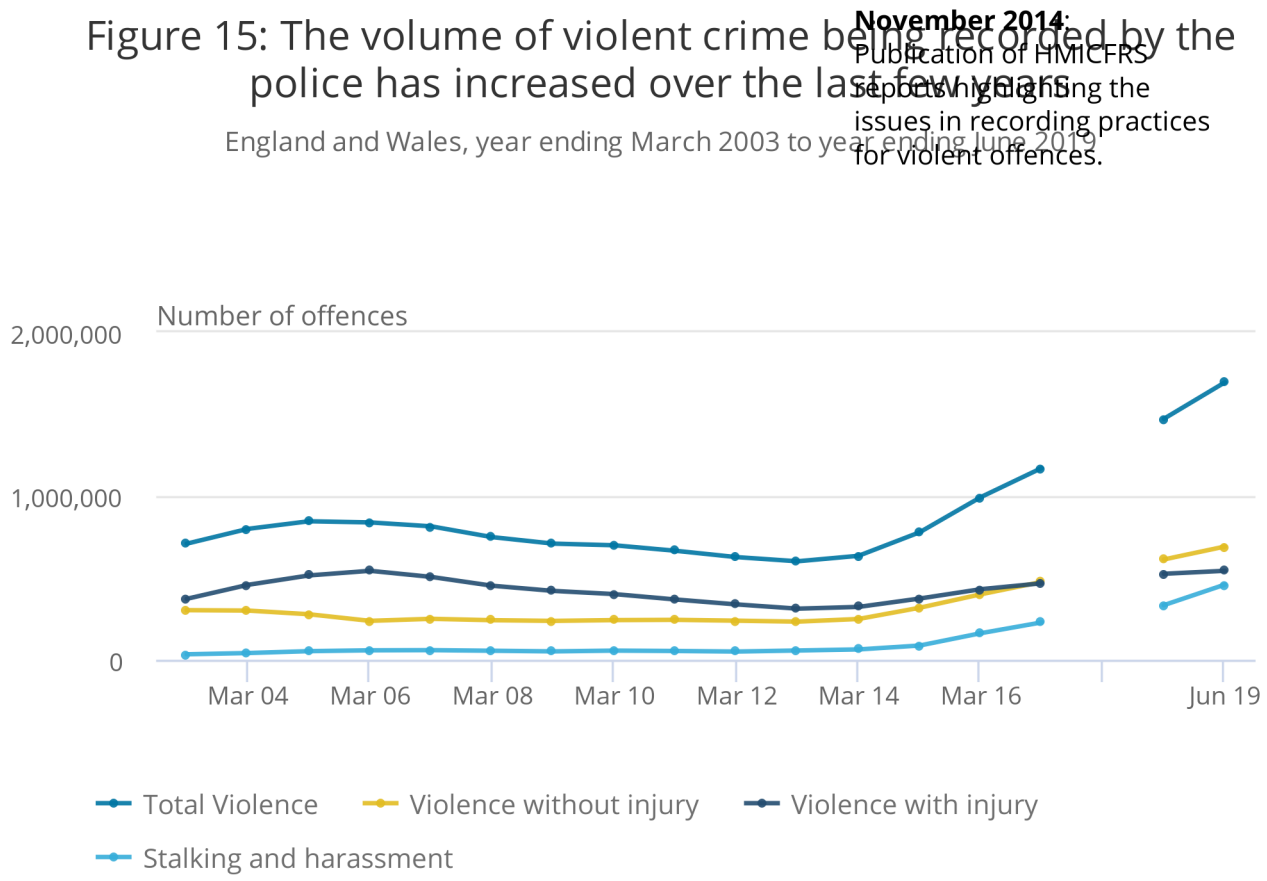
Over the longer-term, the trend in the number of crimes recorded by the police has been similar to that measured by the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW). However, the rises seen over recent years indicate a different trend to the CSEW. These rises are known to have been driven by improvements to police recording practices.

Larger increase in violence without injury than violence with injury

The “violence without injury” subcategory accounted for 41% of all violence recorded by the police and showed a larger increase in the latest year (up 13% to 691,266 offences), than the “violence with injury” subcategory (up 3% to 543,089 offences; Figure 15). The effect of recording improvements by the police is thought to have been most pronounced in the relatively less harmful types of violent crime.

Figure 15: The volume of violent crime being recorded by the police has increased over the last few years

England and Wales, year ending March 2003 to year ending June 2019



Source: Home Office – Police recorded crime

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics.
2. Data on homicide and death or serious injury – unlawful driving data are not included in this figure due to the relative low number of offences.
3. Lancashire changed recording systems in November 2018, this led to some technical difficulties in processing data. There are a number of offences with unallocated Community Safety Partnership (CSP) which have been excluded, this will be rectified in subsequent quarters.
4. Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS).

Stalking and harassment accounted for half of the increase in violence

The stalking and harassment[1] subcategory rose by 38% compared with the previous year (Figure 15). This accounted for 56% of the change in violence recorded by the police (a volume increase of 125,694 offences). Harassment offences increased by 53% in the last year and accounted for nearly half (48%) of all stalking and harassment offences.

Trends in stalking and harassment offences recorded by the police need to be interpreted with caution. There have been changes in the coverage of this group of offences and in the rules governing the recording of these offences.

It is likely that recording improvements are an important factor in this rise, particularly in relation to malicious communication offences because of improved compliance in recording of these offences since they were introduced in April 2015.

From April 2018, a change to the Home Office Counting Rules meant that the offence of stalking or harassment is recorded in addition to the most serious offence involving the same victim and offender. This change has been a large driver in the increase in stalking and harassment offences recorded by police in the last year. It is likely that the number of such offences recorded will continue to increase until the rule changes have bedded-in across all forces.

The latest joint inspection[2] conducted by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) and HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate (HMCPSI) 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 that we cannot currently be confident about the accuracy of the recorded crime figures for the separate categories of stalking or harassment.

Number of modern slavery offences has been steadily increasing

The Modern Slavery Act 2015 came into force on 31 July 2015 and consolidated existing offences of slavery and human trafficking. In the year ending July 2019 there was a 48% rise in the number of Modern Slavery Act offences being recorded by the police compared with the previous year. Since the year ending March 2016, there has been an increase in the number of offences from 883 to 5,655 offences in the year ending July 2019. This is unlikely to be a genuine increase and more likely to reflect improvements in recording practices of police forces.

Data from HMICFRS's crime data integrity inspection programme[3] has established the under-recording of modern slavery offences. To support police forces in improving the identification and understanding of modern slavery, the "Modern Slavery Police Transformation Programme" was established. This includes police forces working closely with the National Referral Mechanism triage team to improve the recording of modern slavery offences[4].

We are currently exploring an approach to measure modern slavery through proxy indicators and plan to publish our findings next year.

Smaller increases in public order offences

Public order offences cover a range of incidents including "causing intentional harassment, alarm or distress". Police recorded figures show that public order offences increased at a slower rate in the latest year compared with previous years. An increase of 9% (to 445,945 offences), following a 30% increase in the year ending June 2018.

A large part of the increase in public order offences over the past few years is likely to reflect improvements and changes to recording practices. In particular, we think that some incidents that would have been recorded as anti-social behaviour previously, are now being recorded as public order offences. This is consistent with the continued drop in the number of recorded anti-social behaviour offences since figures began in 2008. However, it is possible that genuine increases in public disorder may have contributed to this rise. These figures can also be affected by changes in police activity.

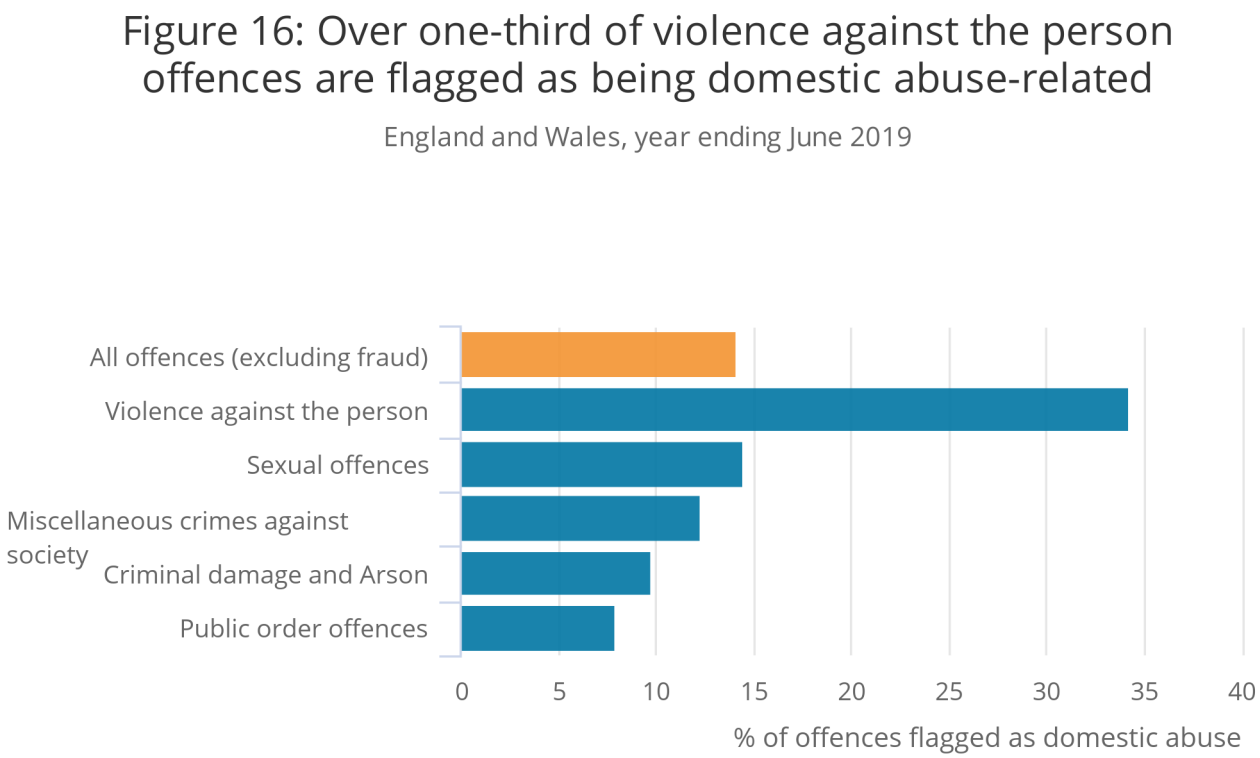
Police recorded domestic abuse continues to rise

Since April 2015, crimes should be “flagged” as being domestic abuse-related by the police if the offence meets the government definition of domestic violence and abuse[5].

Domestic abuse recorded by the police is not a reliable measure of trends in this type of crime and the quality of these data may be inconsistent across police forces. These offences have been subject to recording improvements, such as better identification at recording, and police have been encouraging victims to report these crimes.

Figure 16: Over one-third of violence against the person offences are flagged as being domestic abuse-related

England and Wales, year ending June 2019



Source: Home Office – Police recorded crime

Notes:

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

2. Year ending June 2019 data are provisional and have not been fully reconciled with police forces.

3. Lancashire changed recording systems in November 2018, this led to some technical difficulties in processing data. There are a number of offences with unallocated Community Safety Partnership (CSP) which have been excluded, this will be rectified in subsequent quarters.

In the year ending June 2019, there was an increase in the total number of domestic abuse-related offences recorded by the police (up 17% to 743,999). This rising trend is thought to reflect factors related to reporting and recording and does not provide a reliable indication of current trends.

Figures from a self-completion module in the CSEW, which give a reliable measure of long-term trends, have shown little change in the prevalence of domestic abuse in recent years. However, the cumulative effect of small year-on-year changes has resulted in a small, significantly lower prevalence for the year ending March 2019 (6.3%), compared with the year ending March 2005 (8.9%). This indicates a gradual, longer-term downward trend (Table S42).

Further analysis on domestic abuse can be found in the Domestic abuse in England and Wales: year ending March 2018 release and Domestic abuse: findings from the Crime Survey for England and Wales: year ending March 2018. We will be updating the domestic abuse publication in November 2019.

Increase in recording of coercive behaviour

Included in the rise in domestic abuse-related crimes are offences of controlling or coercive behaviour in an intimate or family relationship[6]. This became a new criminal offence as part of the Serious Crime Act 2015 and came into force on 29 December 2015. Of the 43 forces[7] for which data were available, 17,069 offences of coercive control were recorded in the year ending March 2019. Data for the previous year showed that a total of 9,101 coercive control offences were recorded. This increase is likely to be because of police forces increasing their use of the new law over the last year.

Additional data on controlling or coercive behaviour are published in the Domestic abuse in England and Wales: year ending March 2018 release. We are conducting research into extending the CSEW questions to measure controlling or coercive behaviour. An update on testing some experimental questions and our proposed next steps can be found in Developing a measure of controlling or coercive behaviour.

Increase in police recorded sexual offences slowing down in the last year

There was an increase of 5% in the number of sexual offences recorded by the police in the year ending June 2019 compared with the previous year (up to 163,076; Figure 17, Table A4). This is a smaller increase than in recent years. Within the overall increase:

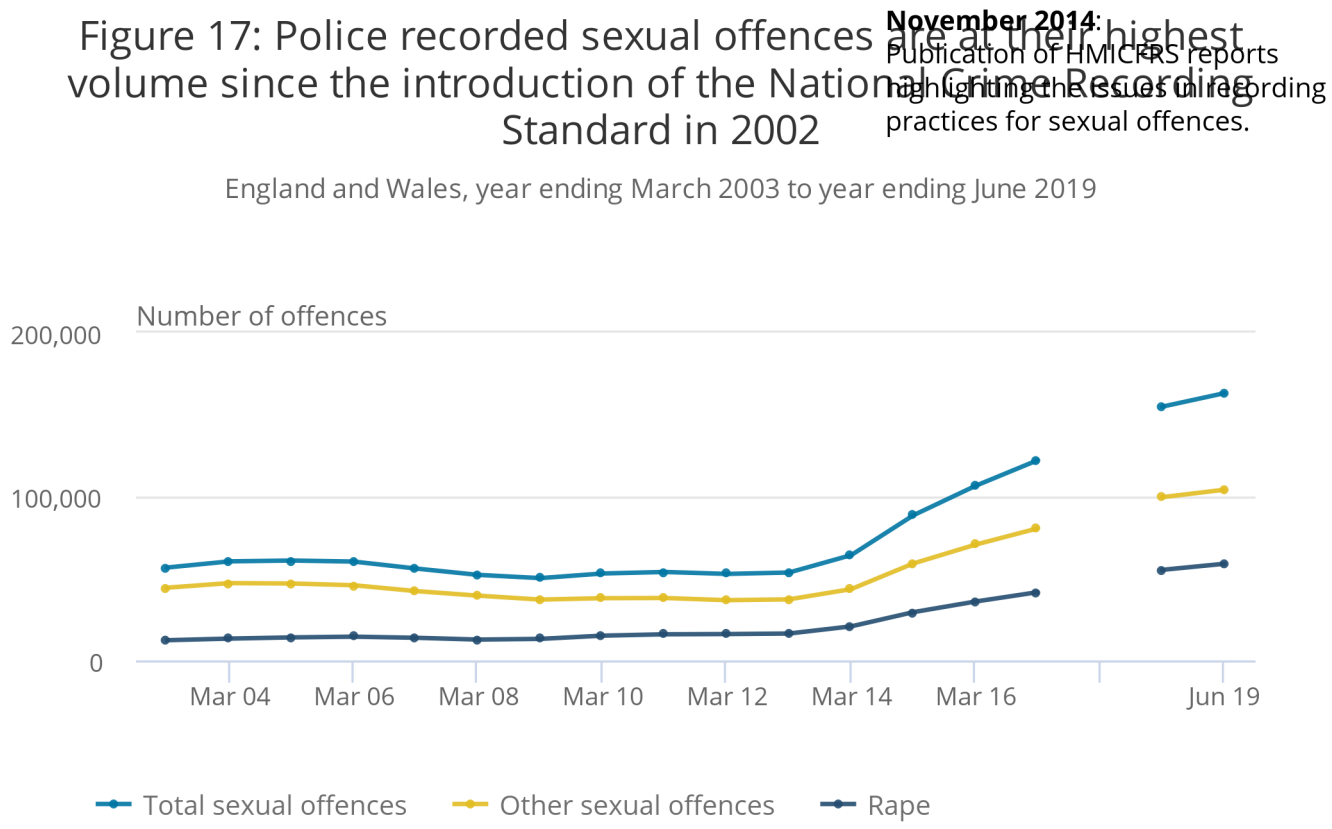
- police recorded rape increased by 7% (to 58,947 offences), compared with a 21% increase in the year ending June 2018
- other sexual offences increased by 5% (to 104,129 offences), compared with a 16% increase in the year ending June 2018

The increase in sexual offences against children[8] contributed to 16% of the total increase in the number of sexual offences recorded by the police.

Sexual offences recorded by the police are not a reliable measure of trends in this type of crime. Improvements in police recording practices and an increased willingness of victims to come forward and report sexual offences are thought to have contributed to increases in recent years.

Figure 17: Police recorded sexual offences are at their highest volume since the introduction of the National Crime Recording Standard in 2002

England and Wales, year ending March 2003 to year ending June 2019



Source: Home Office – police recorded crime

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime are not designated as National Statistics.
2. The Sexual Offences Act 2003, introduced in May 2004, altered the definition and coverage of sexual offences.
3. Lancashire changed recording systems in November 2018, this led to some technical difficulties in processing data. There are a number of offences with unallocated Community Safety Partnership (CSP) which have been excluded, this will be rectified in subsequent quarters.

While recording improvements and better reporting rates have both contributed to the rise in sexual offences recorded by the police, it is not possible to say how much of the increase each of these factors accounts for.

For a subset of forces providing data to the Home Office Data Hub [9], 24% of sexual offences recorded by the police in the year ending June 2019 were non-recent offences (those that took place more than 12 months before being recorded by the police). While non-recent offences remain an important contributor to the latest rise in sexual offences, the rise was due mainly to increases in recent offences (those that took place within 12 months of being recorded by the police).

Estimates from a self-completion module in the CSEW for the year ending March 2019 showed that 2.9% of adults aged 16 to 59 years had been victims of sexual assaults in the last year (including attempted offences). This estimate showed no change compared with the previous year (2.7%). Over the past five years, there has been a rise in the prevalence of sexual assault estimated by the survey, with the latest estimate returning to levels similar to those over a decade ago (Table S42).

More information on interpreting longer-term trends in these offences can be found in Sexual offences in England and Wales: year ending March 2017. However, this does not include the most recent statistics for the latest two years. The Sexual offending: victimisation and the path through the criminal justice system release also provides more information on sexual offending in England and Wales, bringing together a range of official statistics from across the crime and criminal justice system.

New data will help us measure sexual offences against children

A further change to police recording practices is to flag offences where children have been sexually abused or exploited. New experimental statistics for the year ending March 2019 showed the police flagged 60,685 crimes as involving child sexual abuse[10] and 13,133 as involving child sexual exploitation[11]. As with flagging for domestic abuse, the data quality for these figures is variable across police forces but is expected to improve over time. A breakdown of these data across police force areas is available in Other related tables.

Notes for: What's happened to the volume of crime recorded by the police?

1. Stalking and harassment offences have moved out of the subcategory of “violence without injury” and are now in a separate subcategory along with the notifiable offence of malicious communications. 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”. These were added to the notifiable offence list in April 2015.

2. Living in fear – the police and CPS response to harassment and stalking inspection report was published in July 2017.

3. Stolen freedom: the policing response to modern slavery and human trafficking – published October 2017.

4. Modern Slavery Police Transformation Programme Annual Report to 31 March 2018 - https://www.npcc.police.uk/Publication/MSPTP_Annual_Report_to_310318.pdf

5. Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 years and over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality.

6. 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.

7. British Transport Police are not able to provide data.

8. This includes “rape of a male or female child under 16 years”, “rape of a male or female child under 13 years”, “sexual assault on a male or female child under 13 years”, “sexual activity involving a child under 13 years or under 16 years” and “abuse of children through sexual exploitation”.

9. The Home Office Data Hub is a live database that allows police forces to provide the Home Office with record-level information on every crime recorded in a year.

10. Child sexual abuse is defined as “forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts (for example, masturbation, kissing, rubbing, touching outside of clothing and so on). They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet)”.

11. Child sexual exploitation is defined as “a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 years into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology”.

12 . Other sources of data help provide a fuller picture of crime

Neither the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) nor the main police recorded crime series cover all crime. This section provides an overview of supplementary data sources, including:

- the CSEW for children aged 10 to 15 years
- recorded crime data for incidences of anti-social behaviour
- data concerning non-notifiable offences
- the Commercial Victimisation Survey, which gathers data on crimes experienced by businesses

CSEW estimated 1 in 10 children aged 10 to 15 years were victims of crime

CSEW estimates of crimes experienced by children aged 10 to 15 years (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. However, estimates are presented to provide a better understanding of victimisation experiences among children resident in households.

The CSEW estimated that around 1 in 10 children aged 10 to 15 years were victims of at least one crime in the latest year. A total of 810,000 crimes [1] were estimated to have been experienced by children aged 10 to 15 years:

- 54% were violent crimes (441,000), with the majority (75%) of these being low-level violence [2]
- 30% were thefts of personal property (239,000)
- 11% were criminal damage to personal property (93,000)
- 4% were robbery (36,000)

Given the small sample size for the 10- to 15-year-old element of the CSEW, estimates can fluctuate over time and trends can be difficult to interpret.

Increase in anti-social behaviour estimated by the CSEW

The CSEW provides estimates of adults experiencing or witnessing anti-social behaviour (ASB) in their local area (Tables F12 and F13). Since these questions were introduced in the year ending March 2012 survey, estimates have ranged between 28% and 39%. While the latest estimate showed a rise, this is believed to reflect changes made to the order in which survey questions were asked, which may have affected responses. We are investigating this potential issue further.

Around 1.4 million incidents of ASB were recorded by the police (including the British Transport Police) in the latest year, a decrease of 11% from the previous year (Figures F1 and F2). These are incidents that may still be crimes in law, such as littering or dog fouling, but are not severe enough to 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 Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) 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. It is possible that, given the focus on the quality of crime recording, some incidents that may have previously been recorded as ASB have more recently been recorded as crimes. In particular, this is likely to account for some of the recent rise in public order offences.

Non-notifiable offences remain at a similar level to the previous year

In the year ending March 2019 (the latest period for which data are available), there were 1.1 million convictions for non-notifiable offences[3] that were not covered in police recorded crime or the CSEW. This is similar to the number seen in the previous year.

In addition, 10,000 Penalty Notices for Disorder (PNDs) were issued in relation to non-notifiable offences for the year ending March 2019, a decrease of 11% from the previous year[4] . The majority of these PNDs related to drunk and disorderly behaviour. Further information is available in Tables F15a and F15b.

Wholesale and retail businesses experienced the highest levels of crime

As the CSEW is a survey of the population resident in households, it traditionally has not covered crimes against businesses[5] . 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[6] covered in its sample and gives some insight into the number of these crimes that go unreported to the police.

The 2018 CVS[7] showed that businesses in the wholesale and retail sector experienced the highest levels of crime – an estimated 10.1 million incidents, a rate of around 27,000 incidents per 1,000 business premises (Table F16). However, care must be taken when comparing crime rates over time, based on CVS data. This is because the CVS does not cover all industry sectors (the survey generally covers premises in three or four industrial sectors each year) and sample sizes associated with individual sectors are small.

Notes for: Other sources of data help provide a fuller picture of crime

1. The survey of children aged 10 to 15 years only covers personal-level crime (so excludes household-level crime) and, as with the main survey, does not include sexual offences.

2. 75% of violent crimes experienced in the latest survey year resulted in minor or no injury.

3. Non-notifiable offences are offences dealt with exclusively by magistrates' courts or by the police issuing 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.

4. 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.

5. Although the recent extension to cover fraud against adult resident in households includes incidents where the victim has been fully (or partially) reimbursed by their financial provider.

6. 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.

7. Data from the 2018 CVS are the latest data available.

13 . New and upcoming changes

This section provides information about changes to the publication of police recorded crime data, and changes to the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW).

An update on the Nature of crime tables focusing on specific crime types

We have previously announced proposals to make changes to future releases of the Nature of crime tables. These tables, which are based on data from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW), provide details of the nature and circumstances of crime incidents captured by the survey, including time of day, location type, items stolen, and injuries sustained. In the next release of these tables we will be implementing these proposals, which involve:

- moving from using a single year of survey data to using a three-year survey period to produce these tables
- reducing the publication frequency, moving from an annual cycle, to three-yearly

In doing so we aim to improve the reliability of estimates provided in these tables.

Implementing these changes will add to the normal production time and we will not be able to publish Nature of crime tables according to the normal schedule in 2020. Our aim is to publish the next edition of these tables in late summer 2020. These will be based on CSEW data covering the combined survey years 2017 to 2018, 2018 to 2019, and 2019 to 2020.

Improving the treatment of high-frequency repeat victimisation on the Crime Survey

This bulletin is the fourth release of data following a methodological change to the handling of repeat victimisation in the CSEW. The first release including this change was published on 24 January 2019. More information on this methodological change and the impact on CSEW estimates can be found in the User guide to crime statistics in England and Wales.

Recorded crime data at police force area, community safety partnership and local authority level

We ceased publication of the following three sets of tables in April 2019:

- Recorded crime data at community safety partnership and local authority level
- Recorded crime data at police force area level
- Recorded crime data at police force area level (including pivot table)

These tables, which provided the number of offences by offence type on a 12-month rolling basis, closely duplicated data published by the Home Office on GOV.UK.

We have, however, continued to publish on a quarterly basis, the Crime in England and Wales: Police force area data tables (P1 to P5). These provide offence rates and percentage changes for the latest year for each police force area in England and Wales.

As part of this change, we now publish breakdowns of police recorded crime figures by Community Safety Partnership (CSP) area alongside our quarterly crime statistics bulletin.

Users requiring access to more detailed CSP or police force area level recorded crime data, including longer time series data at these local levels, are able to download the information from Home Office open data tables on police recorded crime.

Fraud and computer misuse redistribution of tables

We no longer release the Additional tables on fraud and cybercrime as a separate set of tables. All content previously released within these tables has, or will be, redistributed among other sets of tables.

The majority of these tables have either been published within the Annual trend and demographic tables or the Other related tables accompanying the year to March 2019 release. The remainder will be published within our Property crime tables and newly planned Nature of fraud and computer misuse release later within the 2019 to 2020 financial year.

14 . 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 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 Statistics.

However, statistics based on police recorded crime data have been assessed against the Code of Practice for 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.

A new data quality framework has been compiled to help inform users about the quality of crime statistics for different types of crime and which source is thought to provide the most reliable measure. This can be found in Figure 5 of the User guide.

Table 7 summarises the strengths and weaknesses of the two main sources of data used in this bulletin.

Table 7: 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	
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 and well-recorded by 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	
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)
Potential time lag between occurrence of crime and survey data collection means that the survey is not a good measure of emerging trends	Trends can be influenced by changes in recording practices or police activity as well as public reporting of crime
Excludes crimes against businesses and those not resident in households (for example, residents of institutions and visitors)	Not possible to make long-term comparisons due to fundamental changes in recording practice introduced in 1998 and the year ending March 2003[2]
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)	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
Previously excluded fraud and cybercrime[1]	

Source: Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. From 1 October 2015, the offence coverage of the Crime Survey in England and Wales (CSEW) was extended to include fraud and computer misuse 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.

Inspections of police recorded crime and incident data quality

Over the last seven years Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) have published a range of inspections related to police forces' crime and incident recording practices.

In 2012, A step in the right direction review found that there was a wide variation in the quality of decision-making associated with the recording of anti-social behaviour (ASB). It is possible that some incidents that may have previously been recorded as ASB have more recently been recorded as crimes.

In 2014, Crime recording: making the victim count concluded that around one in five crimes were not recorded by the police in England and Wales.

Crime Data Integrity (CDI) inspections are a rolling programme of inspections of police forces. Findings from these inspections suggest that crime recording practices by police forces in England and Wales are, in general, improving. More information is available in Section 3.3 of the User guide to crime statistics for England and Wales . Also, HMICFRS published State of Policing: The Annual Assessment of Policing in England and Wales 2018 , which summarises the progress of police forces in improving their recording practices, based on the ongoing CDI programme. This report also concludes, however, that crime recording standards still vary a great deal between police forces.

In 2015, the Increasingly everyone's business report concluded that recent increases in the number of domestic abuse-related crimes were owing, in part, to police forces improving their recording of domestic abuse incidents as crimes.

In 2017, the Living in fear report concluded stalking was not always recorded accurately by the police and in some of these cases, stalking was recorded as harassment.

Other information on quality and methodology

The Crime in England and Wales Quality and Methodology Information report contains important information on:

- the strengths and limitations of the data
- uses and users of the data
- quality characteristics of the data
- methods used to produce 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 Section 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.