

Statistical bulletin

# Crime in England and Wales: year ending June 2020

Crime against households and adults using data from police recorded crime and the new Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales. Includes the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on crime and people's perceptions of crime during the April to June 2020 period.



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# 1 . Main points

This publication reports on crime in the 12 months to year ending June 2020. The last quarter of this 12-month period was affected by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and related lockdown restrictions. Further information can be found in [Section 15. Measuring the data](#).

For the 12-month period to year ending June 2020:

- Findings from the Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales (TCSEW) estimated that there were approximately 11.5 million offences in the last 12 months<sup>1</sup> in England and Wales; although not directly comparable, this was similar to levels estimated from the face-to-face Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) in recent years.
- Total police recorded crime decreased by 4% in England and Wales to approximately 5.8 million offences in the 12 months ending June 2020; police reported crime levels were relatively stable from July 2019 to March 2020 and the annual decrease was mainly driven by substantial falls during the April to June 2020 period, particularly in theft offences.
- There were also falls in offences involving firearms (9% decrease) and knives or sharp instruments (1% decrease) across England and Wales; similarly, these falls were also driven by substantial decreases in the April to June 2020 period.
- Police recorded crime data showed a 3% increase in violence against the person; this is the smallest annual increase since improvements to recording practices began to be implemented in 2014.
- The overall number of homicides increased by 9%; this figure includes the Grays lorry incident with 39 homicide victims, if this incident is excluded, homicide showed a 3% increase overall.

Available data sources show there was an overall decrease in crime in the April to June 2020 quarter:

- The number of victims of total TCSEW crime including fraud and computer misuse decreased by 19% in April to June 2020 compared with January to March 2020.
- Police recorded crime levels during the April to June 2020 period were much lower than April to June 2019, with 19% less crime including fraud and computer misuse.
- Reductions were seen across many types of police recorded crime; in particular, theft offences and robbery fell in April to June 2020 by 43% and 47% respectively, compared with April to June 2019, reflecting the increase in time people spent at home during the lockdown period, a reduction in opportunities for theft in public spaces and the closure of the night-time economy.
- This was also supported by TCSEW estimates of theft offences, which decreased by 30% in April to June 2020 compared with January to March 2020.
- Offences involving knives or sharp instruments and firearms also saw reductions, with decreases of 21% and 23% respectively in April to June 2020, compared with April to June 2019.
- One exception was trends in drug offences, where levels rose by 30% in April to June 2020 compared with April to June 2019; this reflected increased police activity in pursuing these crimes.
- Other findings from the TCSEW indicated that public perceptions of the police during this time were largely positive, with 9 in 10 adults satisfied with the way local police were responding to the pandemic.

## Statistician's comment

Commenting on today's figures, Billy Gazard from the Office for National Statistics Centre for Crime and Justice said:

"Decreases in crime levels during the year ending June 2020 were mainly driven by changes in society after coronavirus lockdown restrictions were put in place. The most substantial reductions were seen in theft and robbery offences during the April to June quarter. There are indications that crime levels in June were moving back towards pre-lockdown levels.

"Police recording of drug offences increased sharply throughout the April to June period, reflecting proactive police activity as overall crime levels reduced. Anti-social behaviour incidents also increased. These include reported breaches of lockdown restrictions to the police."

### Notes for: Main points

1. TCSEW participants report on crimes experienced in the last 12 months. TCSEW estimates are based on responses from interviews conducted between 20 May and 31 August inclusive.

## 2 . New in this release

This publication explores crime in England and Wales in the year ending June 2020, as reported by respondents in a new Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales (TCSEW) between May and August 2020.

The TCSEW is designed to capture trends in crime whilst normal face-to-face interviewing is suspended<sup>1</sup>. Information is provided from the TCSEW on crimes experienced by respondents in a 12-month reporting period as well as crime estimates for specific periods of time affected by coronavirus (COVID-19) restrictions, such as the April to June period. Further information on how this survey was set up is available in our [Quality and Methodology Information report](#).

Where some data cannot be collected in the TCSEW, previous annual estimates from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) are presented for context.

Data on police recorded crime have been provided in annual, quarterly and monthly formats. These data may be subject to revision in future quarterly releases.

Because of issues with their data supply following the implementation of new force IT systems, data from Greater Manchester Police (GMP) were excluded from the previous release. For this release, data from GMP is included in figures unless otherwise stated.

Each data source includes additional reference periods to enable comparison with pre-lockdown months<sup>2</sup>.

### Notes for: New in this release

1. TCSEW estimates are not directly comparable with estimates derived from the face-to-face Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW).
2. For police recorded crime quarterly and monthly data is presented in order to compare the April to June 2020 period with pre-lockdown periods. In most cases, we have compared police recorded crime in April to June 2020 with April to June 2019 in order to take account of any seasonal effects on crime trends. The TCSEW provides estimates for quarterly reporting periods for comparing the April to June 2020 period with the preceding quarter, January to March 2020.

### **3 . Long-term trends from the face-to-face Crime Survey for England and Wales**

Because of the change in data collection mode, there is a break in the CSEW data time series. TCSEW estimates are not directly comparable with those previously published from the face-to-face CSEW.

The face-to-face Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) was suspended on 17 March 2020 because of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. A telephone-operated version of the CSEW (TCSEW) was specifically designed to allow us to continue measuring crime during this period whilst face-to-face interviewing is not possible.

This release predominantly reports on estimates from the TCSEW, but it is important to set these in context of longer-term trends in crime, as estimated by the CSEW. For the crime types and population it covers, the CSEW is a better indicator of long-term trends than police recorded crime. It is unaffected by changes in levels of reporting to the police or police recording practices.

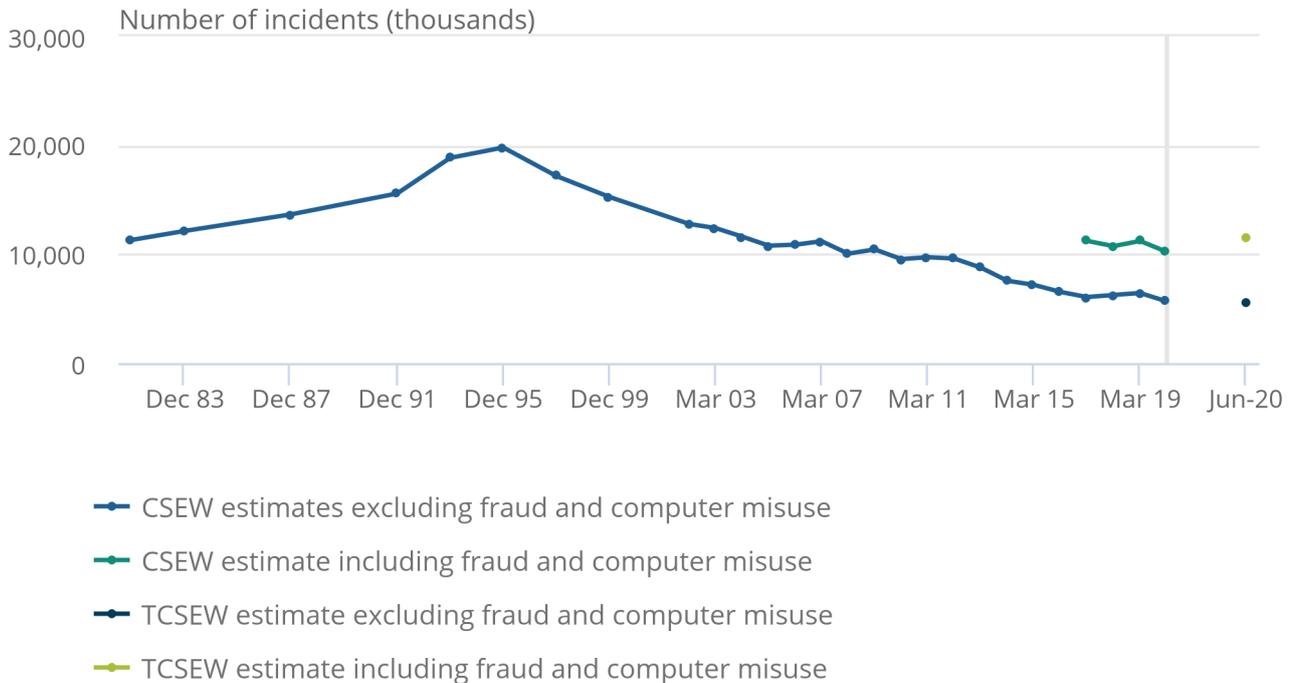
Since the mid-1990s, there have been long-term falls seen in overall CSEW crime estimates (see Figure 1).

**Figure 1: Crime estimates by the CSEW December 1981 to March 2020, and TCSEW estimates for the year ending June 2020**

England and Wales, annual estimates

Figure 1: Crime estimates by the CSEW December 1981 to March 2020, and TCSEW estimates for the year ending June 2020. Rises in crime levels during the 90s were mainly due to increases in violent, vehicle-related theft and burglary. Excluding fraud and computer misuse from 2015 onwards, we have seen a long-term steady decline in the CSEW time series.

England and Wales, annual estimates



Source: Office for National Statistics - Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) and the Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales (TCSEW)

Notes:

1. These data are published as Experimental Statistics.
2. Data on this chart refer to different modes: 1981 to March 2020 are based on the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW), June 2020 are based on the Telephone-operated crime survey for England and Wales (TCSEW). 3 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. CSEW data relate to adults aged 16 and over or to households. TCSEW data relate to adults aged 18 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 from October 2015 until September 2017, to test for detrimental effects on the survey as a whole and help ensure that the historical time series is protected, and have been asked of a full sample from October 2017.
5. 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

The CSEW provides the best measure of trends for the more common types of crime experienced by the population including theft, overall violent crime, criminal damage, fraud and computer misuse. Long-term trends vary by headline CSEW crime types. For all headline figures, including a data time series, see Appendix tables.

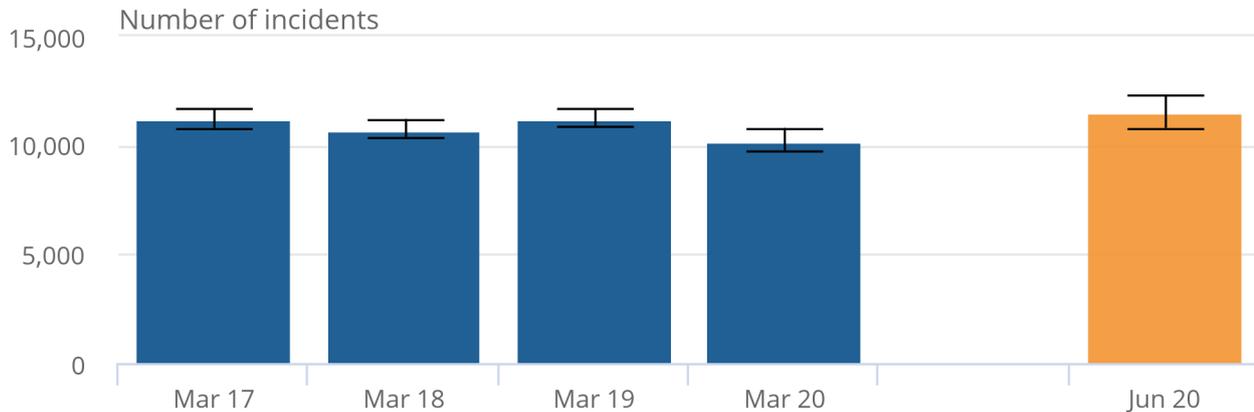
Because of the change in data collection mode and sample design, CSEW and TCSEW estimates are not directly comparable and there is a break in the data time series. TCSEW annual estimates of total crime are, however, similar to levels estimated by the face-to-face CSEW in recent years (see Figure 2). We plan to investigate and report on the impact of the mode change and sampling biases on Crime Survey estimates soon.

**Figure 2: TCSEW annual estimates for total crime lie within the range of what has been estimated in the face-to-face CSEW in recent years**

England and Wales, annual estimates (with 95% confidence intervals)

Figure 2: TCSEW annual estimates for total crime lie within the range of what has been estimated in the face-to-face CSEW in recent years

England and Wales, annual estimates (with 95% confidence intervals)



Source: Office for National Statistics - Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) and the Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales (TCSEW)

**Notes:**

1. These data are published as Experimental Statistics.
2. Data on this chart refer to different modes: March 2017 to March 2020 are based on the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW), June 2020 are based on the Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales (TCSEW).
3. CSEW data relate to adults aged 16 and over or to households. TCSEW data relate to adults aged 18 and over or to households
4. 95% confidence intervals are included. This means that if we drew 20 random samples and calculated a 95% confidence interval for each sample using the data in that sample, we would expect that, on average, 19 out of the 20 (95%) resulting confidence intervals would contain the true estimate.

## 4 . Crime estimates from the Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales

The Telephone-operated Crime Survey (TCSEW) estimated that 11.5 million offences, including fraud and computer misuse, were experienced by adults aged 18 years and over in the last 12 months<sup>1</sup>. This is similar to the number of offences estimated since year ending March 2017, when fraud and computer misuse was first included in total crime estimates (see Figure 2).

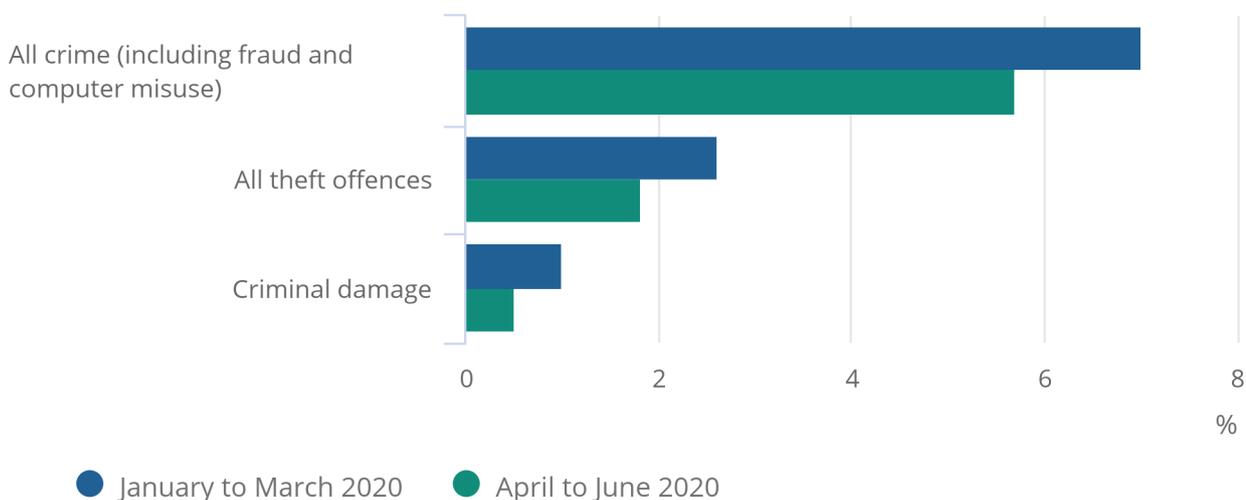
Using data from the TCSEW only, there was a non-significant decrease for total crime in the April to June 2020 period in comparison with the previous quarter, January to March 2020<sup>2</sup>. Because of the small TCSEW sample size, measuring change in incidence between quarterly periods is affected by increased uncertainty around repeat incidents, however, prevalence estimates are not affected by this. In terms of the number of victims of total TCSEW crime, there was a significant 19% decrease in April to June 2020 compared with January to March 2020 (see Figure 3).

**Figure 3: Falling Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales (TCSEW) victimisation levels during April to June 2020 driven by large decreases in theft offences**

England and Wales, based on interviews conducted between May and August 2020

Figure 3: Falling Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales (TCSEW) victimisation levels during April to June 2020 driven by large decreases in theft offences

England and Wales, based on interviews conducted between May and August 2020



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

Notes:

1. These data are published as Experimental Statistics.

While falls were shown across the majority of crime types, this reduction was driven by significant decreases in theft offences, by 30% compared with the previous quarter, January to March 2020 (817,000 offences to 573,000 offences). This decrease included a 77% fall in “other theft of personal property” (180,000 offences to 41,000 offences). There was also a significant decrease in criminal damage offences, by 49% compared with January to March 2020 (309,000 offences to 158,000 offences).

For more detailed figures relating to estimates from the TCSEW, see [Appendix tables](#).

## **Notes for: Crime estimates from the Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales**

1. TCSEW estimates are not directly comparable with estimates derived from the face-to-face Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW).
2. The TCSEW provides estimates for quarterly reporting periods for comparing the April to June 2020 period with the preceding quarter, January to March 2020.

## **5 . Trends in police recorded crime**

Improvements to recording processes and practices by the police have made substantial contributions to rises in recorded crime over the last five years. This effect has been more pronounced for some crime types, and for many types of offence, these figures do not provide reliable trends in crime.

The police recorded 5.8 million crimes in England and Wales in the 12-month period to year ending June 2020, a 4% decrease from the previous year. Police reported crime levels were relatively stable from July 2019 to March 2020.

The annual decrease was driven by substantial falls during the April to June 2020 period. This reflected the increase in time people spent at home during the lockdown period, a reduction in opportunities for theft in public spaces and the closure of the night-time economy.

Overall, theft offences fell by 15% in the year ending June 2020. There were also falls in robbery offences (10% decrease), sexual offences (7% decrease) and criminal damage and arson (8% decrease) but there were rises in drug offences (21% increase).

Trends in police recorded crime data for lower volume crimes show a mixed picture:

- a 9% increase in the overall number of homicides; this includes a single incident in October 2019, when the bodies of 39 migrants were found in a lorry in Grays, Essex, which if excluded, shows a 3% increase overall
- a 1% decrease in the number of offences involving knives or sharp instruments
- a 9% decrease in recorded offences involving firearms

Police recorded crime data provide a good measure of crime-related demand on the police but are not a measure of overall crime or changes in the level of overall crime. Rises seen over recent years indicate a different trend to the CSEW, and reflect a combination of factors, including improvements to police recording processes and practices, expansion of the recorded crime collection to include new offences, variations in police activity, more victims reporting crime, and genuine increases in some types of crime.

Improvements to recording processes and practices by the police have made substantial contributions to rises in recorded crime over the last five years (see Figure 4). However, the rate of increase has been slowing, likely reflecting the diminishing impact of recording improvements.

**Figure 4: Falls in police recorded crime during April to June 2020 following steady increases since April to June 2015**

England and Wales, quarterly figures (April 2015 to June 2020)

Figure 4: Falls in police recorded crime during April to June 2020 following steady increases since April to June 2015

23 March 2020  
Start of lock

England and Wales, quarterly figures (April 2015 to June 2020)



Source: Home Office – Police recorded crime

Notes:

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

Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) report on the [State of Policing 2019](#) provides insight into the improvements in police recording practices over recent years. The report estimates that “because of better recording standards, and compared with the findings of our 2014 inspection, forces recorded around 570,000 more crimes during 2019”.

There were small fluctuations across offence types in the first three quarters of the year ending June 2020, but the trend was broadly stable compared with the previous year. Falls in offences during the April to June 2020 period (see Figure 5) can be attributed to the lockdown period and related restrictions.

The police recorded 1,242,194 crimes (including fraud and computer misuse) in April to June 2020, a 19% decrease from the number of crimes recorded in April to June 2019 (1,533,776 crimes). Decreases of 17% to 21% in police recorded crime (excluding fraud and computer misuse) were seen across all regions of England and Wales except for London, which saw a decrease of 27%.

Theft offences decreased in every quarter of the year ending June 2020, but by far the largest decrease was seen in April to June 2020. There were 43% fewer theft offences (280,087) than in the corresponding months of 2019. Similarly, robbery offences decreased by 47% in the April to June quarter (11,961), compared with the same period in 2019.

Following a broadly stable trend in the first three quarters of the year, criminal damage offences and sexual offences saw large decreases in April to June 2020. Sexual offences fell by 24% in April to June 2020 (to 31,997 offences) compared with April to June 2019. Criminal damage and arson fell by 23% in April to June 2020 (to 108,604 offences) compared with the corresponding period in the previous year.

By contrast, recorded drug offences rose by 30% in April to June 2020 (57,132 offences) compared with April to June 2019. This reflected proactive police activity in crime hotspots and was largely driven by offences involving the possession of drugs. The rise was particularly evident in London where there was a 43% increase in offences. Data from the Metropolitan Police Service indicated [steep rises in April and May 2020 in the number of stop and searches conducted by police relating to drugs](#). As restrictions have eased, the police have had less capacity to continue this proactive policing. The number of stop and searches relating to drugs decreased in June 2020 but remained higher than pre-lockdown months.

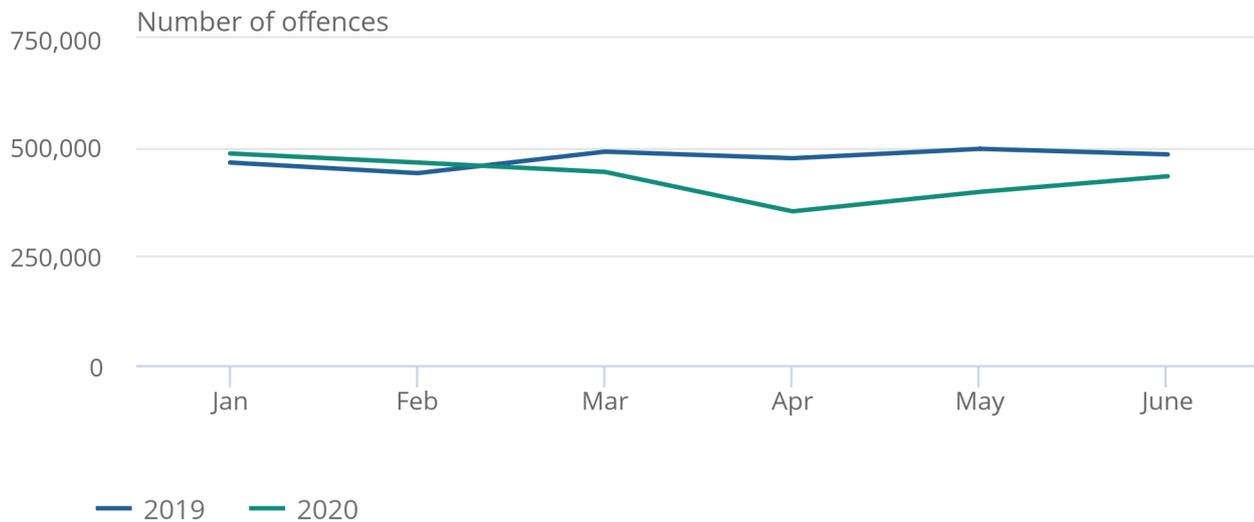
The largest monthly fall in total recorded crime was in April 2020, with a 26% decrease compared with April 2019. May 2020 saw a 20% year-on-year decrease, with a smaller 10% reduction in June 2020. These changes are likely to reflect the introduction and subsequent easing of lockdown restrictions across England and Wales (see Figure 5).

**Figure 5: Falls in police recorded crime during April to June 2020 compared with 2019 (excluding Greater Manchester Police)**

England and Wales, monthly figures (January to June 2019 and January to June 2020)

Figure 5: Falls in police recorded crime during April to June 2020 compared with 2019 (excluding Greater Manchester Police)

England and Wales, monthly figures (January to June 2019 and January to June 2020)



Source: Home Office – Police recorded crime

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics.
2. Data from Greater Manchester Police are not included in this chart

Figures indicate a similar pattern for several offence types (see Figure 6). For more detailed figures relating to month-on-month changes in police recorded crime see Quarterly data tables.

**Figure 6: Falls in police recorded theft offences and rises in drug offences during 2020 compared with 2019 average**

England and Wales, January to June 2019 and January to June 2020

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics.
2. Data from Greater Manchester Police are not included in this chart.
3. The index was calculated by dividing the number of police recorded incidents for each crime type and month by the average number of incidents for that crime type for the period January to December 2019. An index value of 100 is equivalent to the 2019 monthly average number of incidents; a value above 100 indicates an increase from the average while a value below 100 indicates a decrease.

## Download the data

[.xlsx](#)

## 6 . Homicide

The police recorded 725 homicides in England and Wales in the year ending June 2020, a 9% increase (from 668) compared with the previous year (see Figure 7). Since 2016, the trend in homicide offences has been broadly stable.

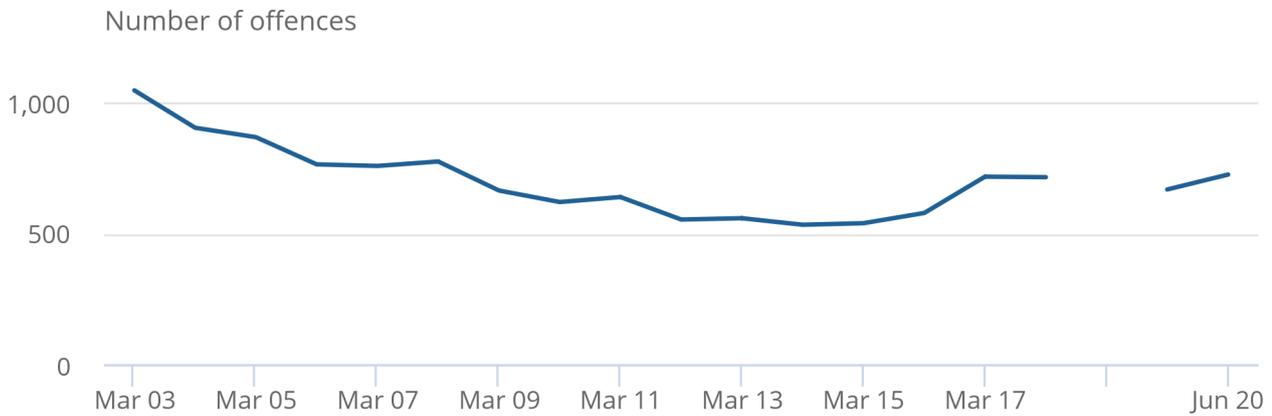
The latest figure for homicides includes 39 people whose bodies were found in a lorry in Grays, Essex in October 2019. Without this homicide incident, the number of victims would have risen by 3%. The figures also include a 5% increase (to 128) recorded by the Metropolitan Police Service in the latest year. The rate of homicide in the population remains low, at 12 per 1 million people in the year ending June 2020.

**Figure 7: Homicide shows a large increase following the Essex lorry deaths.**

England and Wales, year ending March 2003 to year ending June 2020

Figure 7: Homicide shows a large increase following the Essex lorry deaths.

2003 to 2005: 1752 victims of Harold Shipman are recorded.  
 May 2017: 22 victims of Manchester Arena bombing are recorded.  
 April 2016: 96 victims of Hillsborough are recorded.  
 March 2017: 301 victims of Bridgegate lorry are recorded.



Source: Home Office – Police recorded crime

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics.
2. Some forces have revised their data and police recorded crime totals may not agree with those previously published.
3. The dates shown for the London terrorist attacks in 2005 and 2017 correspond to when the events occurred, rather than when the homicides were recorded by the police.
4. 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 2019](#). 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

The number of homicides where a knife or sharp instrument was involved increased by 2% in the year ending June 2020 (from 257 to 262 offences). The number of homicides involving the use of a knife or sharp instrument in London increased from 69 to 79, a 14% increase. Of all recorded homicides in the latest year, 38% involved a knife or sharp instrument.

For the latest headline figures relating to homicide and more detailed figures including data time series see [Appendix tables](#) and [Other related tables](#). For Police Force Area breakdowns see [Police Force Area data tables](#).

## 7 . Knife or sharp instrument offences

Police recorded crime provides a better measure of higher harm but less common types of violence than the Crime Survey, such as those involving a knife or sharp instrument.

There was a 1% decrease in offences involving knives or sharp instruments recorded by the police in the year ending June 2020 (to 47,349 offences). Offences involving knives or sharp instruments have been rising since the year ending March 2014, although in recent years the rate of increase has slowed. The last annual decrease seen in offences involving knives or sharp instruments recorded by the police was in the year ending March 2014.

In the latest year, the offences “assault with injury and assault with intent to cause serious harm” and “robbery” accounted for the majority of all offences involving a knife or sharp instrument and decreased by 2% (to 19,739 offences; excluding Greater Manchester Police) and 6% (to 17,964 offences; excluding Greater Manchester Police) respectively. However, “threats to kill” offences involving a knife or sharp instrument increased by 22% in the year ending June 2020 (to 4,579 offences; excluding Greater Manchester Police), continuing the upward trend since the year ending March 2012 (see Figure 8).

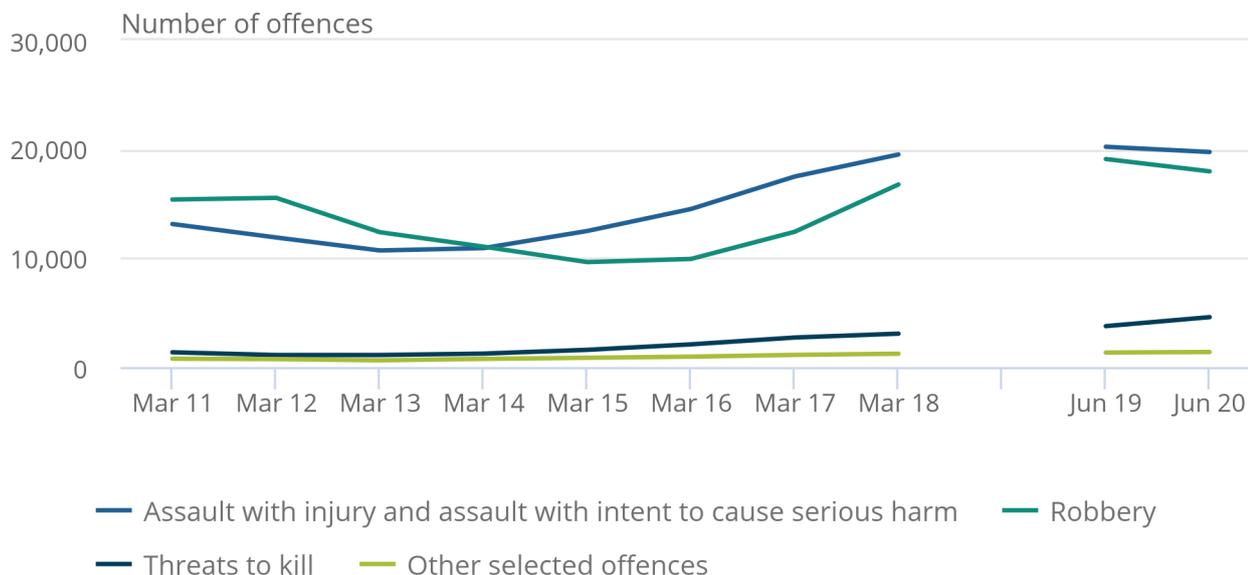
The annual decrease in offences involving knives or sharp instruments can be wholly attributed to the large decrease seen in the lockdown period. Although the trend was relatively stable over the first three quarters, offences fell by 21% in April to June 2020 compared with April to June 2019 (12,237 offences to 9,617 offences).

**Figure 8: Crimes involving knives or sharp instruments decreased in the latest year following rising trend driven by increase in robberies**

England and Wales (excluding Greater Manchester police), year ending March 2011 to year ending June 2020

Figure 8: Crimes involving knives or sharp instruments decreased in the latest year following rising trend driven by increase in robberies

England and Wales (excluding Greater Manchester police), year ending March 2011 to year ending June 2020



Source: Home Office - Police recorded crime

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics.
2. Data from Greater Manchester Police are excluded to allow for comparison over time.
3. Police recorded knife or sharp instrument offences data are submitted via a special collection.
4. Other selected offences include rape, attempted murder, homicide and sexual assault.

The change in the number of offences involving knives or sharp instruments in the latest year varied by Police Force Area (see Figure 9). For example, looking at the three areas with the highest rate per 100,000 population:

- London<sup>1</sup> saw a 6% decrease
- West Midlands saw an 11% decrease
- Greater Manchester<sup>2</sup> saw an increase of 7%

The change in the number of offences involving knives or sharp instruments in April to June 2020 compared with April to June 2019 also varied by Police Force Area. For example, looking at the three areas with the highest rate per 100,000 population:

- London<sup>1</sup> saw a 44% decrease
- West Midlands saw a 31% decrease
- Greater Manchester<sup>2</sup> saw a 2% increase

### **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 2020**

#### **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. 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**

[.CSV](#)

Knife or sharp instrument offences continue to be concentrated in metropolitan areas across England and Wales with almost a third (30%) of all offences recorded by the police in London. However, this has decreased from 43% in the year ending March 2013. The highest rate was also seen in London, with 158 offences per 100,000 population. This compared with an England and Wales average of 80 offences per 100,000 population.

### **Other sources of data**

Although for a different time period, the latest available provisional [admissions data for NHS hospitals](#) in England reported 1,277 admissions for assault by a sharp object between April 2020 and July 2020. This was a decrease of 23% compared with the period between April 2019 and July 2019, in line with decreases in overall offences involving knives or sharp instruments. This is also in line with a decrease of 10% in “assault with injury and assault with intent to cause serious harm” offences recorded by the police in April to June 2020, compared with April to June 2019.

Other sources of data can help to provide additional insights. For example, the [Knife and Offensive Weapon Sentencing](#) for England and Wales publication by the Ministry of Justice shows that the number of knife and offensive weapon offences dealt with by the Criminal Justice System (CJS) had been increasing since 2014 but stabilised in the latest year. While these figures cover a different period to those presented in this bulletin, they show that, in the year ending March 2020, there was a slight reduction in knife and offensive weapon possession offences dealt with formally by the criminal justice system.

Police recorded “possession of an article with a blade or point”<sup>3</sup> offences similarly fell by 6% to 21,543 offences in the year ending June 2020.

Trends in this offence have often been influenced by increases in targeted police action, such as the recent rise in stop and searches<sup>4</sup>, which typically follow rises in offences involving knives or sharp instruments. Data related to stop and searches can be found in the Home Office publication [Police powers and procedures](#).

For data relating to offences involving knives or sharp instruments see [Other related tables](#), for geographic breakdowns see [Police Force Area data tables](#) and for sharp instrument homicides see [Appendix tables: homicide in England and Wales](#).

## Notes for: Knife or sharp instrument offences

1. Includes the Metropolitan and City of London Police Force Areas.
2. These increases should be interpreted within the context of changing recording practices. Greater Manchester Police (GMP) reviewed their recording of knife or sharp instrument offences in December 2017. This revealed that they were under-counting these offences. Following this review, there were sharp increases in the number of knife or sharp instrument offences recorded by GMP in January to December 2018.
3. Offences of “possession of an article with a blade or point” are covered separately by a specific recorded crime category, which is the specific crime of possessing an article with a blade or point illegally.
4. In August 2019, [a pilot easing restrictions around emergency stop and search powers](#) was extended to all 43 police forces in England and Wales.

## 8 . Offences involving firearms

Firearms offences recorded by police in England and Wales (including Greater Manchester Police) saw a 9% decrease in the year ending June 2020 compared with the previous year (to 6,228 offences).

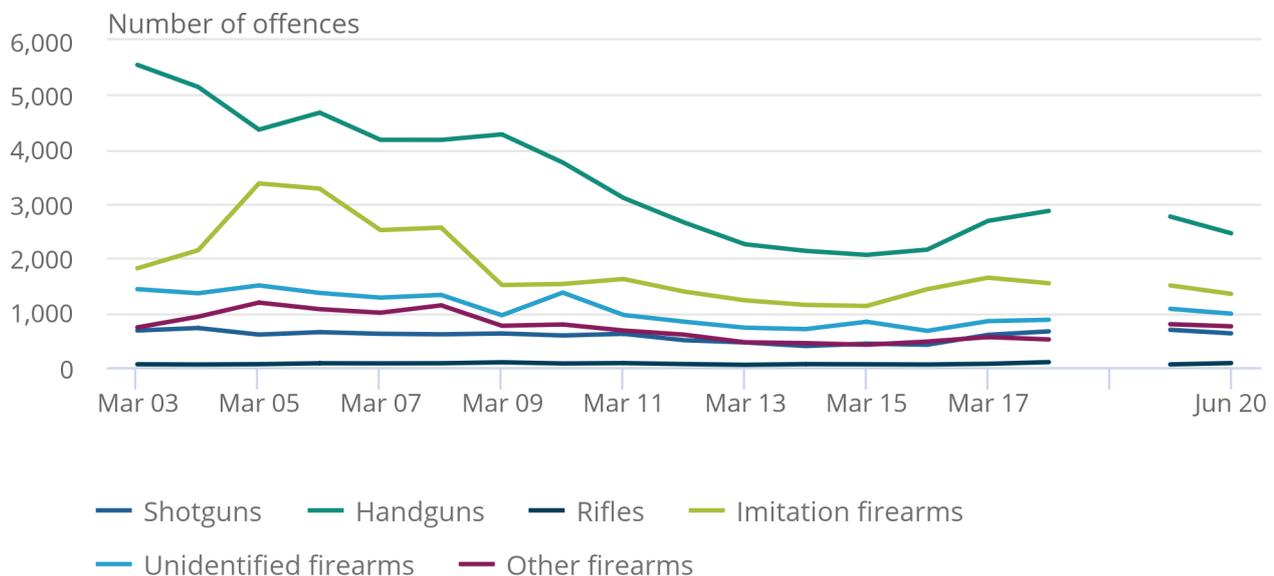
Decreases were seen in offences involving handguns (from 2,764 to 2,458, 11%), shotguns (from 685 to 620, 9%), imitation firearms (from 1,500 to 1,345, 10%), other firearms (from 788 to 749, 5%), and unidentified firearms (from 1,070 to 982, 8%) (see Figure 10).

## Figure 10: Crimes involving firearms show a small decrease compared with the previous year

England and Wales (including Greater Manchester Police), year ending March 2003 to year ending June 2020

### Figure 10: Crimes involving firearms show a small decrease compared with the previous year

England and Wales (including Greater Manchester Police), year ending March 2003 to year ending June 2020



Source: Home Office - Police recorded crime

#### Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics.
2. Data are provisional and have not been reconciled with police forces.
3. Figures exclude conventional air weapons, such as air rifles.

Whilst firearms offences decreased each quarter within the year ending June 2020 compared with their corresponding quarter in the year ending June 2019, the largest decrease was seen over the lockdown period. In April to June 2020, firearms offences fell by 23% compared with the corresponding months of the previous year (1,680 offences to 1,286 offences). The smallest decrease was seen in October to December 2019, which fell by 1% compared with the corresponding months of the previous year (1,704 offences to 1,687 offences).

Detailed data for the year ending March 2019 were released in [Offences involving the use of weapons: data tables](#) in February 2020. For data relating to offences involving firearms see [Other related tables](#).

As part of the [government's Serious Violence Strategy](#) and action plan to tackle corrosive attacks, the Home Office began collecting data on selected offences that involved a corrosive substance on a mandatory basis from April 2019. Data for the year ending March 2020 show that there were 619 violence against the person and robbery offences recorded by the police in England and Wales that involved a corrosive substance.

## 9 . Types of violence

The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) provides the best picture of the overall trend in violent crime and is a more reliable measure of long-term trends in domestic abuse, sexual assault, stalking and harassment. Estimates from the Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales (TCSEW) showed that there were 1.4 million violent offences in the last 12 months. Although not directly comparable with face-to-face CSEW estimates, the estimate for total violence was within the range of those reported in recent years. No significant change in violence was reported by the TCSEW in April to June 2020, compared with the previous quarter, January to March 2020<sup>1</sup>.

Police recorded crime showed a 3% increase in violence against the person offences from 1,697,718 offences to 1,750,750 offences in the year ending June 2020. This was driven by small increases over the first three quarters of the reporting period July 2019 to March 2020. In the April to June 2020 quarter there was a 5% decrease compared with the same period in 2019. This was driven by falls in offences not flagged as domestic abuse-related crimes<sup>2</sup>.

Sexual offences and domestic abuse-related crimes recorded by the police do not provide a reliable measure of trends in these types of crime. Improvements in police recording practices and increased reporting by victims have contributed to increases in recent years, although this effect is thought to be diminishing. The figures do, however, provide a good measure of the crime-related demand on the police.

### Domestic abuse

Concerns around confidentiality and respondent safeguarding limit the types of questions asked in the TCSEW. This currently includes those relating to domestic abuse. We are, therefore, unable to provide estimates on domestic abuse for the year ending June 2020.

Previous estimates from the CSEW showed that 6.1% of adults aged 16 to 59 years experienced domestic abuse in the year ending March 2020<sup>3</sup>. There has been little change in the prevalence of domestic abuse in recent years. However, the cumulative effect of small year-on-year changes resulted in a small, significantly lower prevalence among 16 to 59 year olds for the year ending March 2020 (6.1%), compared with the year ending March 2005 (8.9%).

Estimates for those aged 16 to 74 years have only been collected since 2017; 5.5% of adults aged 16 to 74 years experienced domestic abuse for the year ending March 2020.

There was a 9% increase in the total number of domestic abuse-related offences recorded by the police in the year ending June 2020 (774,491 offences; excluding Greater Manchester Police) compared with the year ending June 2019. Increases were recorded in every quarter, including a 9% increase in offences recorded in April to June 2020 compared with April to June 2019.

Whilst the impact of improvements to recording practices is believed to be particularly pronounced for trends in domestic abuse recorded by the police, the increase in April to June 2020 contrasts with decreases seen in total crime and violence against the person offences.

There were also indications of rises in demand for domestic abuse-related services during this time, with [Refuge](#) reporting a sharp increase in calls to its helpline and website over the lockdown period. We will be publishing an article that brings together police recorded crime and other sources of domestic abuse data from victim services alongside our [annual domestic abuse publication](#) later this year.

Further information and data related to domestic abuse can be found in Domestic abuse in [England and Wales overview: November 2019](#).

## Sexual assault

For similar reasons to domestic abuse, we are unable to provide TCSEW estimates on sexual assault for the year ending June 2020.

Previous estimates from the CSEW for the year ending March 2020<sup>4</sup> showed that 2.2% of adults aged 16 to 59 years had experienced sexual assault (including attempted offences) in the latest year. This was a significant decrease compared with the previous year (2.9%), driven by the significant decreases in “indecent exposure” or “unwanted sexual touching”. Prior to this, from the year ending March 2014, there had been a rise in the prevalence of sexual assault estimated by the survey.

Estimates for those aged 16 to 74 years have only been collected since 2017; 1.8% of adults aged 16 to 74 years experienced sexual assault (including attempts) for the year ending March 2020. This was a significant decrease compared with the previous year (2.4%).

The number of sexual offences recorded by the police showed a 7% decrease in the year ending June 2020 (152,977 offences) from the previous year. Rape, which accounted for 36% of all sexual offences recorded by the police, also fell by 7%, to 55,758 offences. This follows a decrease of 1% in sexual offences and 2% in rape offences for the year ending March 2020. This may suggest that the influence of improvements in recording practices for this offence group is diminishing. Lockdown restrictions largely contributed to the overall decrease seen since the previous year, as the number of sexual offences decreased during the lockdown period by 24% in April to June 2020 compared with April to June 2019.

For a subset of forces providing data to the Home Office Data Hub<sup>5</sup>, 23% of sexual offences recorded by the police in the year ending March 2020 were non-recent offences (those that took place more than 12 months before being recorded by the police). While non-recent offences were an important contributor to rises in police recorded sexual offences in previous years, in the latest year, reports of non-recent offences have decreased along with sexual offences overall.

Further data related to sexual offences can be found in [Sexual offending: victimisation and the path through the criminal justice system](#).

For more detailed figures relating to violent crime including a data time series see [Appendix tables](#).

CSEW data on the prevalence of domestic abuse, sexual assault and stalking can be found Table S42 in [Annual supplementary tables](#).

For information about HMICFRS and Inspections of police recorded crime and incident data quality see our [User guide](#).

## Notes for: Types of violence

1. There is more uncertainty in TCSEW quarterly estimates compared with annual estimates as estimates of incidents will be based on a small sample and therefore subject to more variation. Quarterly estimates should be interpreted with caution.
2. Stratification of violence against the person offences by whether crimes were flagged as domestic abuse-related showed that there were decreases in offences that were not flagged. There was no evidence to show that domestic abuse-related crimes fell during this period. Data not shown.
3. We are unable to provide estimates on domestic abuse for year ending June 2020 as these questions are not asked in TCSEW because of the change in survey mode. These figures will not be updated until these questions are reinstated into the survey, when appropriate to do so.
4. We are unable to provide estimates on sexual assault for year ending June 2020 as these questions are not asked in TCSEW because of the change in survey mode. These figures will not be updated until these questions are reinstated into the survey, when appropriate to do so.
5. 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. Data not shown.

## 10 . Fraud

Estimates from the Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales (TCSEW) showed that there were 4.3 million fraud offences in the year ending June 2020. Although not directly comparable with estimates from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW), the estimate for fraud lies within the range of those reported in recent years.

Reported fraud offences are recorded and collated by the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau (NFIB) from Action Fraud (the public-facing national fraud and cybercrime reporting centre) and two industry bodies, Cifas and UK Finance (who report instances of fraud where their member organisations have been a victim). Latest figures showed a 4% increase in the total number of fraud offences referred to the NFIB in the year ending June 2020 (733,967 offences) compared with the previous year (703,097 offences).

Two of the three fraud reporting bodies, Action Fraud and UK Finance, reported increases in the latest year. Action Fraud reported a 4% rise (to 311,429 offences) and UK Finance reported a 44% rise (to 107,327 offences). Cifas, however, reported a 4% decrease (to 315,211 offences). These changes need to be interpreted in the context of differences in coverage and fraud types captured by each reporting body.

Additional fraud data collected by UK Finance provide a broader range of bank account and plastic card frauds than those referred for police investigation to the NFIB. In the latest year, UK Finance reported 2.9 million cases of frauds involving UK-issued payment cards, remote banking and cheques via their recording system, CAMIS. This is broadly stable from the previous year. Within plastic card frauds, there was a 58% increase in “remote banking” fraud (to 55,058 incidents). This increase reflects the greater number of people now regularly using internet, telephone and mobile banking, and the attempts by fraudsters to take advantage of this.

The 4% increase in reported total fraud and computer misuse offences was driven by increases over the first three quarters of the reporting period, July 2019 to March 2020. However, offences fell by 9% in April to June 2020 compared with April to June 2019. This fall was not supported by TCSEW estimates, where there was no significant change in fraud and computer misuse offences in April to June 2020 compared with January to March 2020<sup>1</sup>.

The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic is likely to have had differential effects on trends in fraud and computer misuse offences. For example, Action Fraud reported that the increase in “online shopping and auctions” fraud (to 70,403 offences) could be accounted for by the increase in online shopping whilst the decrease in “other advance fee” fraud (to 25,418 offences) could be attributed to reduction in holiday fraud figures as fewer holidays were booked. However, it is too early to say whether this is evidence of a change to longer-term patterns.

For the latest headline figures relating to fraud and for more detailed figures including a data time series see [Appendix tables](#) and [Other related tables](#).

## Notes for: Fraud

1. There is more uncertainty in TCSEW quarterly estimates compared with annual estimates as estimates of incidents will be based on a small sample and therefore subject to more variation. Quarterly estimates should be interpreted with caution.

## 11 . Computer misuse

Estimates from the Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales (TCSEW) showed that there were 1.6 million computer misuse offences in the last 12 months. Although not directly comparable with estimates from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW), the estimate for computer misuse lies within the range of those reported in recent years.

There were 22,524 offences referred to the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau (NFIB) by Action Fraud (the public-facing national fraud and cybercrime reporting centre) in the year ending June 2020, an increase of 5% from the year ending June 2019.

This increase was driven by large increases in the two highest-volume computer misuse types reported to Action Fraud. “Hacking – social media and email” saw a 34% increase from 8,588 to 11,510 offences and “computer viruses and malware” saw a 22% increase from 4,431 to 5,419 offences. This increase may correlate with the rise in the number of large-scale data breaches around the world. Data breaches included a lot of email and password combinations, enabling potential hacking of social media and email accounts, dependent on the public’s level of cyber security standards and the likelihood of them using the same password and email for multiple accounts.

Improvements by Action Fraud to both internal case review processes and their online reporting tool in October 2018 have resulted in some computer misuse offences now being more accurately classified as fraud offences.

For the latest headline figures relating to computer misuse and for more detailed figures see [Appendix tables](#) and [Other related tables](#).

## 12 . Perception and nature of crime during the coronavirus pandemic

Figures presented in this section relate to findings from a new module of questions included in the Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales (TCSEW) around perceptions of crime, the police and anti-social behaviour during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

### **Crime is perceived to have fallen since the coronavirus outbreak<sup>2</sup>, while worry about crime remains the same**

Of those interviewed for the TCSEW between June and August 2020, a majority of adults aged 18 years and over perceived crime to have fallen in England and Wales since the beginning of lockdown. However, this proportion has been decreasing each month, from 56% to 47% (see Figure 11).

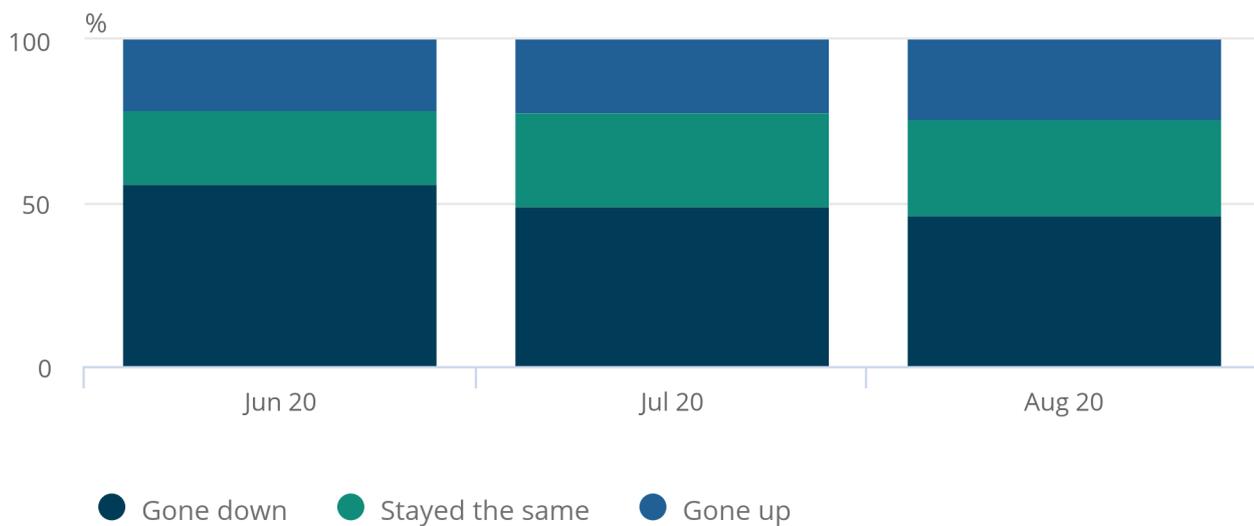
A lower proportion of people perceived crime to have fallen in their local area. This has also decreased over each interview month, from 41% in June to 32% in August. Around half of people perceived crime to have stayed the same locally. This was consistent across each of the three interview months.

**Figure 11: Proportion of adults who perceive crime levels to have fallen nationally has decreased**

England and Wales, based on interviews conducted between June 2020 and August 2020

Figure 11: Proportion of adults who perceive crime levels to have fallen nationally has decreased

England and Wales, based on interviews conducted between June 2020 and August 2020



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

Notes:

1. These data are published as Experimental Statistics.

Despite perceiving falls in national crime, the majority of adults reported that there had been no change in their level of worry during the pandemic about either crime in general or fraud. However, across each of the three interview months, a higher proportion of adults consistently reported having become more worried about fraud (between 16% and 18%), than about crime in general (between 10% and 12%), during the pandemic period.

**More than a fifth of adults experienced or witnessed local anti-social behaviour in the previous three months, while half witnessed breaches in government restrictions**

Across the three interview months, the majority of people perceived anti-social behaviour (ASB) levels in their local area to have stayed the same during the pandemic period. However, the proportion of people who said ASB has gone down decreased from 21% in June to 14% in August interviews.

The proportion of people reporting to have personally experienced or witnessed ASB locally in the last three months has increased 6 percentage points between June 2020 and August 2020 interviews (from 20% to 26%).

Around half of adults have consistently reported noticing others breaching virus restrictions in their local area since the coronavirus outbreak<sup>2</sup> across the three interview months (between 50% and 53%). Of these, 6% to 7% reported the breach to the police. For all three interview months, the main reason for not reporting was that it was considered too trivial.

In April to June 2020, incidents of ASB recorded by the police were 45% higher than in April to June 2019 (excluding Greater Manchester Police and British Transport Police). However, in the previous three quarters, ASB incidents were showing a downward trend. The increase in the latest quarter may reflect the reporting of breaches to lockdown restrictions, as any reported breaches are captured within the ASB category.

Data from the [NPCC \(National Police Chiefs' Council\)](#) present Fixed Penalty Notices issued by police for breaches of government regulations during the lockdown period. The data show that 18,656 notices have been recorded as having been issued in England and Wales between Friday 27 March and Monday 6 July. The majority of fines were issued during the month of April and the first two weeks of May, with a reduction as lockdown restrictions were eased.

## **Public perceptions of police and their response to the coronavirus pandemic remained largely positive**

Across the three interview months, more than two-thirds of adults gave the police a positive rating for the work they were doing in their local area, with around half saying they were doing a good job (between 49% and 50%) and one-fifth saying they were doing an excellent job (between 20% and 21%). This compared with 4% to 6% of adults who said that the police were doing a poor or very poor job.

In addition, between 90% and 92% of adults were satisfied with the way local police were responding to the coronavirus pandemic (fairly satisfied, 63% to 67%; very satisfied, 25% to 28%).

## **Around 1 in 10 children aged 10 to 15 years were reported by parents to have encountered a negative online experience within the previous month**

Parents with children aged 10 to 15 years living in their households were asked questions about online experiences on behalf of their child.

Over half of parents reported that their 10- to 15-year-old was spending five or more hours online per day at the current time<sup>1</sup> (55%), with 12% spending nine or more hours online. Despite this, the majority of parents said their child had not had any negative online experiences in the previous month that they were aware of (89%). However, 10% reported that their child had encountered one or more negative online experiences in the last month. This included experiencing nasty messages being sent to them or posted about them online (5%).

Over one-quarter of parents thought their child was more at risk since the coronavirus outbreak<sup>2</sup> from having a negative online experience (27%), while the majority felt the level of risk had stayed the same (69%).

For more detailed figures relating to estimates from the TCSEW see [Coronavirus and crime tables](#).

## **Notes for: Perception and nature of crime during the coronavirus pandemic**

1. "At the current time" refers to the window in which respondents were interviewed, in this case during the months of June, July and August 2020.
2. The reference period referred to in the module includes but is not specific to the lockdown period and is therefore open to some interpretation by respondents as to when the start of the outbreak was.

## 13 . Crime data

### [Crime in England and Wales: Appendix tables](#)

Dataset | Released on 28 October 2020

Long-term trends in Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) crime experienced by adults and children aged 10 to 15 years, estimates from the Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales (TCSEW) and police recorded crime, by offence type.

### [Crime in England and Wales: Coronavirus and crime tables](#)

Dataset | Released on 28 October 2020

Information from a new module of questions included in the Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales (TCSEW) around perceptions of crime, the police and anti-social behaviour during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Data on children's online activity are also presented.

### [Crime in England and Wales: Other related tables](#)

Dataset | Released on 28 October 2020

Firearms, knife and sharp instrument offences, fraud, offences flagged as domestic abuse-related, corruption, child sexual abuse and child exploitation. Data tables also include information on anti-social behaviour, perceptions, non-notifiable incidents and crimes against business. The data contained in these tables are from the following sources: police recorded crime, fraud data from the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau and UK Finance CAMIS database, figures from the Ministry of Justice Criminal Justice Statistics and the Commercial Victimisation Survey.

### [Crime in England and Wales: Police Force Area data tables](#)

Dataset | Released on 28 October 2020

The number of police recorded crimes, percentage change from previous year and rate per 1,000 population by offence group, and firearms and knife and sharp instrument offences by Police Force Area.

### [Crime in England and Wales: Quarterly data tables](#)

Dataset | Released on 28 October 2020

Data from Home Office police recorded crime broken down into quarterly and monthly time periods.

### [Recorded crime data by Community Safety Partnership area](#)

Dataset | Released on 28 October 2020

Recorded crime figures for Community Safety Partnership areas, which equate in the majority of instances to local authorities. Contains the number of offences for the last two years, percentage change between these two time periods and rates per 1,000 population for the latest year.

## 14 . Glossary

### Computer misuse

Computer misuse is when fraudsters hack or use computer viruses or malware to disrupt services, obtain information illegally or extort individuals or organisations.

## Criminal damage

Criminal damage results from any person who without lawful excuse destroys or damages any property belonging to another, intending to destroy or damage any such property or being reckless as to whether any such property would be destroyed or damaged.

## Fraud

Fraud involves a person dishonestly and deliberately deceiving a victim for personal gain of property or money, or causing loss or risk of loss to another. The majority of incidents fall under the legal definition of “Fraud by false representation” – where a person makes a representation that they know to be untrue or misleading (for example, banking and payment card frauds and dating scams). Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales (TCSEW) estimates cover a broad range of fraud offences, including attempts, involving a loss and incidents not reported to the authorities.

## Overall theft offences

Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales (TCSEW) theft offences include all personal and household crime where items are stolen, including theft from the person; other theft of personal property; domestic burglary; vehicle-related theft; and bicycle theft.

## Robbery

Robbery is an offence in which force, or the threat of force, is used either during or immediately prior to a theft or attempted theft. Mugging is an informal term for robbery. In this bulletin, we use the term “robbery”.

## Violent crime

Violent crime covers a range of offence types from minor assaults, such as pushing and shoving that result in no physical harm, to murder. This includes offences where the victim was intentionally stabbed, punched, kicked, pushed or jostled, as well as offences where the victim was threatened with violence, regardless of injury.

More information and further definitions can be found in the “offence type” section of the [User guide to crime statistics for England and Wales](#).

# 15 . Measuring the data

In response to the developing coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, we are working to ensure that we continue to publish vital statistics on crime during the lockdown period. For more information on how we are measuring crime during the pandemic see our [Quality and Methodology Information report](#) and recent [blog](#).

## Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales (TCSEW)

Estimates from the TCSEW are derived from telephone interviews conducted with household residents in England and Wales aged 18 years and over between 20 May and 31 August 2020 inclusive. The sample was formed from respondents who had previously participated in the face-to-face Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) in the last two years<sup>1</sup> and who had agreed to being re-contacted for research purposes. A total of 12,383 interviews were completed during this data collection period.

We provide TCSEW crime estimates for a 12-month reporting period as well as for quarterly periods. We have made comparisons between the estimated number of incidents and victims in April to June 2020 with those in the January to March 2020 period. This provides the best indication of change in crime levels once lockdown restrictions were introduced on 23 March 2020. The sample size on which these quarterly estimates are produced will, however, be substantially lower than the standard CSEW sample. There will be more uncertainty in TCSEW quarterly estimates compared with annual TCSEW estimates and they should, therefore, be interpreted with caution.

The TCSEW operation closely replicates that of the face-to-face CSEW, however, because of restrictions on interview length<sup>2</sup> and sensitivities around the topic, the TCSEW contains a reduced number of questions. These include questions about respondents' experiences of a broad range of offences over the previous 12 months, as well as a short module specific to the pandemic period relating to their perceptions of crime, the police and anti-social behaviour. Questions in this module are likely to be adapted over the coming months as circumstances change.

Following ethical guidelines, questions from the more sensitive self-completion modules of the face-to-face CSEW are not included in the telephone-operated survey. As a result, estimates are not available in relation to sexual assault, partner abuse, abuse during childhood, and the preferred measure of domestic abuse and domestic violence. We plan to publish an article focusing on domestic abuse during the pandemic alongside our [annual domestic abuse publication](#) later this year.

The TCSEW does not collect data from children aged 10 to 15 years, as the procedure for conducting telephone interviews with more than one member of a household would be complex and add considerable time to the length of the household interview. However, we have included proxy measures for parents with 10- to 15-year-olds living in their households as part of the COVID-19-specific module in order to collect information about children's online activities. Where there is more than one child aged 10 to 15 years living in the household, the respondent is asked to answer in relation to the child with the most recent birthday.

As we are collecting data in a new survey mode, the survey estimates are presented within this release as [Experimental Statistics](#). The Office for Statistics Regulation, on behalf of the UK Statistics Authority, has [reviewed these statistics](#) against several important aspects of the Code of Practice for Statistics and regards them as consistent with the Code's pillars of Trustworthiness, Quality and Value. All survey estimates presented in this release, including crime estimates for the pre-lockdown period, are calculated using data collected in the new telephone-operated survey. These estimates are not directly comparable with those previously published from the face-to-face CSEW.

## Police recorded crime

Police recorded crime data are supplied to us by the Home Office, who are responsible for the collation of recorded crime data supplied by the 43 territorial police forces of England and Wales<sup>3</sup>, plus the British Transport Police. These data are supplied to the Home Office on a monthly basis for each crime within the [notifiable offence list](#).

For the purposes of this release, data on police recorded crime have been provided in a monthly and quarterly format to enable comparisons to be made over the pandemic period. The recorded crime figures are collated via a live administrative system that is continually being updated as forces submit data. The data represent a "snapshot" of the live database taken on 21 September 2020 (for data up to the end of June 2020).

Only high-level crime categories are presented for England and Wales as a whole. Figures may differ slightly from those published in subsequent bulletins for the same period, although this does not mean that the figures previously published were inaccurate at the time that they were reported.

In addition, although reductions in crime are likely to have been influenced by the lockdown, some differences may be the result of normal monthly variation within the crime types. Changes in police recording and police activity in response to the lockdown are also likely to have contributed, along with changes in the reporting of crime to the police. Police recorded crime data are not designated as [National Statistics](#). Details of concerns over the quality of these data are in the UK Statistics Authority's [most recent assessment report](#).

More information on both these sources can be found in the [User guide to crime statistics for England and Wales](#).

### **Notes for: Measuring the data**

1. Between 1 May 2018 and 29 February 2020 inclusive.
2. On average the face-to-face survey lasted around 45 minutes whereas the industry standard for telephone surveys is a maximum of 30 minutes in length.
3. Because of issues with their data supply following the implementation of new force IT systems, data from Greater Manchester Police (GMP) was excluded from the previous release. For this release, data from GMP is included in figures unless otherwise stated.

## **16 . Strengths and limitations**

### **Police recorded crime**

Police recorded crime has wider offence coverage and population coverage than the Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales (TCSEW). It is the primary source of local crime statistics and is a good measure of offences that are well-reported to and well-recorded by the police, as well as lower volume crimes (for example, homicide). In addition, the time lag between occurrence of crime and reporting results tends to be short, providing an indication of emerging trends.

On the other hand, police recorded crime excludes offences that are not reported to, or not recorded by, the police and does not include less serious offences dealt with by magistrates' courts (for example, motoring offences). Trends can be influenced by changes in recording practices or police activity as well as public reporting of crime, making it difficult to make long-term comparisons. There are also concerns about the quality of recording and that crime is not recorded consistently across police forces.

Data on police recorded crime have been provided in a monthly format. These data may be subject to revision in future quarterly releases.

### **Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales**

The Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales (TCSEW) sample interviewed each month has been designed to be as representative and accurate as possible given practical limitations such as time and cost constraints. The survey covers crimes not reported to the police and is not affected by changes in police recording practice; therefore, it is a reliable measure of long-term trends. It is also important to note that because of the change in survey mode, from face-to-face to telephone interviews, it is not possible to directly compare estimates in this publication with previous findings from the CSEW.

The TCSEW does not cover crimes against businesses and those not resident in households (for example, residents of institutions and visitors). Headline estimates exclude offences that are difficult to estimate robustly (such as sexual offences) or that have no victim who can be interviewed (for example, homicides and drug offences). In addition, the survey is subject to error associated with sampling and respondents recalling past events. Potential time lags between occurrence of the crime and survey data collection means that the survey is not a good measure of emerging trends.

It is also important to consider differing interpretations by respondents of the reference period referred to in the TCSEW questions. Respondents are asked to consider experiences and perceptions “since the start of the virus outbreak”. This includes but is not specific to the lockdown period and respondents’ interpretation of the starting point of the pandemic may differ. Furthermore, throughout the developing coronavirus pandemic, government restrictions and regulations have been continually changing. This will affect and impact interpretation of responses over time.

Results from sample surveys are always estimates, not precise figures. This can have an impact on how changes in the estimates should be interpreted, especially for short-term comparisons. As the number of people available in the sample gets smaller, the variability of the estimates that we can make from that sample size gets larger. Because of the relatively small sample size for the TCSEW, estimates for less frequently occurring crime types will be less reliable and prone to more volatility than for larger aggregated crime totals, making it difficult to detect short-term trends.

Following a methodological change to the handling of repeat victimisation in the CSEW, victim incident counts for each crime type have been capped at the 98th percentile. Given that the TCSEW commenced in May 2020, we have decided to apply the caps to incident counts that were applied to CSEW estimates for year ending March 2020. We will review caps for TCSEW data for the year ending March 2021 publication. For more information see [Crime in England and Wales QMI](#) and [Improving victimisation estimates derived from the Crime Survey for England and Wales](#).

## 17 . Related links

### [Guide to finding crime statistics](#)

Methodology | Released 17 July 2020

A guide that directs you on where best to find different crime statistics.

### [Crime in England and Wales: year ending March 2020](#)

Bulletin | Released 17 July 2020

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

### [Coronavirus and crime in England and Wales: August 2020](#)

Bulletin | Released 26 August 2020

Impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on crime and people's perceptions of crime during the April and May 2020 period of national lockdown, using data from the Crime Survey for England and Wales telephone survey and Home Office police recorded crime.

### [Nature of crime tables: year ending March 2020](#)

Dataset | Released 3 September 2020

Annual data from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW). Data include when incidents happened, information about offenders, the victim's perception of the incident. Available for: violence, criminal damage, personal and other theft, bicycle theft, other household theft, vehicle-related theft, robbery, burglary and fraud and computer misuse.

### [Property crime tables](#)

Dataset | Released 3 September 2020

Annual data from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) and metal theft offences recorded by the police, including demographic and offence type breakdowns and time series data.

### [Child abuse in England and Wales: March 2020](#)

Bulletin | Released 5 March 2020

Statistics and research on child abuse in England and Wales, bringing together a range of different data sources from across the government and the voluntary sector.

### [Domestic abuse in England and Wales overview: November 2019](#)

Bulletin | Released 25 November 2019

Figures on domestic abuse from the Crime Survey for England and Wales, police recorded crime and a number of different organisations.

### [Homicide in England and Wales: year ending March 2019](#)

Article | Released 13 February 2020

Analyses of information held within the Home Office Homicide Index, which contains detailed record-level information about each homicide recorded by police in England and Wales.