

User guide to crime statistics for England and Wales: measuring crime during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic

Quarterly statistics on crime levels and trends during the coronavirus pandemic. Includes details of the datasets used to compile our crime statistics.

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Table of contents

1. [Introduction](#)
2. [Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales \(TCSEW\)](#)
3. [Police recorded crime](#)
4. [Offence types](#)
5. [Perceptions](#)
6. [Classifications](#)
7. [Statistical conventions and methods](#)
8. [Other reference data](#)
9. [Appendix 1: Recorded crime list](#)
10. [Appendix 2: Fraud and computer misuse offences recorded by the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau](#)
11. [Appendix 3: Summary of rolling programme of crime data integrity inspections \(Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services\)](#)

1 . Introduction

1.1 Publication of crime statistics

This user guide provides detailed information on the datasets used to compile crime statistics published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). It is designed to be a useful reference guide with explanatory notes regarding the updates, issues and classifications that are crucial to the production and presentation of the crime statistics.

The ONS publishes figures on the levels and trends of crime in England and Wales primarily based on two sets of crime statistics: the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) and police recorded crime data. Each source has different strengths and limitations but together they provide a more comprehensive picture of crime than could be obtained from either series alone.

The face-to-face 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 while face-to-face interviewing is not possible. All survey data published alongside police recorded crime up to the year ending March 2020 were based on the face-to-face CSEW and largely unaffected by the coronavirus pandemic.

Survey data published for the year ending June 2020 to the year ending March 2022 were based on the TCSEW. Data collection for the TCSEW ended on 31 March 2022 and the face-to-face CSEW resumed on 4 October 2021. Survey estimates published from the year ending June 2022 onwards will be based on the face-to-face CSEW.

A quarterly statistical bulletin also draws on data from other sources to provide a more comprehensive picture of crime and anti-social behaviour, including data from the courts, the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau (NFIB) and the Commercial Victimisation Survey. In addition to quarterly updates, a number of supplementary volumes are produced, containing in-depth analysis of issues such as property crime, homicide, and violent crime. Together, these statistics inform public debate about crime, and support the development and monitoring of policy.

The dates of forthcoming crime statistics publications are pre-announced and can be found via the [GOV.UK release calendar](#).

Copies of our [statistical bulletins on crime](#) are available online.

For further information about the CSEW and police recorded crime statistics, please email crimestatistics@ons.gov.uk or write to:

Public Policy Division, Centre for Crime and Justice, Office for National Statistics, Segensworth Road, Titchfield, Fareham, Hampshire, PO15 5RR.

[Crime statistics for Scotland](#) and [crime statistics for Northern Ireland](#) are collected and published separately.

1.2 Changes resulting from the National Statistician's review

The [National Statistician's review](#) specified several recommendations to be addressed. This included the Office for National Statistics (ONS) developing proposals for the future dissemination of crime statistics, with the aim of improving the presentation for users and providing a clearer picture of crime. The [consultation](#) ran at the end of 2012, setting out proposed changes to the content of regular crime statistics outputs, and the presentation of the crime classification used in those outputs.

A [summary response](#) to the consultation was published in January 2013, with changes to the presentation of police recorded crime statistics implemented in the July 2013 bulletin and changes to Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) presentation implemented in the July 2014 bulletin. Although the changes included reclassifying some elements of each data series, the overall count did not change. Changes to the presentation included:

- the introduction of a new high-level "theft offences" category
- the movement of some individual offences between categories
- for police recorded crime, the formation of two broad categories to distinguish between crimes with a specific identifiable victim (referred to as "victim-based crime") and those without a direct victim (referred to as "other crimes against society")
- for CSEW, robbery was moved from violence into a separate standalone category

A more in-depth explanation of police recorded reclassifications can be found in the [Methodological note: Presentational and methodological improvements to National Statistics on the Crime Survey for England and Wales](#) and for the CSEW, in the [Methodological note: Presentational and methodological changes to National Statistics on the Crime Survey for England and Wales](#).

There have also been a number of other changes to the presentation of crime statistics. The presentation of data on fraud has been updated to reflect new operational arrangements in reporting and recording practice. Specifically, fraud data presented in the police recorded crime series now shows offences recorded by Action Fraud, a public-facing national reporting centre that records incidents of fraud and internet crime directly from the public and other organisations. In addition, the police recorded crime figures now incorporate available fraud data at England and Wales level from two industry bodies, Cifas and UK Finance (formerly Financial Fraud Action UK (FFA UK)) [note 1]. More detail on this is given in [Section 4.4](#) of this user guide.

The CSEW introduced new questions on fraud in October 2015, with the first estimates included in the main estimate of CSEW overall crime for the year ending September 2016 quarterly update (published in January 2017). Estimates of fraud were previously classed as experimental. Following assessment in March 2018 by the Office for Statistics Regulation, estimates of fraud provided by the CSEW are now [classified as National Statistics](#) [note 2]. Further information is provided in [Section 4.4](#).

However, all estimates currently published from the Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales (TCSEW) are classified as Experimental.

Notes for: Introduction

1. As of 1 July 2017, FFA UK is now integrated into UK Finance, a new trade association representing the finance and banking industry in the UK.
2. The TCSEW and all estimates provided by the survey has been designated as experimental statistics by the UK Statistics Authority.

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

2.1 Description of the survey

The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW), formerly known as the British Crime Survey (BCS), is a face-to-face victimisation survey in which people resident in households in England and Wales are asked about their experiences of a range of crimes in the 12 months prior to the interview. Respondents to the survey are, under normal circumstances, also asked about their attitudes towards different crime-related issues, such as the police and the criminal justice system, and perceptions of crime and anti-social behaviour.

The face-to-face CSEW was suspended on 17 March 2020 because of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, as part of the efforts to minimise social contact and stop the spread of COVID-19. A shortened telephone-operated version of the CSEW (TCSEW) was specifically designed to allow us to continue measuring crime during this period while face-to-face interviewing was not possible.

This suspension did not affect the results for the year ending March 2020 publication published in July 2020. All survey data published alongside police recorded crime up to the year ending March 2020 were based on the face-to-face CSEW and all data since, based on the TCSEW.

The CSEW methodology and the crime types included in the main count of crime have remained comparable since the survey began in 1981 [note 1]. A description of and methodological information about the face-to-face CSEW are available within the User guide to crime statistics – March 2020.

On 20 May 2020, we launched an interim TCSEW based on a reduced set of questions usually operated via the face-to-face CSEW. Survey estimates published for the year ending June 2020 to the year ending March 2022 were based on the TCSEW. Data collection for the TCSEW ended on 31 March 2022 and the face-to-face CSEW resumed on 1 October 2021.

The CSEW/TCSEW excludes those crimes often termed as "victimless" (for example, possession of drugs). As a survey that asks people whether they have experienced victimisation, homicides cannot be included. The CSEW /TCSEW does not cover the population living in group residences (for example, care homes or student halls of residence) or other institutions, nor does it cover crime against commercial or public sector bodies. Following a recommendation made in the [National Statistician's review of crime statistics](#), published in 2011, the Home Office commissioned a new survey of business crime to run from 2012.

Detailed findings for the latest [Commerical Victimisation Survey \(CVS\) 2021](#) were published by the Home Office in March 2022.

For the crime types and population it covers, the CSEW/TCSEW provides a better reflection of the true extent of crime experienced by the population resident in households in England and Wales than police recorded statistics, because the survey includes crimes that are not reported to, or recorded by, the police.

TCSEW estimates for April 2021 to March 2022 interviews are based on 31,204 telephone interviews with 14,027 people aged 18 years and over. The TCSEW response rate for Wave 2 interviews (the first wave of interviews in this period) was 83.1%. Table 1 provides more information on how the response rate has varied by wave.

The TCSEW remains a sample survey, and as such estimates are subject to a margin of error. Unless otherwise specified, any changes in TCSEW estimates over time that are described as differences in statistical bulletins are statistically significant ones. More information is available in Chapter 7.

TCSEW estimates are not directly comparable with those previously published from the face-to-face CSEW. Changes reported between estimates from the year ending March 2020 CSEW and the TCSEW estimates can be made on a comparable subset of data with the following changes:

- the population of study is restricted to those aged 18 and over
- overlapping data periods must not be used for the main estimates of crime
- incidents derived from the threat and harassment screener question must be removed from both the current and comparator years for the main estimates of crime

More information on the comparability of TCSEW can be found in [Comparability between the Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales and the face-to-face Crime Survey for England and Wales](#).

[Technical reports](#) provide further detailed information on the survey design and methodology.

As the TCSEW operates in a very different way to the CSEW, estimates are presented as [Experimental Statistics](#) and are a subset of newly developed or innovative official statistics that are undergoing evaluation. Experimental Statistics are developed under the guidance of the Head of Profession for Statistics. The regulatory guidance document [Experimental statistics – official statistics in development](#) sets out the UK Statistics Authority policy on this topic.

Experimental Statistics are, by definition, also official statistics. The Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 refers only to official statistics and makes no mention of Experimental Statistics.

2.2 Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales methodology

The Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales (TCSEW) was first conducted in May 2020 in response to the suspension of face-to-face interviewing because of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) (and by extension the TCSEW) sample is designed to be representative of the population of households in England and Wales and people living in those households. As such, it makes use of the small users' Postcode Address File (PAF), which is widely accepted as the best general population sampling frame in England and Wales.

The overall CSEW sample was designed to yield interviews with a nationally representative sample of 35,000 households in England and Wales each year. The sample design for the TCSEW differs from the CSEW as the TCSEW sample is drawn from respondents who had previously participated in the face-to-face CSEW in the last two years [note 2] and who had agreed to being re-contacted for research purposes.

Because the TCSEW sample was derived from the previous two years of the CSEW (which interviews all adults aged 16 years and over) anyone under the age of 18 years was either not represented or only occasionally represented in the TCSEW sample. As a result, only those aged 18 years and over were selected for interview in the TCSEW.

In order to maximise the sample available, and assure its longevity, the TCSEW was designed to operate as a panel survey, re-interviewing respondents at three-monthly intervals. Participants who take part in the TCSEW have recently been asked to participate in further waves of the survey so that we can continue to measure crime from April 2021 while the CSEW remains suspended. Table 1 provides a breakdown of sample sizes by wave.

Detailed information on the CSEW core sample, from which the TCSEW sample is drawn, is available in the User guide to crime statistics – March 2020.

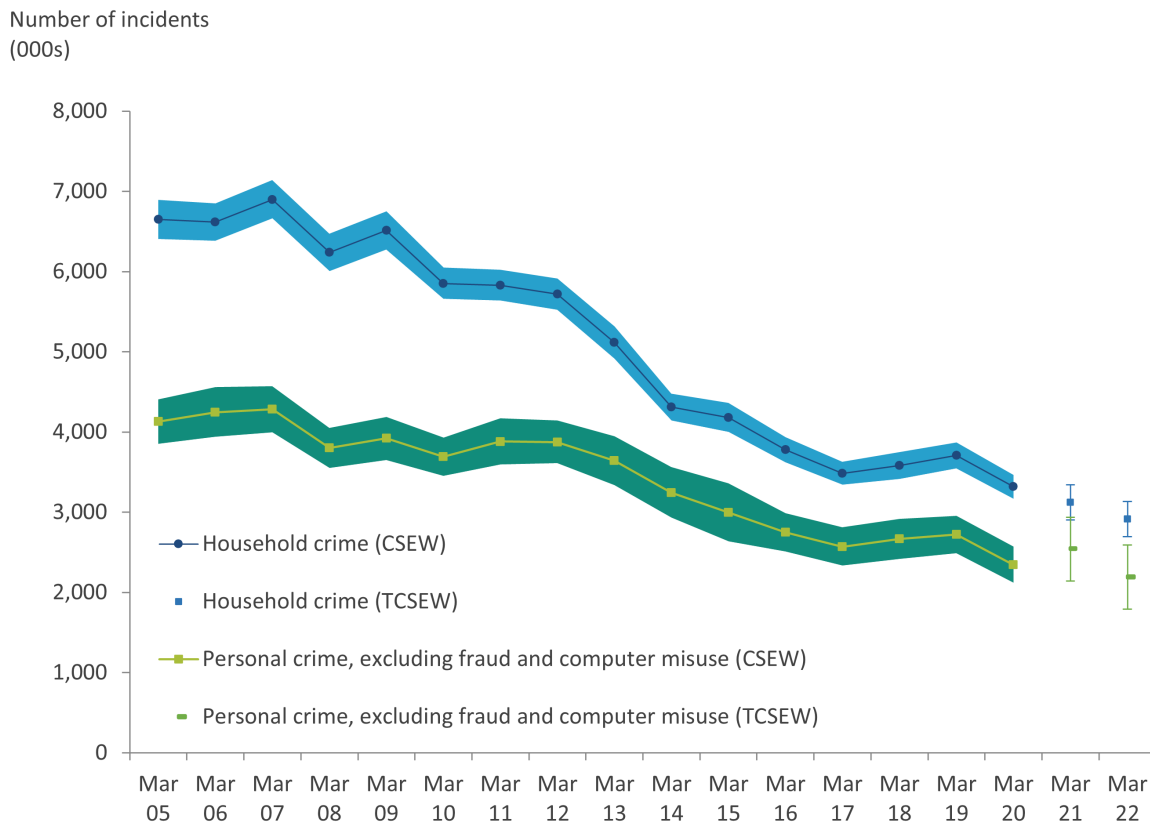
The first interview asks about crimes in the previous 12 months, while subsequent interviews ask about crimes that occurred. A 12-month reference period is created for each respondent at each interview (wave) to calculate a total number of incidents and victims for the previous 12 months. If a respondent's most recent interview does not cover the full 12-month reference period, previous interview information is bolted onto the most recent record to create a full 12-month reference period.

CSEW estimates continue to provide important information in relation to longer-term trends in crime from the year ending December 1981 to the year ending March 2020. The TCSEW provides estimates of crime for the last 12 months only. 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.

Figure 1 shows confidence intervals around CSEW/TCSEW estimates of household and personal crime over the last decade. The chart illustrates that the sample size reduction (implemented in the year ending March 2013 survey) had little effect on confidence intervals around estimates of crime for England and Wales as a whole (confidence interval data are available in the [User Guide tables](#)).

Figure 1: Number of incidents and confidence intervals for estimated levels of household crime and personal crime

Households and adults aged 16 years and over (Crime Survey for England and Wales) or aged 18 years and over (Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales), England and Wales, year ending March 2005 to year ending March 2022



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

Notes:

1. Following a methodological change to the handling of repeat victimisation in the CSEW, data for year ending March 2021 and year ending March 2022 are not comparable with data published before January 2019. More information is available in our [Improving victimisation estimates derived from the Crime Survey for England and Wales article](#).
2. Owing to the impracticality of interviewers meeting face-to-face with respondents in respondents' homes, at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the CSEW temporarily switched to a Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales (TCSEW) to continue meeting user need during this period. "Mar 21" and "Mar 22" refers to the TCSEW, while all other years refer to the CSEW.
3. The range given for these estimates is based on a 95 percent confidence interval (Section 7 of our User guide has more information).
4. The approximate sample size for the CSEW for 2005 to 2012 was 46,000; the approximate sample size for the CSEW for 2013 to 2020 was 35,000; and the approximate sample size for TCSEW interviews was 37,000.
5. 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. Data are presented from the year ending March 2018 onwards because the questions are being asked of a full survey sample.

To help minimise any bias, the survey has been successful in maintaining a very high response rate for the face-to-face survey with little variation between years (70% to 76% over the past 10 years [note 3]). The CSEW /TCSEW also uses calibration weighting to adjust for differential non-response (for more information see [Section 7.3](#)), further reducing the chances of bias. In addition, an evaluation of non-response bias is conducted each decade on the CSEW by comparing census results with both CSEW responders and non-responders. Results of the 2011 Census non-response link study using CSEW data were published in [Survey Methodology Bulletin No. 73 \(PDF, 3.23MB\)](#).

Changes to the sample design of the TCSEW may introduce additional bias to crime estimates through differences in respondents' agreement to be re-contacted, and non-response. For example, demographic characteristics and victimisation profiles may differ between those CSEW respondents who agreed to be re-contacted on the TCSEW and those who did not. Although further measures have been implemented to take account of additional bias that has been introduced into the sample design, it is likely these changes will result in more uncertainty in our crime estimates.

Table 1: Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales (TCSEW) sample information
2021 to 2022

Wave	2	3	4	5	6	7
Survey company	KANTAR Public	KANTAR Public	KANTAR Public	KANTAR Public	KANTAR Public	KANTAR Public
Core sample size [note 1] [note 2] [note 3]	3,062	10,598	11,868	9,739	7,138	1,935
Response rate (% of eligible) [note 4]	83.1%	84.7%	84.9%	91.9%	89.8%	80.8%
Conversion rate (% of issued) [note 4]	80.1%	81.5%	82.7%	89.0%	86.7%	80.6%
Sampling frame [note 5]	Re-contact (based on original PAF sample design)	Re-contact (based on original PAF sample design)	Re-contact (based on original PAF sample design)	Re-contact (based on original PAF sample design)	Re-contact (based on original PAF sample design)	Re-contact (based on original PAF sample design)
Weights used	c11indivwgt c11hhdwgt c11weighti	c11indivwgt c11hhdwgt c11weighti	c11indivwgt c11hhdwgt c11weighti	c11indivwgt c11hhdwgt c11weighti	c11indivwgt c11hhdwgt c11weighti	c11indivwgt c11hhdwgt c11weighti
CAPI/ PAPI /CATI [note 6]	CATI	CATI	CATI	CATI	CATI	CATI
No. of victim forms	6	6	6	6	6	6
Self-completion element	No	No	No	No	No	No
Sample type [note 7]	Stratified by PFA; proportionate sample	Stratified by PFA; proportionate sample	Stratified by PFA; proportionate sample	Stratified by PFA; proportionate sample	Stratified by PFA; proportionate sample	Stratified by PFA; proportionate sample

Source: Kantar Public - Technical report

Notes:

1. In Wave 2 1,022 were issued between April 2021 and March 2022, with the remainder issued before the end of March 2021.
2. In Wave 3, 4,496 were issued between April 2021 and March 2022, with the remainder issued before the end of March 2021.
3. All Wave 4, 5, 6 and 7 samples were issued between April 2021 and March 2022.
4. Data relates to all Wave 2 and Wave 3 interviews.
5. Information on the original small users postcode address file (PAF) sample design can be found in our [User guide to crime statistics: March 2020](#). All TCSEW respondents had given permission to be recontacted between May 2018 and February 2020.
6. Computer assisted personal interviewing (CAPI); paper and pencil interviewing (PAPI); Computer-assisted telephone Interviewing (CATI).
7. Police force area (PFA).

2.3 Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales interviewing

The Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales (TCSEW) estimates are based on analysis of structured interviews carried out via telephone interviewing of those aged 18 years and over in England and Wales. The mode of interview changed in May 2020 from a face-to-face interview in response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

Detailed information on the face-to-face interviewing methodology can be found in the [User guide to crime statistics – March 2020](#).

The TCSEW operation closely replicates that of the face-to-face Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW), however, because of restrictions on interview length [note 4] 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 within this module were adapted over the pandemic period as circumstances changed.

The CSEW uses the individual or household as the base from which estimates are derived. For the TCSEW, because of changes in the sample design, with respondents re-interviewed at broadly three-monthly intervals, it is no longer possible to derive estimates using these bases. Instead, the base and the unit of the analysis for the TCSEW is the interviews conducted. A respondent who has been re-interviewed will therefore be included in the base more than once.

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. Further information on domestic abuse during the pandemic can be found in [Domestic abuse during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic, England and Wales: November 2020](#).

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. For more information on these questions, see [Chapter 5](#).

Information on interviewing of 10- to 15-year-olds through the face-to-face CSEW can be found in the [User guide to crime statistics – March 2020](#).

2.4 Time periods covered

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.

In order to measure change in crime during the pandemic, estimates were initially provided on shorter time periods (three months) as well as those normally produced by the CSEW (12 months). From March 2021, we resumed production of estimates only for the 12-month period. In addition, estimates for both of these time periods are based on smaller sample sizes as the survey became operational in May 2020. As a result, estimates may be prone to greater fluctuation than normal, and [confidence intervals](#) will be wider.

Respondents are interviewed in a longitudinal manner and are asked about their experience of crime in the previous 12 months, then re-interviewed at roughly three-monthly intervals. We take a cross-sectional approach to the analysis to provide headline crime estimates for a 12-month reference period. As respondents are interviewed in a wave format, the 12-month reference period is rolling and will depend on the date of the interview. For example, Wave 1 interviews will cover the initial 12-month reference period. When a respondent is re-interviewed at Wave 2, they are asked about experience since last interview. Their 12-month reference period will be calculated from their most recent interview. If their most recent interview does not cover the full 12-month reference period, previous interview information is bolted onto the most recent record to create a full 12-month reference period. This rolling process continues, and the reference period will be updated each wave.

The TCSEW sample size, when comparing number of interviews, is almost identical to that of the face-to-face CSEW. The number of TCSEW interviews between April 2021 and March 2022 was 31,204 and the number of interviews completed in the year ending March 2020 CSEW was 33,734. However, because respondents are re-interviewed on the TCSEW, the number of respondents is much lower (14,027 respondents aged 18 years and over) than the number of respondents in the face-to-face CSEW (33,734 respondents). Therefore, the standard errors of TCSEW estimates are larger than in the face-to-face. This is because they take into account the additional clustering of re-interviewing the same person in the same household, rather than randomly selecting a different person in a different household who is only interviewed once.

Other questions on the TCSEW (for example, attitudes to policing and perceptions around COVID-19) ask the respondent their current views or attitudes and as such the data are referenced as the month in which the respondent was interviewed. Respondents are asked most questions within these modules at each wave.

Because respondents are interviewed at different times within each month, they are asked about experiences of crime in the current month plus in the 12 months prior to interview. Crimes experienced in the interview month are excluded from the 12-month reference period used for analysis. For example:

- the reference period for a respondent interviewed in April 2021 is April 2020 to March 2021
- the reference period for a respondent interviewed in March 2022 is March 2021 to February 2022

Therefore, for TCSEW interviews conducted between April 2021 and March 2022, the reference period includes incidents experienced by respondents between April 2020 and February 2022. This makes March 2021 the mid-point for the reference period as it is the only month to be included in all respondents' reference periods. With March 2021 as the mid-point, police recorded crime for the year ending September 2021 provides the most comparable time period across these data sources.

2.5 Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales measures of crime

The Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales (TCSEW) provides estimates of the levels of household and personal crimes experienced by respondents. Household crimes are considered to be all vehicle and property-related crimes and respondents are asked whether anyone currently residing in the household has experienced any incidents within the reference period. An example of a household crime would be criminal damage to a car (the owner of which could be anyone in the household). Personal crimes relate to all crimes against the individual and only relate to the respondent's own personal experience (not that of other people in the household). An example of a personal crime would be an assault.

Details of experiences of crime are recorded in a series of victim modules. The first three victim modules include detailed questions relating to each incident; the last three victim modules are shorter modules, designed to be much quicker to complete to avoid respondent fatigue during the interview. The order in which the victim modules are asked depends on the type of crime – less-common crimes are prioritised in order to collect as much detailed information as possible. Respondents are asked about their experiences of crime in the 12-month reference period, and up to six victim modules can be completed by each respondent. Respondents are interviewed in a panel format at roughly three-monthly intervals. At each follow-up interview, respondents are asked about their experience of crime since the last interview and can complete up to a further six victim modules in each interview or wave.

The TCSEW operation closely replicates that of the face-to-face CSEW, however, because of restrictions on interview length⁴ 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 within this module were adapted over the pandemic period as circumstances changed. There was also a revision made to the threats screener question for the TCSEW. For more information on the impact of this change see [Comparability between the Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales and the face-to-face Crime Survey for England and Wales](#).

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. Further information on domestic abuse during the pandemic can be found in [Domestic abuse during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic, England and Wales: November 2020](#). As the face-to-face resumed in October 2021, estimates for domestic abuse and sexual assault for the year ending March 2022 were made available. These estimates were based on the six months of data collected between October and March. These estimates are not badged as [National Statistics](#) and should be interpreted with caution. For further information on quality, see our [quality and methodology information report](#).

Repeat victimisation

Most incidents reported are one-off, single occurrences, but in a minority of cases, respondents may have been victimised a number of times in succession. In these cases, respondents are asked whether they consider these incidents to be a "series", that is, "the same thing, done under the same circumstances and probably by the same people." Where incidents are determined to be in a series, the number of incidents is recorded, but with only one victim module being completed based on the most recent incident.

Since the survey began in 1981, only the first five incidents of a series were included within estimates. Historically, including up to five repeat incidents as a maximum within each series for any individual victim had proven to be an effective way of reducing the effects of sample variability from year to year. This approach enabled the publication of incident rates that were not subject to large fluctuation between survey years and yielded a more consistent picture of changes in victimisations over time once high order repeat victimisations were treated in this way. However, for some crime types such as violence, this resulted in point estimates being consistently lower than estimates if all high order repeat victimisations were included. It may also have introduced additional measurement error where high order repeat victimisation disproportionately affected a subgroup within the population, for example, women suffering from sustained repeat victimisation by a violent partner or family member.

In 2015, following criticism of this methodology, we commissioned a review of the methods for treating high-frequency repeat victimisation. The review, which evaluated a range of methods, was completed in spring 2016 and the final proposed method was published on 6 July 2016 in the [Review of methodology for addressing high frequency repeat victimisation in Crime Survey for England and Wales estimates](#). We welcomed views from users on the recommendations in a [consultation](#) that ran from 6 July to 13 September 2016.

Based on feedback received, a proposal for how to address high-frequency repeat victimisation going forward was presented to the National Statistician's Crime Statistics Advisory Committee in late September 2016. The agreed proposal, along with a summary of the feedback received and our plans for the next steps, was published in a [response to the consultation](#) in early November 2016.

In our response, we recognised that removing the cap of five was essential to improving crime statistics for many of our users and agreed to adopt a lighter cap of the 98th percentile of victim incident counts for each crime type (calculated over several years). The final methodology implemented from December 2018 included the following elements:

- Removing the arbitrary limit of five on the number of repeat incidents of crime included in the survey estimates.
- Replacing this limit with a crime-specific imputation method based on the 98th percentile value, to track changes in repeat victimisation over time.
- Adjusting the design weights used on the survey to reduce the level of variance in the weights, which will in turn lessen the volatility in survey estimates.

The 98th percentile values are calculated for each crime type using three-year rolling datasets. For most crime types, the 98th percentile value is lower than five, indicating a low level of repeat victimisation for these crimes. Where this is the case, we have not lowered the maximum number of incidents counted within a series below five (and as such, included numbers of incidents above the 98th percentile). The estimates for criminal damage and violence offences are the only categories to be noticeably affected by implementing the 98th percentile methodology.

The entire CSEW time series going back to 1981 was revised under the new methodology and first published alongside our [Crime in England and Wales: Year ending September 2018](#) publication in January 2019. As such, data published in this release onwards are not comparable with data contained in previous bulletins.

[Uncapped CSEW data](#) are published alongside our quarterly Crime in England and Wales publication to give users choice over which estimates to use. These estimates of incidents will be subject to considerable volatility from year to year and are not the main measure of incident estimates from the CSEW.

It should be noted that the move away from the cap of five to the 98th percentile affected incident estimates only. Estimates of the victims of crime and their associated prevalence rates were affected to a small degree by the change to the component weights that also formed part of the methodological change. Further information on the methodology for repeat victimisation (including changes to the component weights) can be found in [Improving victimisation estimates derived from the Crime Survey for England and Wales](#).

The 98th percentile methodology has also been applied to the TCSEW. To calculate the caps applied to the year ending March 2021 data, three survey years' worth of data were combined. For the year ending March 2021 caps, the years ending March 2018 and 2019 from the CSEW and year ending March 2021 from the TCSEW were combined. The year ending March 2020 was not used to calculate the caps because of the combined overlap of the sample (we re-used the same respondents on the TCSEW) and the 12-month reference period with which crimes are reported in both years. The caps calculated from the combined three years were then applied to the final year ending March 2021 dataset. [User Guide Table 16](#) details the three-year rolling 98th percentiles for the number of incidents in a series by crime type within the Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales (TCSEW). The 98th percentiles act as a new maximum number of incidents that can be included within a series.

Offence coding

The final stage, based on information collected and processed from the adult and child victim modules, is the coding procedure. Specially trained coders determine whether what has been reported constitutes a crime and, if so, what offence code should be assigned to the crime. TCSEW crime statistics are produced from these data and presented as incidence or prevalence rates, based on counts of incidents or victims.

Incidence rate

The number of crimes experienced per household or adult or child

The incidence rate takes account of the number of times respondents have been victimised. Aggregating these incidents, and combining them with household and personal data produces a number of incidents that can be presented as a rate per 1,000 households (for household crimes) or as a rate per 1,000 adults (for personal crimes).

The overall number of incidents can be estimated for England and Wales based on the incidence rate and using population estimates for the household and adult populations. In the year ending March 2022, incidence rates for household-level crimes were multiplied by 25,028,067 households and, for personal-level crimes, by 46,264,717 adults aged 18 years and over to provide the number of incidents for each crime type (all rounded to the nearest 100). Published estimates are rounded to the nearest 1,000 incidents.

For all TCSEW estimates published up to the year ending March 2021, population estimates based on the year ending March 2020 were used. [Section 8](#) provides further information on population and household data used in the calculation of CSEW incidents.

Prevalence rate

The proportion of the population who were victims of an offence once or more

Unlike incidence rates, prevalence rates only take account of whether a household or person was a victim of a specific crime once or more in the reference period, not the number of times victimised. For the majority of crime types, these figures are based on information from the victim module, where respondents and their households are designated either as victims or non-victims. The proportion of victims provides the prevalence rate, often described as the risk of being a victim of crime – this describes only an average rate. Analysis of the TCSEW shows that victimisation rates vary depending on factors associated with personal, area and household characteristics (for example, see [year ending March 2022](#)).

Since the TCSEW also collects additional information from households, it is possible to determine prevalence rates for subgroups, such as vehicle- or bicycle-owning households. Risk among these groups is higher than for the population in general, of course, as the household population includes those who do not own vehicles or bicycles.

Multiple and repeat victimisation

Multiple victimisation is defined as the experience of being a victim of more than one crime in the previous year. This includes those who have been victims of more than one crime of the same type within the last 12 months (repeat victimisation) and also those who have been victims of more than one TCSEW crime of any type within the last 12 months. People who have experienced multiple victimisation include those who have been a victim of more than one personal crime, or have been resident in a household that was a victim of more than one household crime, or have been a victim of both types of crime.

Levels of repeat victimisation account for differences between incidence and prevalence rates. For instance, high levels of repeat victimisation will be reflected in lower prevalence rates compared with incidence rate.

2.6 Crime Survey for England and Wales revisions policy

As we are collecting data in a new survey mode, the Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales (TCSEW) estimates are presented 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.

The general principle applied to the TCSEW will be that when data are found to be in error, both the data and any associated analysis that has been published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) will be revised in line with [our revisions and corrections policy](#).

The TCSEW revisions policy covers:

- all approved researcher special licence datasets held by funding departments, the UK Data Archive and the ONS's Secure Research Service (SRS)
- all end user licence datasets held by funding departments and the UK Data Archive (UKDA)
- data appearing in quarterly bulletins; articles; short stories; ad hoc data requests; and any other form of ONS publication that utilises data from the CSEW

There are a number of reasons why we may wish to revise TCSEW data once it has been published and/or the datasets disseminated, for example if:

- errors are discovered in raw or derived variables
- new derived variables are issued
- it is decided that the methodology used to calculate a variable needs to be amended
- reweighting is performed following revision to population estimates

While every effort is made to thoroughly check the data before publication or release for dissemination, errors do on occasion occur. In these instances, the procedure is as follows:

- The problem is identified and reported to the head of our Crime, Income and Wealth Division for consideration.
- We establish if there is an error and if a revision is necessary (if an error is only minor, it is unlikely we will reissue a dataset, instead recording the error in the User guide).
- The error will be corrected and our analysts will check the revision, recording the impact of the revision in terms of scale and necessary publication revisions.
- A notice will be issued to those organisations in receipt of CSEW data, including the Home Office, Ministry of Justice, and other government departments, detailing the error and its impact.
- The necessary revisions will be made to any publications using ONS procedures.
- The datasets will be reissued to UKDA, SRS and other data users.
- All users of the datasets affected will be informed that revisions have been made.
- The revisions will be made as soon as the impact of the error has been established and it is possible to carry out any amendments to our publications.

New derived variables

If new derived variables (DVs) are issued, and no existing DVs are revised, it will not be necessary to reissue the datasets affected but simply to issue the new DV, which can be appended to the existing datasets. Any new DVs will be issued as soon as they are available and have been checked (though if a number of DVs are to be added they will be added in one go).

Methodological changes

The CSEW was first conducted in 1982 (covering crime in 1981) and ran at mostly two-year intervals until 2001, when it became a continuous survey. Although there have been changes to the survey over time, the wording of the questions that are asked to elicit victimisation experiences have been held constant throughout the life of the CSEW. The core sample has always been designed to be representative of the population of households in England and Wales and people living in those households. Where a methodological change is required, the impact on current and past datasets will need to be assessed and a revision policy developed, giving careful consideration to any effect on the long time series of data available.

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

1. The addition of "Fraud and computer misuse" offences to the CSEW in 2015 means estimates on total CSEW crime are presented with and with and without the inclusion of fraud and computer misuse. This allows for comparability back to 1981.
2. Between 1 May 2018 and 29 February 2020 inclusive.
3. Because of the suspension of fieldwork two weeks early on 17 March 2020 caused by coronavirus (COVID-19), the response rate for the year ending March 2020 was slightly lower than previous years at 64%.
4. 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 . Police recorded crime

3.1 Introduction to police recorded crime

De-designation of police recorded crime as National Statistics

In January 2014, the UK Statistics Authority published its [assessment](#) of the Office for National Statistics (ONS) crime statistics. The Authority noted "accumulating evidence that suggests the underlying data on crimes recorded by the police may not be reliable" (UK Statistics Authority, 2014). As a result, the Authority removed the National Statistics "badge" from all recorded crime data. However, following a further [assessment](#), the Board of the UK Statistics Authority, on the advice of the assessment team, restored the National Statistics status to the statistics on unlawful deaths based on the Homicide Index, although all other recorded crime statistics remain undesignated. The report also confirmed the continuing National Statistics status of the crime statistics that originate from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW).

We continue to publish and provide commentary on police recorded crime data.

Recorded crime figures are an important indicator of police workload. They can be used for local crime pattern analysis and provide a good measure of trends in well-reported crimes (in particular, homicide, which is not covered by the CSEW or the TCSEW). There are also some categories of crime (such as drug possession offences) where the volume of offences recorded are heavily influenced by police activities and priorities; in such cases, recorded crime figures may not provide an accurate picture of the true extent of criminality.

Unlike the CSEW/TCSEW, recorded crime figures do not include crimes that have not been reported to the police or incidents that the police decide not to record as crimes. It was estimated in the year ending March 2020 that around 42% of CSEW comparable crime was reported to the police, although this proportion varied considerably for individual offence types.

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, plus the British Transport Police. These data are supplied to the Home Office on a monthly basis in an aggregated return for each crime within the notifiable offence list (see [Appendix 1](#)). They are then quality assured by the Home Office Statistics Unit before they send the final data to us at the end of each quarter for final preparation and publication as Official Statistics. Notifiable offences include all offences that could possibly be tried by jury (these include some less serious offences, such as minor theft that would not usually be dealt with this way), plus a few additional closely-related summary offences dealt with by magistrates' courts, such as assault without injury.

3.2 Compilation of police recorded crime statistics for England and Wales

The crime recording process starts at the point at which an incident comes to the attention of the police. This could be through a victim calling 999 (or reporting it to the police via another means), an incident being referred to the police by another agency, or being identified by the police directly (for example, officers encountering an incident while on patrol). While there are standardised rules used by all police forces to ensure consistency in decisions around when a crime is recorded, and what type of crime it is (see Section 3.3 for details) the process by which the incident is subsequently logged and data are extracted for submission to the Home Office for inclusion in the Official Statistics varies between police forces. Forces currently use different IT systems and employ different internal processes in the steps that are followed to record crimes. However, it is possible to summarise the process in general terms (see Figure 3a).

Figure 2a: Crime recording process map



Source: Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. [National Standard for Incident Recording](#).
2. Further information on decisions around when a crime should be recorded is provided in the [National Crime Recording Standard](#).
3. For full definitions of different types of crime recorded by the police see the [Home Office Counting Rules for recorded crime](#).
4. Section 3.5 provides further information on transferred or cancelled records.

Additionally, in their interim report on crime data integrity, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) provides a clear description of the first stages of the crime recording process.

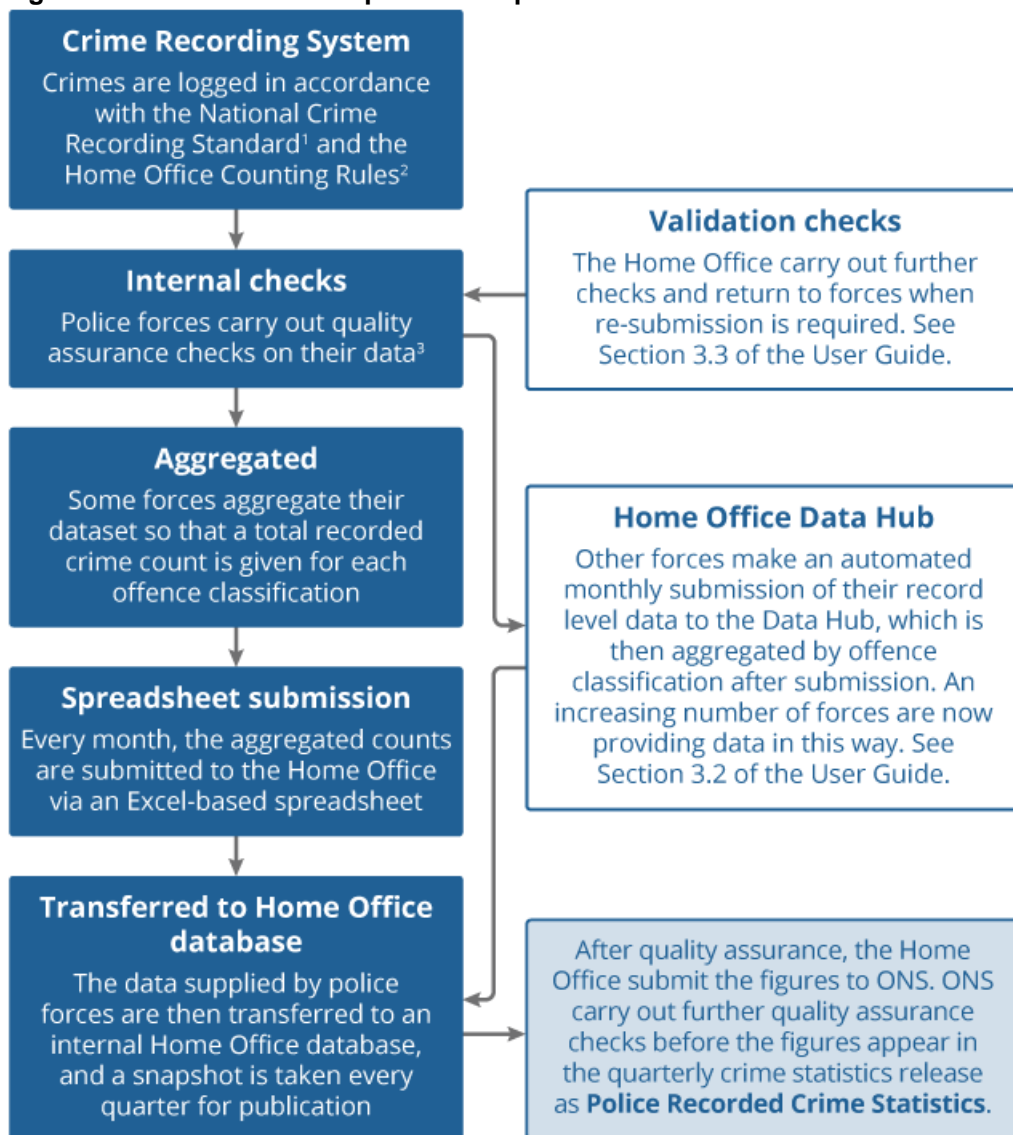
Home Office Data Hub

The Home Office have been implementing a new data collection system to streamline the process by which forces submit data. The Home Office Data Hub has been designed to replace the current spreadsheet-based system with automated capture of crime data (via direct extracts from forces' own crime recording systems). This reduces the burden on forces and reduces the risk of error associated with spreadsheet systems. The police are also able to supply more detailed information to the Home Office Data Hub, allowing a greater range of analyses to be carried out.

Forces have been progressively switching over to the Home Office Data Hub. Of the 44 police forces in England and Wales, there are currently 39 providing their recorded crime data solely via this route. Many more forces are currently parallel running the new system whilst the Home Office continues to work with forces to overcome technical issues involved with such a comprehensive data administration system. Once all forces are using this new system, further consideration will be given to the quality of the data and how this more detailed data can be used. Some of the additional data provided by the Data Hub have already been used in the quarterly crime bulletins, the articles relating to violent crime and sexual offences and "Domestic abuse in England and Wales" publications.

In the interim, we have been working with police forces and the Home Office to develop a more thorough understanding of how police forces extract data collected on their crime recording systems for submission to the Home Office. Information collected from a small number of police forces on the processes used to produce aggregate data and supply it to the Home Office suggest varying systems are used, with some based on more automated approaches while others extract data manually to input onto an Excel spreadsheet. Figure 3b summarises these processes in general terms.

Figure 2b: Data submission process map



Source: Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Further information on decisions around when a crime should be recorded is provided in the [National Crime Recording Standard](#).
2. For full definitions of different types of crime recorded by the police see the [Home Office Counting Rules for recorded crime](#).
3. The quality assurance process varies by force but may include checking that expired codes have not been used, or that an offence has not been recorded under more than one offence code.

3.3 Recording practices and data quality

The Home Office Counting Rules and National Crime Recording Standard

There have been two major changes to the recording of crimes in the last two decades. In April 1998, the Home Office Counting Rules (HOCR) for recorded crime were expanded to include certain additional summary offences and counts became more victim-based (the number of victims was counted rather than the number of offences). In April 2002, the National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS) was introduced across England and Wales, (some forces adopted key elements of the standard earlier and compliance with the standard continued to improve in the years following its formal introduction). The NCRS was devised by the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) [note 1] in collaboration with Home Office statisticians. It was designed to ensure greater consistency between forces in recording crime and to take a more victim-oriented approach to crime recording, with the police being [required to record any allegation of crime unless there was credible evidence to the contrary](#).

Both these changes resulted in an increase in the number of crimes recorded. Certain offences, such as the more minor violent crimes, were more affected by these changes than others. All these factors need to be considered when looking at the trends in recorded crime. For these reasons, statistical bulletins mainly focus on trends following the introduction of recording changes in police recorded crime from the year ending March 2003.

Each police force has a Force Crime Registrar (FCR) who monitors the application of the HOCR and has a final arbiter role with respect to crime recording decisions. A nationally agreed crime data quality assurance manual (DQAM) has been developed for use by FCRs. This DQAM is subject to regular review. A national data quality working group meets regularly to consider specific issues, to advise Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) on inspection activity and to support FCRs in the development of local risk-based audits.

Like any administrative data, risks to the quality and integrity of police recorded crime data exist at some stages of the operational and decision-making processes used in the collection. The main areas of risk are whether a crime is recorded, whether a crime is correctly classified, and cancelled crimes.

Whether a crime is recorded

When an incident comes to the attention of the police there is a decision made about whether a crime has been committed. To provide consistency, police recording practice is governed by the HOCR and the NCRS. These rules set a national standard for the recording and classifying of notifiable offences by police forces in England and Wales (see [Home Office documentation on counting rules for recorded crime](#)). However, previous audits of crime and incident records have highlighted that in some cases the HOCR and the NCRS have not been correctly applied (the section on "Reviews and audits of data quality" contains more information).

Whether a crime is correctly classified

When the police have judged that a crime has occurred, the type of crime should be classified according to the HOCR, which set out a description of each notifiable offence. While audits have shown that crimes have in some cases been incorrectly recorded against the wrong crime type, evidence from the most recent audits suggests that the large majority of crimes were correctly classified and found no evidence of systemic misclassification (the section on "Reviews and audits of data quality" contains more information).

Cancelled crimes

Police forces record some crimes that are subsequently cancelled. Crime reports that are cancelled are removed from police crime data and thus from the police recorded crime statistics [note 2]. The HOCR set out circumstances under which a crime report may be cancelled. These include situations where a crime is considered to have been recorded in error or where, having been recorded, additional verifiable information becomes available that determines that no crime was committed (for further information see the "General rules" section of the HOCR). In HMICFRS's recent inspections [note 3], nationally 80% of these decisions were made correctly. This result varied greatly across police forces, highlighting the difference in understanding amongst those responsible for making these decisions [note 4].

Ongoing quality checks

Ongoing consultation on the formulation and development of the policy on crime recording is provided through working groups comprising members of the Home Office, the Office for National Statistics (ONS), police force regional representatives, and representatives of the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC), Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS), and the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS). Any changes of significant statistical impact will be subject to wider user consultation and be subject to final ministerial clearance.

Police recorded crime statistics, like any administrative data, will be affected by the rules governing the recording of data, systems in place, and operational decisions in respect of the allocation of resources. More proactive policing of non-victim-based crimes in a given area, such as drug offences or possession of a weapon, could lead to an increase in crimes recorded without any real change in underlying crime trends. Therefore, when examining trends in police recorded crime data presented in statistical bulletins, it is important to pay attention to the commentary, which will explain any caveats associated with the data.

Prior to submitting data to us, the Home Office Statisticians carry out internal quality assurance of the recorded crime data. These checks include:

- monthly variation checks – the total number of recorded crimes and the number recorded against each offence type are compared to the previous months' figures to check for any major deviations from the time series trend
- evidence of a high number of transferred or cancelled records (previously referred to as "no crimes") for individual offence types; Section 3.5 provides more information on transferred or cancelled records
- checks against offences recorded under redundant codes – no offences should be recorded against expired codes, such as fraud offences, which should all be recorded under Action Fraud.
- a comparison of the police force area and community safety partnership (CSP) crime counts – in nearly all cases, the total number of recorded crimes for a police force should be the sum of the number of crimes recorded in the corresponding CSP areas
- a number of other ad hoc quality checks are carried out by the Home Office

Any anomalies or errors identified through these checks result in a report being returned to the relevant force for validation or correction.

Prior to the publication of any crime statistics bulletin, a verification exercise is carried out with all forces. The data held on the Home Office database are returned to individual forces asking for confirmation that the data accords with that held on their own systems. Again, forces resubmit data if required.

These checks are subject to continuous development.

Reviews and audits of data quality

Crime recording was previously the subject of independent audit by the Audit Commission. In their assessment of police data quality in September 2007 ([Audit Commission 2007](#)), they commented, "The police have continued to make significant improvements in crime recording performance and now have better quality crime data than ever before." However, both the UK Statistics Authority (2010) and the [National Statistician \(2011\)](#) highlighted concerns about the absence of such periodic audits.

A [HMICFRS review](#) in line with a recommendation in the [National Statistician's 2011 review of crime statistics](#) looked at police crime and incident reports in all forces in England and Wales (HMICFRS, 2012) [note 5]. The review found a wide variation in the quality of decision making associated with the recording of crime (a range of between 86% and 100% from the lowest to the highest performing force), which was a cause for concern.

In the period that followed, further concerns over the quality of police recorded crime data were raised; through analysis published in [methodological notes](#) by the Office for National Statistics in January 2013 [note 6], and as part of an [inquiry by the Public Administration Select Committee \(PASC\) into crime statistics](#) in late 2013, allegations of under-recording of crime by the police were made (in particular, concerns regarding the accuracy of police recorded crime data for sexual offences were raised).

The above resulted in a further HMICFRS inspection of the integrity of police recorded crime during 2014 [note 7]. HMICFRS's final inspection report, [Crime recording: making the victim count](#), which was based on inspections in all 43 territorial police forces, was published on 18 November 2014. The report highlighted that, at the national level, an estimated four in five offences (81%) that were brought to the attention of the police and should have been recorded as crimes, actually were recorded, with compliance for specific offence types as follows:

- burglary – 89%
- robbery – 86%
- criminal damage and arson – 86%
- other offences (excluding fraud) – 83%
- sexual offences – 74%
- violence with or without injury – 67%

The audit sample was not large enough to produce force level compliance rates. However, HMICFRS have reported on their inspection findings in separate [crime inspection force reports](#) for each of the 43 police forces in England and Wales, published on 27 November 2014. Following the inspections, HMICFRS made 13 recommendations aimed at improving crime recording, which are detailed in their [final report](#).

Additional caution is currently required when interpreting statistics on police recorded crime. While we know that it is likely that improvements in compliance with the NCRS have led to increases in the number of crimes recorded by the police, it is not possible to quantify the scale of this, or assess how this effect varies between different police forces. Apparent increases in police force area data may reflect a number of factors, including tightening of recording practices, increases in reporting by victims, and also genuine increases in the levels of crime. In November 2015, HMICFRS wrote to all police forces advising that they would be commencing an unannounced programme of rolling inspections of police forces on an ongoing basis. This programme of Crime Data integrity inspections ran from 2015 until early 2020 and [reports on these inspections were being published by HMICFRS on a rolling basis](#). In late 2020, HMICFRS commenced a new programme of Victim Service Assessments (VSA) also on a rolling basis. VSA is integrated into the inspectorate's wider PEEL inspections for each force with reporting merged into PEEL reports. By exception, HMICFRS may publish VSA findings in advance where they consider there is an Accelerated Cause for Concern.

Most recently, HMICFRS have published their annual report, [State of Policing: The Annual Assessment of Policing in England and Wales](#). This summarises the progress of police forces to improve their recording practices, on the basis of the ongoing Crime Data Integrity programme.

3.4 Changes to recorded crime classifications

Since the introduction of the National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS), there have been two substantial changes to recording classifications.

During the year ending March 2012, the Home Office carried out a review of the crime classifications contained within the counting rules to consider to what extent they might be rationalised [note 8]. As a result, from April 2012 the number of crime classifications reduced from 148 to 126. Importantly, however, the overall number of crimes was not reduced in any way. There has been no change to the coverage of offences in the police recorded crime series and most changes are presentational, with some offences moving between classifications or being separated out of existing groupings [note 9].

In response to the National Statistician's recommendation, classifications used to present police recorded crime statistics from July 2013 were redesigned to provide a more coherent and consistent set of offence categories and a clearer picture for users [note 10]. One of the important changes was to divide police recorded crimes between two broad categories to distinguish between crimes with a specific identifiable victim (referred to as "victim-based crime") and those which do not normally have a direct victim and are more likely to be recorded as a result of proactive enforcement by the police and other authorities (referred to as "other crimes against society"). These were introduced to improve clarity of presentation and comparability with data from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW). A more in-depth explanation of police recorded reclassifications can be found in the [Methodological note: Presentational changes to National Statistics on police recorded crime in England and Wales](#).

At the same time, a third category was introduced to cover offences of fraud. Changes to the operational arrangements for the reporting and recording of fraud offences mean that, from April 2013, many fraud offences previously recorded by police forces were recorded centrally by Action Fraud ([Section 4.4](#) provides more information on fraud). Since September 2015, the presentation of data on fraud has been updated to reflect new operational arrangements in reporting and recording practice. Specifically, the police recorded crime figures now incorporate available fraud data at England and Wales level from two industry bodies, Cifas and UK Finance. More detail on this is given in [Section 4.4](#) of this user guide.

More recently, from October 2017 a new sub-category was introduced within the main violence against the person offence group covering "death or serious injury caused by illegal driving" covering offences previously contained within the "violence with injury" subcategory. Additionally, "stalking and harassment" offences have been moved out of the sub-category of "violence without injury" and are now in a separate sub-category of "stalking and harassment".

3.5 Data on transferred and cancelled records

The Home Office routinely collects data from police forces on the number of incidents that have been recorded as crimes but have then been transferred [note 11] or cancelled. A table showing the numbers and percentages of transferred or cancelled records by offence group is available in [Table UG14 of the User Guide tables](#) and by police force area from the [Home Office](#).

Great care is needed in interpreting data on transferred or cancelled records. In particular, the proportion of cancelled records does not in itself infer high or low compliance with the overall requirements of the Home Office Counting Rules (HOCR). Levels of cancelled records are particularly susceptible to local recording practice and the IT systems in use. A police force having a high level of cancelled records may be indicative of that force having a local recording process that captures all reports as crimes at the first point of contact, and before any further investigation has taken place to consider the full facts. Equally, a police force with a low level of cancelled records may be indicative of a recording practice by which reports are retained as incidents only until a fuller investigation has taken place.

3.6 Police recorded crime revisions policy

The recorded crime figures are a by-product of a live administrative system that is continually being updated with incidents that are logged as crimes and subsequently investigated. Some incidents initially recorded as crime may on further investigation be found not to be a crime (described as "cancelled records"). Some offences may change category, for example, from theft to robbery. The police return provisional figures to the Home Office on a monthly basis and each month they may supply revised totals for months that have previously been supplied. The Home Office Statistics Unit undertakes a series of validation checks on receipt of the data and queries outliers with forces who may then resubmit data.

Once a quarter, the Home Office Statistics Unit takes a "snapshot" of the live database and sends back to individual forces their figures for quality assurance. Once the quality assurance process is complete, final data is supplied to the Office for National Statistics (ONS). Therefore, it should be noted that figures in one release may differ slightly from figures published later. This does not mean that the figures previously published were inaccurate at the time that they were reported. The size of these revisions tend to be small and it is our policy not to revise previously published recorded crime figures unless they arise from a genuine error (for example, a force subsequently reports that when supplying thefts and robbery figures they had been transposed). A data table showing updates to the number of police recorded crimes compared with previously published statistics is released alongside each quarterly bulletin. See table [QT1a](#) in the quarterly data tables.

The general principle for any revision will be that when data are found to be in error, both the data and any associated analysis that has been published will be revised in line with the [our revisions and corrections policy](#).

3.7 Published sources of police recorded crime statistics for England and Wales

Police recorded crime statistics for England and Wales are available from a number of different published sources. The main sources are:

- Official Statistics published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS)
- [Home Office open data tables](#)

Whilst all the above sources are based on data extracted from police crime recording systems, there are a number of important differences between them, both in terms of the data they hold and their intended use.

In addition to these sources, local police forces also publish data covering their own areas. There is no standardised format for the release of local data by individual forces. Time periods used and crime types covered, as well as frequency of release, may vary between police forces.

Official Statistics published by the Office for National Statistics

Statistical bulletins [published by the ONS](#) include data on police recorded crime. These data are based on information supplied by police forces to the Home Office on a monthly basis. After conducting quality assurance, the Home Office supplies aggregated data to us on a quarterly basis. The presentation of data focuses on England and Wales as a whole, although geographic breakdowns by police force and community safety partnership areas are included. The bulletins provide a comprehensive report on the latest crime statistics broken down by individual offence types, presenting these in the context of longer-term trends. Where possible, supporting commentary explains possible drivers of changing levels of crime. Our statistical bulletins also present other sources of statistics (including victimisation data from the (CSEW/TCSEW) and the Commercial Victimisation Survey (CVS)) to help provide a fuller picture of trends and patterns in crime.

Home Office open data tables

The Home Office publish a set of open data tables on police recorded crime to coincide with the publication of the ONS quarterly statistical bulletin on crime. These tables are based on the same police recorded crime dataset as that used in the ONS statistical bulletin. They provide a breakdown of police recorded crime counts by individual offence classifications for each community safety partnership and police force area.

The open data tables are designed to meet the needs of the expert user. It is a rich source of data with which users are able to conduct their own bespoke analysis. The large data table (available in CSV and ODS formats) requires some manipulation to extract data for specific time periods, areas, and offence types. Users can download open data tables from the [Home Office](#).

"Compare your area" data

Police recorded crime data can be found in the Compare Your Area section of [police.uk](https://www.police.uk). This presents data in the form of charts, which enables users to compare levels of crime in a local area with other areas (presented at community safety partnership level). The charts help users to understand more about:

- how crime in an area compares with crime in other similar areas
- how crime in an area compares with crime in the rest of the police force area
- how crime has changed over time in an area and in the police force area

These tables are updated quarterly and are based on the same police recorded crime dataset as that used in the ONS Official Statistics.

Local crime maps

[Police.uk](https://www.police.uk) also provides street-level recorded crime counts presented using a crime mapping tool. This allows users to view crime maps for a specific area (for example, their own neighbourhood) and gives a count of crimes in that area, as well as an indication of the street location that the crime occurred. The raw data (at street level) can also be downloaded.

The crime counts are based on data submitted by the police separately from the data used in the Official Statistics. While these data are ultimately sources from the same police force databases as those used to supply data for the Official Statistics, there are some important differences between the [Police.uk crime maps](https://www.police.uk) and ONS Official Statistics, most notably that:

- crime mapper data are published on a monthly basis, providing counts of crime recorded in each calendar month rather than for a quarterly period
- crime mapper data are published more quickly (with less lag time between the period to which the data refer and the date of release); however, these data are not subject to the same rigorous quality assurance process as the police recorded crime data published by the ONS
- due to the monthly publication cycle, crime mapper data are more likely to include crimes where there has been a subsequent decision to "transfer or cancel" the offence (Section 3.5 provides further details)
- crime mapper data is restricted to those crimes for which geographical location information is available; crimes without this information are excluded from the map, but an indication of the number of crimes that do not have location information is provided

Alongside police recorded crime data, the crime mapper tool also includes data on anti-social behaviour incidents recorded by the police and information on justice outcomes in a local area (a "justice outcome" is a crime that has been resolved by the police or a court).

Notes for: Police recorded crime

1. In April 2015, the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) replaced the Association for Chief Police Officers (ACPO).
2. The majority of cancelled record decisions are made by police forces before data are submitted to the Home Office, and although some revisions are made to published crime statistics as a result of transferred or cancelled records, these are typically small.
3. Further information is given in Section 3.3, a sample (3,246) of decisions to cancel crime records for violent, robbery and rape offences were reviewed by HMICFRS throughout these inspections.
4. As a result of this audit, HMICFRS made two recommendations. Firstly, the Home Office should revise the HOOCR guidance and in the case of rape offences, only the Force Crime Registrar should have the authority to make a decision to cancel a crime record. Secondly, the revision of the guidance should also state that a victim should be informed in a timely manner in the case of a decision to cancel a crime, with a record being made to that effect.
5. This followed a HMICFRS quality review in 2009 into the way in which police forces record most serious violence. This review found some variation in recording, which they partly attributed to the lack of independent monitoring of crime records.
6. Analysis published by ONS showed that between the year ending March 2007 and the year ending March 2012, the police recorded crime series showed a faster rate of reduction than CSEW crime. For more information see Section 4.2 of the [User guide to crime statistics - March 2020](#), or [Analysis of Variation in Crime trends](#) methodological note. One possible explanation for this was a gradual erosion of compliance with the NCRS in police recording practices and processes.
7. HMICFRS's inspection methodology involved audits of a sample (10,267) of reports of crime received either through incidents reported by the public, crimes directly reported to a police crime bureau, and those reports referred by other agencies directly to specialist departments within a force.
8. A public consultation was conducted during the autumn of 2011 following which the NSCSAC considered the various proposals and made recommendations to the Home Secretary. All of the NSCSAC papers and letters of advice resulting from that review are available on the [NSCSAC pages](#) of the UK Statistics Authority website
9. This change has no impact on the format of crime statistics published from July 2012. For all categories, a back-series has been created so that long-term trends are consistent from the year ending March 2003.
10. A [methodological note](#) was published alongside [Crime in England and Wales, year ending March 2013](#), published on 18 July 2013, to provide more detail on the changes and to explain their impact on time series for important measures.
11. Police forces record some crimes that are subsequently transferred to another police force where it is determined that the crime occurred outside the jurisdiction of the police force in which it was originally recorded. Like cancelled records, these were previously classified as "no crimes".

4 . Offence types

All crime is split between two primary offence groups: victim-based crimes and other crimes against society. Victim-based crimes are those with a specific identifiable victim. All Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) and the Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales (TCSEW) crime is victim based, as it is derived from a survey of people's experiences of crime and must have a victim for it to be recorded. Police recorded crime includes both victim-based crimes as well as other crimes that do not normally have a direct victim, referred to as "other crimes against society". Police recorded "victim-based crime" includes violence against the person; sexual offences; robbery; total theft offences; and criminal damage and arson. Police recorded "other crimes against society" includes drug offences; public order offences; and miscellaneous crimes against society. In addition, victim-based crime can be separated into crimes against people and households and crimes against businesses.

CSEW, TCSEW and police recorded crime data also have varying strengths dependent on the crime type being measured. 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 is shown below in the data quality framework.

Homicide

Reliability rating: good

Reliable trend information is available in police recorded crime figures and the Homicide Index. This offence is not captured by the CSEW.

Source: police recorded crime

Relative volume: very low

Offences involving knives or sharp instruments

Reliability rating: moderate

There is some uncertainty over drivers, but it is likely that recent trend reflects real changes in crime levels. There is some validation of this trend from NHS data on hospital admissions. Recording improvements may also be a factor. This offence is not captured by the CSEW.

Source: police recorded crime

Relative volume: low

Offences involving firearms

Reliability rating: moderate

There is some uncertainty over drivers but it is likely that recent trends reflect real changes in crime levels. Recording improvements may also be a factor. This offence is not captured by the CSEW.

Source: police recorded crime

Relative volume: low

Other violent crime

Reliability rating: moderate

Reliable long-term trends are available from the CSEW. Some validation from hospital episodes data on visits to A&E following an assault is available. Recording improvements in police recorded crime data mean that these do not provide a reliable measure of trends in crime. For the TCSEW, a revision was made to the threats screener question. This revision had an impact on violent crime estimates. For more information, the [comparability report](#) is available.

Preferred source: CSEW

Relative volume: medium

Sexual offences

Reliability rating: poor

Trends in the prevalence of sexual assault are available from a separate self-completion module of the CSEW. Limitations of the sample size mean that estimates have large margins of error and can fluctuate. Recording improvements in police recorded crime data, as well as increasing willingness among victims to report to authorities, mean that police recorded crime data do not provide a reliable measure of trends in this crime type. Following ethical guidelines, questions from the self-completion modules are not included in the TCSEW operation. Therefore, estimates are not available in relation to sexual assault for the TCSEW.

Preferred source: CSEW

Relative volume: medium

Criminal damage and arson (crimes against individuals and households)

Reliability rating: good

Reliable long-term trends are available from the CSEW. Recording improvements in police recorded crime data mean that these do not provide a reliable measure of trends in crime.

Preferred source: CSEW

Relative volume: high

Criminal damage and arson (crimes against businesses and organisations)

Reliability rating: moderate

Covered in police recorded crime statistics, but offences against business are not separately identifiable. This offence is not captured by the CSEW. We are able to draw on information from Home Office Commercial Victimization Survey, but this only covers some sectors.

Preferred source: police recorded crime

Relative volume: high

Criminal damage and arson (crimes against society and the state)

Reliability rating: moderate

Covered in police recorded crime statistics but criminal damage offences against public or state owned property are not separately identifiable. This offence is not captured by the CSEW.

Preferred source: police recorded crime

Relative volume: high

Vehicle theft offences (crimes against individuals and households)

Reliability rating: good

Reliable long-term trends available from the CSEW. However, police recorded crime data are also thought to offer a good indication of trends. Vehicle theft offences are well reported to the police and not thought to have been subject to extensive changes in recording practice.

Preferred source: CSEW

Relative volume: medium to high

Vehicle theft offences (crimes against businesses and organisations)

Reliability rating: moderate

Covered in police recorded crime statistics but offences against business are not separately identifiable. Able to draw on information from Home Office Commercial Victimization Survey, but only covers some sectors. This offence is not captured by the CSEW.

Preferred source: police recorded crime

Relative volume: medium to high

Burglary (crimes against individuals and households)

Reliability rating: good

Reliable long-term trends available from the CSEW. However, police recorded crime data are also thought to offer a good indication of trends. Burglary offences are well reported to the police and not thought to have been subject to extensive changes in recording practice.

Preferred source: CSEW

Relative volume: high

Burglary (crimes against businesses and organisations)

Reliability rating: moderate

Covered in police recorded crime statistics as part of "Burglary – business and community" category. Not thought to have been subject to extensive changes in recording practice. Able to draw on information from Home Office Commercial Victimization Survey, but only covers some sectors. This offence is not captured by the CSEW.

Preferred source: police recorded crime

Relative volume: high

Burglary (crimes against society and the state)

Reliability rating: moderate

Covered in police recorded crime statistics as part of "Burglary – business and community" category. Not thought to have been subject to extensive changes in recording practice. This offence is not captured by the CSEW.

Preferred source: police recorded crime

Relative volume: high

Other household theft

Reliability rating: good

Reliable long-term trends available from the CSEW. Captured in police recorded crime but not separately identifiable from within the "Other theft offences" category.

Preferred source: CSEW

Relative volume: medium to high

Theft from the person

Reliability rating: moderate

Reasonably reliable long term trend information from the CSEW but relatively small numbers of victims means that there can be some volatility in CSEW estimates from year to year. Police recorded crime data are thought to provide a reasonable indication of trends and are not thought to have been subject to extensive changes in recording practice.

Preferred source: police recorded crime

Relative volume: medium

Other theft of personal property

Reliability rating: good

Reliable long-term trends available from the CSEW. Captured in police recorded crime but not separately identifiable from within the "Other theft offences" category.

Preferred source: CSEW

Relative volume: high

Bicycle theft

Reliability rating: moderate

Reasonably reliable long term trend information from the CSEW but relatively small numbers of victims means that there can be some volatility in CSEW estimates from year to year. Police recorded crime data are thought to provide a reasonable indication of trends and are not thought to have been subject to extensive changes in recording practice.

Preferred source: CSEW

Relative volume: medium

Shoplifting

Reliability rating: moderate

Trend data are available from police recorded crime data. Shoplifting offences are often not reported to the police, so trends may also reflect changes in reporting rates, as well real changes in crime. Improvements in recording practice may also be a factor. This offence is not captured by the CSEW. Able to draw on information from Home Office Commercial Victimization Survey but small sample size can make trends difficult to interpret due to volatility in estimates from year to year.

Preferred source: police recorded crime

Relative volume: medium

All other theft offences

Reliability rating: moderate

Theft of business property is covered in police recorded crime but not separately identifiable from personal or household theft offences.

Preferred source: police recorded crime

Relative volume: high

Robbery (crimes against individuals and households)

Reliability rating: good

Reasonably reliable long term trend information from the CSEW but relatively small numbers of victims means that there can be some volatility in CSEW estimates from year to year. Police recorded crime data are thought to provide a reasonable indication of trends and are not thought to have been subject to extensive changes in recording practice.

Preferred source: police recorded crime

Relative volume: low to medium

Robbery (crimes against businesses and organisations)

Reliability rating: good

Police recorded crime data thought to provide a reasonable indication of trends, and are not thought to have been subject to extensive changes in recording practice. This offence is not captured by the CSEW.

Preferred source: police recorded crime

Relative volume: low to medium

Fraud (crimes against individuals and households)

Reliability rating: good

CSEW now provides reliable estimates of the extent of fraud against individuals although there is no long-term trend data available. CSEW estimates capture high volume lower harm offences well and are not as good at providing reliable figures on more serious forms of fraud. Data from Action Fraud (AF) cover only those crimes that are reported to AF. As such, these figures capture the more serious types of fraud more effectively than the CSEW.

Preferred source: CSEW

Relative volume: high

Fraud (crimes against businesses and organisations)

Reliability rating: poor

Available sources provide only a partial picture. Some reports to AF will be from businesses, but only a small proportion of incidents are likely to be reported.

Able to draw on additional information from industry body UK Finance on bank account and plastic card fraud.

Preferred source: police recorded crime and data from industry bodies

Relative volume: high

Fraud (crimes against society and the state)

Reliability rating: poor

Available sources provide only a partial picture. Some reports to AF will be from organisations and public sector bodies but only a small proportion of incidents are likely to be reported.

Preferred source: police recorded crime

Relative volume: high

Computer misuse (crimes against individuals and households)

Reliability rating: good

CSEW now provides reliable estimates of the extent of computer misuse against individuals, although there is no long-term trend data available. CSEW estimates capture high volume lower harm offences well and are not as good at providing reliable figures on more serious forms of computer misuse. Data from AF cover only those crimes that are reported to AF. As such, these figures capture the more serious types of computer misuse more effectively than the CSEW.

Preferred source: CSEW

Relative volume: high

Computer misuse (crimes against businesses and organisations)

Reliability rating: poor

Available sources provide only a partial picture. Some reports to AF will be from businesses, but only a small proportion of incidents are likely to be reported.

Preferred source: police recorded crime and data from industry bodies

Relative volume: high

Computer misuse (crimes against society and the state)

Reliability rating: poor

Available sources provide only a partial picture. Some reports to AF will be from organisations and public sector bodies but only a small proportion of incidents are likely to be reported.

Preferred source: police recorded crime

Relative volume: high

Public order offences

Reliability rating: poor

Trends are available from police recorded crime figures, but these do not currently provide a reliable indication of trends in crime. These figures reflect levels of police activity rather than crime and have also been subject to improvements in recording.

Preferred source: police recorded crime

Relative volume: high

Drug offences

Reliability rating: poor

Trends are available from police recorded crime figures, but these do not currently provide a reliable indication of trends in crime. These figures reflect levels of police activity rather than crime.

Preferred source: police recorded crime

Relative volume: medium

Possession of weapons offences

Reliability rating: moderate

Trends are available from police recorded crime figures, but these do not currently provide a reliable indication of trends in crime. These figures reflect levels of police activity rather than crime.

Preferred source: police recorded crime

Relative volume: low

4.1 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 punched, kicked, pushed or jostled, or attacked with a weapon, as well as offences where the victim was threatened with violence whether or not there is any injury.

In published crime statistics, violent crime as measured by the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW), and TCSEW is grouped into two broad, high-level categories: "violence with injury" and "violence without injury". Police recorded violent crime also features "violence with injury" and "violence without injury" categories, however, these categories are not directly comparable between the CSEW/TCSEW and police recorded crime, and attempts to cause injury are categorised differently. In addition to the two categories outlined above, police recorded crime statistics present three other violence categories: "homicide", "death or serious injury – unlawful driving" and "stalking and harassment". Homicide, and death or serious injury – unlawful driving offences are not covered by the CSEW/TCSEW as they are victim-based surveys.

In the year ending March 2022, 35% of all violence against the person offences resulted in an injury. Of violent incidents recorded by the police over the same period, 27% resulted in injury to the victim.

Violence with injury includes all incidents of wounding and assault with injury; homicide is only included for police recorded crime. Police recorded crime also includes attempts at inflicting injury, although the CSEW/TCSEW would not include these if no actual injury occurred.

The CSEW provides the best picture of the overall trend in violent crime and is a more reliable measure of long-term trends compared with police recorded crime. Improvements to recording processes and practices by the police, expansions 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, 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.

Police statistics are important for showing the mix of violent crimes dealt with and recorded by the police. They are an important measure of activity locally and a source of operational information to help identify and address local crime problems at a lower geographical level than is possible using the CSEW/TCSEW. Police statistics also provide more reliable information on less common crimes, such as robbery, and are currently the only source of data on homicides and offences against those not resident in households.

CSEW/TCSEW violence

The revision made to the threats screener question for the Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales (TCSEW) has had a bigger impact on violent estimates compared with other crime types measured by the survey. This should be considered when interpreting violence estimates from May 2020 to March 2021 interviews. For more information on the impact of this change see [Comparability between the Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales and the face-to-face Crime Survey for England and Wales](#).

CSEW violent crime is categorised by offence type and according to the victim-offender relationship. CSEW offence types are as follows (estimates for wounding, assault with minor injury, and violence without injury add up to overall violence):

- wounding: the incident results in severe or less serious injury, for example, cuts, severe bruising, chipped teeth, bruising or scratches requiring medical attention, or any more serious injuries
- assault with minor injury: an incident where the victim was punched, kicked, pushed or jostled and the incident resulted in minor injury to the victim, for example, scratches or bruises
- violence without injury: an incident (or attempt) where the victim was punched, kicked, pushed or jostled but resulted in no injury

The categories of CSEW violence according to the offender-victim relationship are as follows:

- "domestic violence" [note 1] comprises wounding and assaults that involve partners, ex-partners, other relatives or household members
- "stranger violence" includes wounding and assaults in which the victim did not have any information about the offender(s), or did not know and had never seen the offender(s) before
- "acquaintance violence" comprises wounding and assaults in which the victim knew one or more of the offenders, at least by sight; it does not include domestic violence

In the CSEW, the previously used "common assault" (or attempted assault) category, which had been inconsistent with the police recorded offence category, was replaced with "assault with minor injury" and "assault without injury" categories in the year ending March 2007. This change was made to align CSEW categories more closely with those used by the police.

Police recorded violence against the person

"Violence against the person" offences contain the full spectrum of assaults. Within the same offence classification, the severity of violence varies considerably between incidents.

Long-term trends in police recorded violent crime can be difficult to interpret, as they are influenced by a number of factors. It is important to consider the following issues when interpreting trends. There have been two major changes to the recording of crimes in the last two decades. Both these changes resulted in an increase in the number of crimes recorded. Certain offences, such as the more minor violent crimes, were more affected by these changes than others. For more information on the impact of these changes on police recorded crime, see [Chapter 3](#).

Police recorded crime data are subject to changes in the levels of public reporting of incidents, although the proportion of CSEW violent crimes estimated to be reported to the police has been reasonably stable since the year ending March 2003. The latest published data on the percentages of CSEW incidents reported to the police are for the year ending March 2020, available from Table D10 in the Crime in England and Wales: Year ending March 2020 [annual trend and demographic tables](#).

Local policing activity and priorities affect the levels of reported and recorded violent crime. Where the police are proactive in addressing low-level violence and anti-social behaviour, this can lead to more of these crimes being brought to their attention and being recorded. For example, [research by the Cardiff Violence Research Group \(PDF, 314.7KB\)](#) showed an association between the introduction of CCTV surveillance and increased police detection of violence.

Police recorded crime data are subject to changes in police recording practices. The 1998 changes to the Home Office Counting Rules (HOCR) had a very significant impact on the recording of violent and sexual crime; the number of "violence against the person" offences recorded by the police increased by 118% as a result of the 1998 changes, according to [Recorded crime statistics for England and Wales, April 1998 to March 1999](#). Much of this increase resulted from a widening of the offence coverage to include assaults with little or no physical injury and offences of harassment (again with no injury).

The National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS), introduced in April 2002, again resulted in increased recording of violent and sexual crimes, particularly for less serious offences, as well as for some other offences. There was an estimated NCRS effect of 23% on "violence against the person" offences in the first 12 months of implementation, although it was recognised in [National Crime Recording Standard: An analysis of the impact on recorded crime](#), published in 2003, that this effect was unlikely to be complete within the first 12 months.

Incidents of "violence against the person" recorded by the police include the following categories as described below:

- "death by driving" offences, which include death by dangerous driving, careless or inconsiderate driving, driving under the influence of drink or drugs and while being an unlicensed or uninsured driver
- "assault with injury" and "assault with intent to cause serious harm" offences include injury resulting in permanent disability; more than minor permanent disfigurement; broken bones; fractured skull; compound fractures; substantial loss of blood; internal injury; lengthy treatment or serious psychiatric injury (based on expert evidence); and shock (when accompanied by expert psychological evidence)
- "threats to kill" where an individual fears that the offender's threat is real and may be carried out
- "assault without injury" offences are those where at the most a feeling of touch or passing moment of pain is experienced by the victim

Since January 2018, the [appendix tables](#) accompanying quarterly releases provide a more detailed breakdown of homicide offences than has previously been provided. Separate figures are given for each of the constituent categories of homicide: murder, manslaughter, corporate manslaughter, and infanticide.

The Home Office receives two sources of information on homicide from the police forces of England and Wales (including the British Transport Police where the incident occurred within England and Wales). These sources are the monthly aggregated recorded crime return (Section 3.1 provides more information on this), and a more detailed statistical return for each recorded homicide, containing additional information such as victim and suspect details and the circumstances of the offence. This is used to populate a Home Office database called the Homicide Index.

The Homicide Index

The Home Office Homicide Index contains record-level detail about homicides recorded in England and Wales since 1977. Information prior to 1977 is held as paper records. The Homicide Index is continually being updated with revised information from the police as investigations continue and as cases are heard by the courts, and is therefore viewed as a better source of data than the main recorded crime data. However, because of the time permitted for police forces to submit the individual returns (within 30 days of recording an incident as homicide) and the complexities in checking the data, it is not possible to use the Homicide Index figures in the quarterly statistical bulletins on crime in England and Wales. Instead, figures from the monthly recorded crime return are presented as a provisional homicide estimate, with full analysis published in [Homicide in England and Wales](#) at the beginning of the following year. Care should therefore be taken when using the provisional figures for homicide as these are subject to change (though in recent years the changes between provisional and final figures have generally been small).

Homicide Index data are based on the year when the offence was first recorded, not when the offence took place or when the case was heard in court.

While in the majority of cases, the offence will be recorded in the same year as it took place, this is not always so. Caution is therefore needed when looking at longer-term homicide trends. For example:

- the 96 deaths that occurred at Hillsborough in 1989 were recorded as manslaughters in the year ending March 2017 following the verdict of the Hillsborough Inquest in April 2016
- the 173 homicides attributed to Dr Harold Shipman as a result of Dame Janet Smith's inquiry took place over a long period of time but were all recorded by the police during the year ending March 2003

Furthermore, where several people are killed by the same suspect, the number of homicides counted is the total number of victims killed rather than the number of incidents. For example, the 39 victims of human trafficking found in a lorry in Grays, Essex, in October 2019 are counted as 39 individual homicides.

For the purposes of the Homicide Index, a suspect in a homicide case is defined as either:

- a person who has been charged with a homicide offence, including those who were subsequently convicted and those awaiting trial
- a person who is suspected by the police of having committed the offence but is known to have died or committed suicide

When the police initially record an offence as a homicide, it remains classified as such unless the police or courts decide that a lesser offence, or no offence, took place.

Where there are multiple suspects, they are categorised in the Homicide Index as either the principal or a secondary suspect. The suspect with the longest sentence or most serious conviction is determined to be the principal suspect. In the absence of any court outcome, the principal suspect is either the person considered by the police to be the most involved in the homicide or the suspect with the closest relationship to the victim.

Homicide Index – data collection and quality assurance

Data are collected through a detailed form that is completed by the police within 30 days from the homicide being recorded.

On 1 April 2021, a new online process for the collection of homicide data from the police was introduced, providing a new user-friendly interface and a revised form to ensure that relevant homicide issues and themes are captured. The new process includes robust, in-form validation to improve the quality of data submitted to the Home Office. The following section details the quality assurance process for the old collection form that was used to collect homicide information for those recorded up to March 2021 and applies to our [Homicide in England and Wales: year ending March 2021 article](#) onwards.

To help ensure consistency and accuracy in the data submitted by police forces, guidance is issued to them setting out definitions of the terms used on the Homicide Index form and providing instructions on how to populate the form. In addition, the Home Office works closely with police forces and provides assistance to individuals responsible for completion of the Homicide Index form (usually the Senior Investigating Officer). Police forces are encouraged to contact Home Office statisticians if they have any questions about what data are required.

In addition to engaging with individual police forces, the Home Office engages with other relevant working groups and agencies, including:

- the National Police Chiefs' Council's Homicide Working Group (HWG), a multi-agency group concerned with homicide investigation and recording, which helps forces share best practice
- the National Crime Agency (NCA), who play an important role in the investigation of homicides, working closely with local forces
- the Home Office Forensic Pathology team, who provide assistance and training to police forces and Coroner's Officers on the identification and investigation of homicide cases

The Homicide Index form is returned to the Home Office and loaded onto the Homicide Index. When a suspect is charged with a homicide, the police update the form with suspect information (for example, age, gender and ethnicity), and when the case has been through the courts, it is updated with case outcome information (for example, indictment, court outcome, date of conviction and sentence length). Forces will obtain information on case outcomes from their own Management Information System, the Home Office Large Major Enquiry System (HOLMES) database, or the Police National Computer (PNC). The information that is returned is quality assured in several ways.

As the electronic form is completed by the force, there are some fields that cannot be left blank, and this is flagged up on exiting the form.

Before the form is accepted onto the Homicide Index database, Home Office statisticians check for missing data and inconsistent fields. If an error is found then Home Office contact the police force to explain the error and ask the force to correct the mistake and resubmit a new return form.

The Home Office carries out quarterly checks on the number of homicides from the returns received as part of the main police recorded crime collection against the number of returns to the Homicide Index for each Police Force Area (PFA).

In autumn of 2020, in collaboration with police forces and the HWG, Home Office statisticians undertook an extensive data quality exercise on historical Homicide Index data to update court outcomes and suspect information. This greatly improved the court outcomes data over the last 20 years. At the end of each financial year, forces are required to send a list of homicides with the following information:

- forename and surname of victim
- police force reference
- date of recording
- if firearm was used
- if suspect has been charged

These fields are then compared with information from the Homicide Index.

The total number of homicides in each PFA is compared with the totals from the main police recorded crime return, including the number of "cancelled records" (Section 3.5 provides more information on "cancelled records"). Comparisons are also made with the special data collection on offences involving firearms.

Home Office statisticians run a range of data validity checks on the Homicide Index data, mainly on the fields that are included in the published statistics. These include checks for:

- fields with missing or blank data, such as age, sex, number of victims and suspects
- fields with open text, such as "other method of killing" or "other circumstances" to see if any of the responses could be recoded back into any of the predetermined categories.
- internal consistency between fields – for example, if the victim is aged 10 years and the suspect is aged 40 years, the relationship of victim to suspect cannot be parent (in this case the force would be asked to amend to son/daughter); if the method of killing was "sharp instrument", the field "was a sharp instrument used" cannot be "no"
- the date of charge and/or conviction should be after the date of the homicide

The data are delivered to the Office for National Statistics (ONS) in the form of aggregate tables for the annual release of our [Homicide in England and Wales](#) article. The ONS crime statistics team carries out further quality assurance checks on data tables supplied by the Home Office, focusing on internal validity of the data and the consistency with other available sources. Where concerns over data quality are identified, we will raise these concerns with the Home Office, who will refer questions to police forces where necessary.

Other violent offences

The other violent offences recorded by the police include: attempted murder; conspiracy to murder; endangering life; cruelty or neglect to children; abandoning a child under two years old; child abduction; and kidnapping.

Generally, police recorded crime statistics do not specifically identify offences of domestic violence because it is not a legal definition. Such offences are recorded in accordance with the intent of the offence and any injuries sustained, for example, assault with injury. However, cases involving domestic abuse are flagged as such, enabling domestic abuse-related offences to be identified. In addition, in December 2015 a new law [note 2] defining "controlling or coercive behaviour in intimate or familial relationships" as a criminal offence was enacted. This enabled the police to capture coercive control through psychological and emotional abuse that stops short of physical violence, and is identifiable as a separate offence for police forces reporting to the Home Office Data Hub.

Police recorded crime figures for "violence against the person" quoted in the text and charts also include assault on a constable and racially or religiously aggravated assault, which are both separate categories within recorded crime. Such incidents are not treated separately in the CSEW/TCSEW and would fall within the CSEW "assault with minor injury" or "assault without injury" categories.

Offences involving weapons

The Home Office collects additional data from the police on offences involving the use of firearms and knives or sharp instruments. These additional collections reflect the serious nature of these offences.

Offences involving the use of firearms

The firearm offences collection covers any notifiable offence recorded by the police where a firearm has been fired, used as a blunt instrument or in a threat (the full list of recorded crime offence codes is included in [Appendix 1](#)). Firearm possession offences where the firearm has not been used in any of the ways above are not included in this collection. This collection includes those firearms covered by the Firearms Act 1968:

- firearms that use a controlled explosion to fire a projectile – this category includes handguns, shotguns and rifles and these types of weapon are often used in the more serious offences, and tend to account for most of the fatalities and serious injuries from such offences
- imitation firearms – this category includes replica weapons, as well as very low-powered weapons which can fire small plastic pellets, such as BB guns and soft air weapons; while injuries can occur from offences involving these weapons, they are less common and tend to be less serious
- air weapons – the majority of offences which involve air weapons relate to criminal damage; while air weapons can cause injury (and sometimes fatalities), by their nature they are less likely to do so than firearms that use a controlled explosion

The majority of the information that the Home Office receives from the police is in the form of a record-level dataset. For each offence involving a firearm, information is provided on the victims' personal details (such as age and gender), the type of firearm used, whether an injury was sustained, and where the offence took place. These data are sent to the Home Office on a quarterly basis. Additionally, the police send summary data on offences involving air weapons for certain lower-level offences, such as criminal damage. These data are sent to the Home Office annually.

It is not always possible for the police to categorise the type of firearm that has been used in an offence. For example, some imitation weapons are so realistic that they are indistinguishable from a real firearm. The police will record which type of weapon has been used given the evidence available, and may rely on descriptions from victims or witnesses if the police do not have sufficient information about the type of firearm used in the offence, or if the firearm was concealed.

Figures on the use of firearms in recorded offences (excluding air weapons) are published in the quarterly statistical bulletins on crime in England and Wales. These data are provisional as they do not include air weapons and are not validated by the police. Finalised figures, which are validated, are published in the [Offences involving the use of weapons: data tables](#) at the beginning of each year. The finalised figures include offences involving air weapons.

Home Office statisticians carry out internal quality assurance of the offences involving firearms data, prior to submitting the data to the ONS. These checks include:

- in-built spreadsheet checks – the spreadsheet the police forces return to the Home Office for the firearms collection contains validation procedures ensuring that fields are consistent, for example, if a victim has been injured that the weapon usage category is not "used as a threat"; the spreadsheet also checks for duplicated case reference numbers, plausible ages of the victim(s), and missing fields
- annual variation checks – the total number of offences involving firearms and the number recorded against each offence type are compared with the previous year's figures, to check for any vast deviations from the data time series trend
- figures are also cross-referenced with data from the Home Office Homicide Index to ensure consistency for homicide offences where a firearm has been involved.

Prior to the annual publication of offences involving firearms statistics, a verification exercise is carried out with all forces. The data held by the Home Office are returned to individual forces asking for confirmation that the data accords with that held on their own systems. Forces can resubmit data if required.

As with overall police recorded crime, offences involving the use of a firearm data were affected by the changes in recording practices in 1998 and 2002. Therefore, it is not possible to directly compare figures across these changes in the series. The level of offences was also affected by improvements in crime recording made by the police since 2015, although the effect on this time series is not thought to be as great as other police recorded crime data. Data on the use of firearms have been collected by the Home Office since 1969.

The latest published data are in the "Offences involving firearms" section of the most recent [quarterly release](#).

Offences involving the use of a knife or sharp instrument

The Home Office has collected additional data from police forces for seven selected offences involving knives or sharp instruments since April 2008. In the year ending March 2009, this group of offences consisted of attempted murder, grievous bodily harm (GBH) with intent, GBH without intent, threats to kill, robbery, sexual assault, and rape. From the year ending March 2013, the selected offences consisted of attempted murder, threats to kill, assault with injury, assault with intent to cause serious harm, robbery rape, and sexual assault. Figures for homicide where the method of killing was by a sharp instrument are taken from the Home Office Homicide Index and published alongside the knife or sharp instrument figures. Because of the changes in coverage and issues relating to a clarification in the Home Office Counting Rules (HOCR) for GBH with intent, data are not directly compatible over the time period.

How the police identify whether an offence involved a knife or a sharp instrument or not in the information sent to the Home Office will vary by police force. For many, the adding of additional information is dependent on a police officer or support staff adding an identifier or tag to a respective crime record. Counts of these identifiers or tags are then sent to the Home Office where they are quality assured by statisticians before the final data are sent to the ONS to be published.

Forces have raised concerns with the Home Office that some of the special collections, based upon these identifiers, were likely to be of variable quality since they relied on tags being manually assigned to a crime record. With many other priorities, it was possible that some recorded offences may not have had the tags correctly applied in the returns to the Home Office. For example, while the number of robberies recorded will have been a correct count of those on the force record management systems, the aggravating factors – such as whether the offence involved a weapon – may not have always been correctly identified. Some forces carried out extensive manual reviews of their crime records, used automated database extraction queries to ensure the data returns were accurate as possible, while others largely relied on officers and staff remembering to tag a record accurately. Because of the issues with existing collections, the Home Office has been developing a new approach using a computer-assisted classification tool. This tool scans the free text fields of a crime within force record management systems, which include the detailed circumstances of a crime as recorded by a call handler or an investigating officer. This new approach was piloted on the offences involving knives or sharp instruments collection. The project had three broad aims:

- to improve the accuracy of the offences involving knives or sharp instruments data collection
- to increase the consistency and comparability of data across forces
- to reduce the burden on forces in supplying high quality data.

This new method has been deployed via a tool called the National Data Quality Improvement Service (NDQIS). The tool was piloted with forces and shown to improve data quality and comparability, leading to a national roll out of the new process. Offences involving knives or sharp instruments data processed via NDQIS were first published for 12 forces [note 3] in our Crime in England and Wales: year ending December 2020 bulletin. The NDQIS methodology has been rolled out and 36 forces now supply data via this methodology.

Information on the new methodology can be found in a [methodological report](#) published in May 2021.

The pilot work for the NDQIS identified that not all forces were interpreting the offences involving knives or sharp instruments guidance in the same way. This led to a review led by the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) Lead for Knife-Enabled Crime, Deputy Assistant Commissioner Graham McNulty, resulting in four broad changes to the coverage and guidance of the collection. These are outlined below.

Clarification on when the use of a knife or sharp instrument as a threat should be recorded

The pilot showed this was an area where forces were interpreting the current guidance inconsistently. Some forces were including offences where a knife was not present (for example, the offender states "I will get a knife and stab you") while other forces excluded these offences. New guidance has added a series of rules to ensure consistency between forces. These are:

- the knife or sharp instrument should be present at the time of the offence – or believed to be present by the victim. This includes cases where the sharp instrument is not seen but the threat is believed, or only a knife handle is seen [note 4]
- "remote threats" should not be recorded, for example, threats over social media to use a knife
- "future threats" should not be included – that is, offences where the perpetrator threatens to use a knife or sharp instrument in the future (for example "I will get a knife and stab you")
- "idle threats" should not be recorded, such as where an offender says they will stab someone in passing but there is no evidence that a knife was present when the threat was made.

The removal of broken bottles and glass from the collection

While sharp, these are weapons that are generally used in the heat of the moment without a premeditated motive. They tend to be involved in a different type of context to those involving knives or other sharp instruments. Removal of these type of offences align the collection closer to what the public would consider to be "knife crime". Similarly, pens and pencils, while potentially sharp instruments, have also been removed. The collection still covers other sharp instruments that may be used in a similar way to knives, such as scissors, syringes, and axes.

The addition of sharp tools, such as chisels and screwdrivers

The police have told us that these tools are carried and used in a similar premeditated way to knives.

The inclusion of sharp instruments when used as blunt instruments

This recognises that the use of sharp instruments, even as a blunt instrument, carries an implicit threat of serious harm. The victim will not know whether the offender will use the weapon to stab with the blade, or to strike with as a blunt instrument. This change also brings the collection in line with offences involving firearms, where firearms used as blunt instruments are included in the data.

The implementation of the new NDQIS methodology and the change in coverage for the offences involving knife or sharp instruments collection means that data following these changes will not be comparable with those collected prior to April 2019. To preserve the time series, data for the year ending March 2020 were collected from forces on both the old and new methods and coverage. These data were used to create a set of ratios between the two datasets which could be used to adjust the back series. Data for forces who have moved to the new methodology and coverage have been adjusted back to the year ending March 2011.

Due to recording practices, Surrey Police force includes unbroken bottle and glass offences in their data returns, which are outside the scope of this collection. However, as the number of offences recorded by Surrey is around 1% of the total number of offences involving a knife or sharp instrument recorded, it is unlikely to have any effect on the overall estimates. As reported in [Crime in England and Wales 2010 to 2011](#), West Midlands also included these offences in their data returns until April 2010. Due to this change it is not possible to compare data for West Midlands or national totals across this period and this was reflected in the presentation of these figures in previous crime bulletins. National data are now comparable from the year ending March 2011. The change had no effect on the main counts of violence against the person with injury.

Changes to offence codes in April 2012 mean the categories of ABH and GBH and assault with and without injury are not directly comparable between the year ending March 2012 and the year ending March 2013. However, these changes are not expected to affect the totals – the "Knife or sharp instrument offences" section of the latest [quarterly release](#) provides more details.

Home Office statisticians carry out internal quality assurance of the offences involving knives or sharp instruments data prior to submitting the data to the ONS. These checks include:

- a quarterly variation check of the data received from police forces – the total number of recorded crimes and the number recorded against each offence type are compared to the previous quarters' figures to check for any vast deviations from the time series trend
- cross referencing the data with the main recorded crime returns – the knife or sharp instrument collection (for forces who have yet to move to NDQIS) contains information on the total number of offences for the selected offences, which are compared with the main recorded crime return to ensure consistency
- the total number of offences in the knife and sharp instrument collection are used to create a "ratio" for the number of offences that involved a knife or sharp instrument (figures for which are published at the national level); these ratios are also checked at the police force area level to ensure ratios are not showing a deviation from trend
- offences involving a knife or sharp instrument data are also verified with police forces on a quarterly basis ahead of publication
- the data held on the Home Office database are returned to individual forces asking for confirmation that the data accords with that held on their own systems; forces resubmit data if required.

Sexual offences

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. The information within this section refers to estimates collected from the face-to-face CSEW and is not applicable to the TCSEW.

From the year ending March 2013 bulletin onwards, police recorded crime tables present sexual offences in two groups: "rape" and "other sexual offences"[note 5](#). The Sexual Offences Act 2003, introduced in May 2004, altered the definitions of all rape, sexual assault and sexual activity with children and so comparisons before and after the introduction of this Act should be made with caution.

The group of "other sexual offences" recorded by the police covers sexual assault and unlawful sexual activity, which can involve consenting adults or children, and is therefore particularly influenced by police activity in investigating such crime. The Sexual Offences Act 2003 introduced certain offences such as sexual grooming, which is included in this group. Offences of "indecent exposure" [[note 6](#)] [[note 7](#)] have been retrospectively reclassified to sexual offences back to the year ending March 2003, to help comparisons over time.

Because of the small numbers of sexual offences identified by face-to-face CSEW interviews, results from the main CSEW are too unreliable to report; these data are not included within the overall count of violence (except for the categories of "serious wounding with sexual motive" and "other wounding with sexual motive", which are included in the offence type of "wounding").

CSEW respondents may not wish to disclose sensitive information face-to-face and so interviews since the year ending March 2005 (and prior to this in 1996 and 2001) have included self-completion modules that ask about experience of sexual assault. These figures have previously been published separately by the ONS in [Sexual offences in England and Wales overview: year ending March 2020](#).

Intimate violence

Intimate violence was previously used as a collective term to refer to a number of different forms of physical and non-physical abuse asked about in the CSEW, consisting of partner abuse, family abuse, sexual assault and stalking. Information on these types of abuse is collected via a self-completion module. The term reflected the intimate nature either of the victim-perpetrator relationship or of the abuse itself. However, following feedback from users, this term is no longer used in our publications and instead we refer to the different types of abuse separately.

Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse in the CSEW combines the following different types of abuse carried out by a current or former partner or other family member:

- non-sexual abuse by a partner: physical force [note 8], emotional or financial abuse [note 9], or threats to hurt the respondent or someone close to them, carried out by a current or former partner
- non-sexual abuse by a family member: physical force, emotional or financial abuse, or threats to hurt the respondent or someone close to them, carried out by a family member other than a partner (father or mother, step-father or step-mother or other relative)
- sexual assault carried out by a partner or other family member: rape [note 10] or assault by penetration [note 11] including attempts, or indecent exposure or unwanted touching carried out by a current or former partner or other family member
- stalking carried out by a partner or other family member [note 12]: two or more incidents (causing distress, fear or alarm) of receiving obscene or threatening unwanted letters, e-mails, text messages or phone calls; having had obscene or threatening information about them placed on the internet; waiting or loitering around home or workplace; or following or watching by any person, including a current or former partner or family member [note 13]

The CSEW definition of domestic abuse captured in the face-to-face survey broadly matches the [cross-government definition](#), but does not completely capture the new offence of "[coercive and controlling behaviour](#)" ([PDF, 296.2KB](#)), which was introduced on 29 December 2015. The new law captures coercive control through psychological and emotional abuse that can stop short of physical violence. The CSEW has measured some elements of such non-physical abuse since April 2004, but this measure does not completely capture the new offence. To develop a measure of controlling or coercive behaviour, new survey questions were tested on the survey on a split sample basis between April 2017 and March 2019. The results of this are research presented in the article [Developing a measure of controlling or coercive behaviour](#). Our analysis highlighted uncertainty in whether the new measure adequately captured victims of the offence as outlined in the statutory guidance. As such, the questions tested in the split-sample experiment were removed from the survey in April 2019 to allow for further development.

The CSEW also collects information on sexual assault and stalking that occur outside of domestic abuse, that is, carried out by somebody who is not a current or former partner or other family member of the victim.

On 29 April 2021, a new [Domestic Abuse Act](#) was signed into law. The new law provides further protections to people who experience domestic abuse, as well as strengthen measures to tackle perpetrators. Offences that are domestic abuse-related will continue to be recorded under the relevant offence, such as assault with injury.

Abuse as a child

An additional self-completion module was added to the year ending March 2016 Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW), asking questions about experiences of abuse those respondents aged 16 to 59 may have suffered as a child. This module only asked about abuse perpetrated by an adult and replaced other self-completion modules for this time frame. Childhood is defined here as the period the respondent was under the age of 16 years old. The module on child abuse defines childhood abuse within four distinct domains: emotional abuse; physical abuse; any sexual abuse; and witnessing domestic abuse as a child.

The questions within this module have been refined following consultation with stakeholders and the module was included in the year ending March 2019 survey. Changes made to the questions include asking about sexual abuse perpetrated by anyone rather than adults only and separating experiences of sexual abuse into contact and non-contact. This module was asked of respondents aged 18 to 74.

Witnessing domestic abuse

The abuse during childhood module asks adults if they had witnessed domestic violence or abuse (witnessing any emotional, physical or sexual abuse at home) during childhood. Research has shown that witnessing domestic violence or abuse can cause significant harm and have more long-term impacts. Witnessing domestic violence is therefore categorised as child abuse.

Emotional abuse

The abuse during childhood module defines emotional abuse where the adult respondent indicates that they were not loved; told that they should never have been born; threatened to be abandoned or thrown out of the family home; repeatedly belittled to the extent that they felt worthless; physically threatened or someone close to them physically threatened; and emotionally neglected.

Emotional abuse was referred to as 'psychological abuse' in previous publications.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse is defined as where the adult respondent indicated that they were pushed, held down or slapped hard; kicked, bit, or hit with a fist or something else; had something thrown at them; were choked or had someone attempt to strangle them; hit or attacked with a weapon or an object; burned; or had some other kind of force inflicted against them in a non-sexual way. This can include smacking or corporal punishment at school if the respondent experienced it as abuse. Physical abuse, in this instance, does not include peer-on-peer violence such as school bullying.

Any sexual abuse

In the year ending March 2016 CSEW, this included any sexual assault by penetration or rape, including attempts and any other sexual assault such as indecent exposure or unwanted touching. The following were subcategories of the "any sexual assault" category:

- sexual assault by rape or penetration, including attempts; this includes sexual assault by penetration with any object
- other sexual assaults including indecent exposure or unwanted touching; the category includes indecent exposure (such as flashing), or being touched sexually whether it was agreed to or not (for example, groping, touching of breasts or bottom, and kissing)

Changes were made to the questions on sexual abuse for the year ending March 2019 survey to separate out experiences of sexual abuse into contact and non-contact.

Non-contact sexual abuse is defined as where the respondent indicated that someone made them watch or listen to sexual acts or look at sexual images; made or shared sexual images of them; deliberately exposed themselves to them or sent them sexual images or videos of themselves or others.

The following are sub-categories of the "contact sexual abuse" category:

- rape or assault by penetration, including attempts; this includes penetration with any object
- other contact sexual abuse; this includes being touched sexually (for example, groping, touching of breasts or bottom, and kissing) or being forced into touching someone else's body for sexual purposes

This module forms part of a programme of work which aims to improve the design, coverage, and presentation of crime statistics for England and Wales. As part of that work, [Child abuse in England and Wales: January 2020](#) was published, bringing together a range of different data sources on child abuse from across government and the voluntary sector.

Robbery

A robbery is an incident or offence in which force, or the threat of force, is used either during or immediately prior to a theft or attempted theft. As with "violence against the person", police recorded robberies cover a wide range of seriousness, from armed bank robberies to muggings for mobile phones or small amounts of money. Recorded crime offences also distinguish between robbery of personal property ("personal robbery") and business property ("business robbery"). Robbery of business property is a recorded crime classification where goods stolen belong to a business or other corporate body (such as a bank or a shop), regardless of the location of the robbery. The taking of vehicles during robberies (often termed car-jacking) is also included as robbery.

The CSEW and TCSEW covers robberies against individuals resident in households. Following changes to the classification of CSEW offences implemented in July 2014, robbery is no longer included in the violent crime count and instead is presented in a standalone category [note 14].

4.2 Theft offences

Police recorded theft offences include all offences recorded by the police involving theft, encompassing burglary, offences against vehicle owners, theft from the person, bicycle theft, shoplifting and all other theft offences.

Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) and Telephone-operated CSEW (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.

Burglary

The CSEW and TCSEW covers domestic burglary only, which is an unauthorised entry into the victim's dwelling or non-connected building to a dwelling, but does not necessarily involve forced entry; it may be through an open window or by entering the property under false pretences (for example, impersonating an official).

CSEW and TCSEW domestic burglary does not cover theft by a person who is entitled to be in the dwelling at the time of the offence (for example, party guests or workmen); this is called theft from a dwelling and is included in the sub-category "other household theft".

Within the CSEW and TCSEW, it is possible to differentiate between "burglary with entry" and "attempted burglary" and also between "burglary with loss" and "burglary with no loss". Burglary with entry plus attempted burglary adds up to total burglary. Burglary with loss plus burglary with no loss adds up to burglary with entry. These are defined in this section.

"Burglary with entry" is a term used in the CSEW/TCSEW and comprises burglary where a building was successfully entered, regardless of whether something was stolen or not.

"Burglary with loss" is a term used in the CSEW/TCSEW and comprises burglary where a building was successfully entered and something was stolen.

"Burglary with no loss" is a term used in the CSEW/TCSEW and comprises burglary where a building was successfully entered but nothing was stolen.

An "attempted burglary" is recorded by the police and in the CSEW/TCSEW if there is clear evidence that the offender made an actual, physical attempt to gain entry to a building (for example, damage to locks, or broken doors) but was unsuccessful.

The police record an offence of "burglary" if a person enters any building as a trespasser and with the intent to commit an offence of theft, grievous bodily harm (GBH) or unlawful damage. "Aggravated burglary" occurs when the burglar is carrying a firearm, imitation firearm, offensive weapon or explosive.

From April 2017 a new classification of burglary offences was introduced. Prior to this, police recorded crime figures were published separately for burglaries that occurred in domestic properties and those which occurred in commercial or other properties. Domestic burglaries included burglaries in all inhabited dwellings, including inhabited caravans, houseboats and holiday homes, as well as sheds and garages connected to the main dwelling (for example, by a connecting door). Non-domestic burglaries included burglaries to businesses (including hotels and similar accommodation) and also some burglaries of sheds and outhouses where these are not clearly connected to the inhabited property.

New sub-categories of residential and non-residential burglary have replaced domestic and non-domestic burglary respectively. The new classification of residential burglary now includes all buildings or parts of buildings that are within the boundary of, or form a part of, a dwelling. Burglary offence codes 28A, 28B, 28C, 28D and 29 have been replaced by offence codes 28E, 28F, 28G, 28H and 29A. Offence codes 30A, 30B and 31, have been replaced by 30C, 30D and 31A. This classification change affects percentage change figures for all subcategories of burglary where it is not currently possible to make meaningful comparisons over time, therefore these figures are not shown. Figures for total burglary are unaffected.

Vehicle-related theft

The CSEW and TCSEW includes offences against private households only but relates to vehicles owned by any member of the household (company cars are included). CSEW/TCSEW offences cover cars, vans, motorbikes, motor-scooters or mopeds used for non-commercial purposes, and are published in three categories:

- "theft from vehicles" refers to both theft of parts and accessories of motor vehicles and to theft of contents
- "theft of vehicles" is where the vehicle is driven away illegally, whether or not it is recovered
- "attempted thefts of and from vehicles" – no distinction is made between attempted thefts of and attempted thefts from vehicles as it is often difficult to ascertain the offender's intention

If parts or contents are stolen as well as the vehicle being moved, the incident is classified as "theft of a vehicle".

The police recorded crime category of vehicle offences covers private and commercial vehicles (although does not distinguish between the two) and comprises:

- "theft or unauthorised taking of a motor vehicle", where the vehicle is taken without the consent of the owner or other lawful authority; this includes incidents where there is intent to permanently deprive the owner or where intent is not evident, typically including "joyriding" where the car is later recovered
- "aggravated vehicle taking" where a vehicle once taken is known to have been driven dangerously, damaged, or caused an accident
- "theft from a vehicle targeting property in or on the vehicle"; this also includes attempts
- "interfering with a motor vehicle" – this includes crimes where, while damage has been caused to the vehicle as part of an attempt to steal either the vehicle or its contents, or take the vehicle without consent, the specific intent of the offender is not obvious; for example, a car door may be damaged, which shows an attempt was made to open it, but it cannot be determined if the intent was to steal the car or its contents

"Interfering with a motor vehicle" offences, as presented in the crime statistics bulletins, are equivalent to offences formerly referred to as "vehicle interference and tampering" offences. The CSEW, and by extension the TCSEW, cannot separately identify this category. In comparisons with the CSEW, it is included in the attempted vehicle theft category but in some instances could be viewed as criminal damage or even as nuisance.

The taking of vehicles during robberies (often termed car-jacking) is included within the robbery offence group.

Bicycle theft

Police recorded crime includes offences where a pedal cycle is stolen or taken without authorisation. The CSEW /TCSEW covers thefts of bicycles belonging to the respondent or any other member of the household.

This category does not include every bicycle theft, as some may be stolen during the course of another offence (for example, burglary). Where this is the case, the offence will not be recorded as bicycle theft but as the more serious crime type. Therefore, where a bicycle is stolen as part of another offence it would be classified by the police and in the CSEW/TCSEW as:

- "burglary" – when the bicycle is stolen from inside a house by someone who was trespassing; if a bicycle is stolen from a connected garage or non-connected garage or outhouse and no attempt was made to steal anything else then this is classified as bicycle theft
- "theft from a dwelling" – when the bicycle is stolen from inside a house by someone who was not trespassing
- "theft from a vehicle" – if the bicycle is one of a number of things stolen
- "theft of a vehicle" – if the bicycle was in or on the vehicle when it was stolen

Other theft

"Theft from the person" covers theft (including attempts) of a handbag, wallet or cash, among other things, directly from the victim, but without the use of physical force against the victim, or the threat of it. The CSEW /TCSEW category can be broken down into three components:

- "snatch theft" is where there may be an element of force involved but this is only just enough to snatch the property away
- "stealth theft" is where no force is used and the victim is unaware of the incident (pick-pocketing); stealth theft makes up the majority of "theft from the person" incidents
- "attempted snatch or stealth theft" is where an attempt, which may or may not involve an element of (minor) force, is made to steal, but is unsuccessful

For police recorded crime, "theft from the person" offences are those where there is no use of threat or force in the process of the theft. Stealth theft is included as part of this recorded crime category and cannot be separately identified from snatch theft.

CSEW/TCSEW "other theft of personal property" covers thefts away from the home where no force is used, there was no direct contact between the offender and victim, and the victim was not holding or carrying the items when they were stolen (for example, thefts of unattended property).

CSEW/TCSEW "other household theft" covers "theft from a dwelling", which includes thefts that occurred in the victim's dwelling by someone who was entitled to be there, and "theft from outside a dwelling", which covers incidents where items are stolen from outside the victim's home and also includes thefts in non-connected buildings (for example, garden sheds) by someone who was entitled to be there.

Police recorded crime captures a separate category of "shoplifting".

The police recorded crime offence group of "other theft" offences covers thefts that are not covered by other acquisitive crime offence groups (for example, thefts from vehicles are included in offences against vehicles); one such example is unauthorised taking (including metal theft). In recognition of the volume of metal theft crime and its impact on the economy and particular industries that are targeted, a separate metal theft data collection has been established and more information is available in the [Property crime tables](#).

Neighbourhood crime

Neighbourhood crime covers robbery and selected theft offences (theft from the person, domestic burglary and vehicle related theft). This has been included in our publications in order to monitor the level of neighbourhood crime as defined in the [Home Office's beating crime plan](#). This definition of neighbourhood crime does not include other theft of personal property, other household theft or bicycle theft.

4.3 Criminal damage and arson

In the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) and the telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales (TCSEW), criminal damage is defined as the intentional and malicious damage to the home, other property or vehicles. Criminal damage in the CSEW/TCSEW ranges from arson to graffiti. Cases where there is nuisance only (for example, letting down car tyres) or where the damage is accidental are not included. Where damage occurs in combination with burglary or robbery, the burglary or robbery codes take precedence over the damage codes in offence coding.

The CSEW/TCSEW produces estimates for criminal damage to vehicles, and arson and other criminal damage (to the home and other property). "Criminal damage to a vehicle" includes any intentional and malicious damage to a vehicle, such as scratching a coin down the side of a car or denting a car roof. It does not, however, include causing deliberate damage to a car by fire. These incidents are recorded as arson and, therefore, are included in "arson and other criminal damage". The CSEW/TCSEW only covers damage against private households; that is, vehicles owned by any member of the household (this includes company cars). Police recorded crime includes all vehicle criminal damage under the offence classification of "criminal damage to a vehicle". "Arson and other criminal damage" includes intentional or malicious damage to the home (doors, windows, fences, plants and shrubs, for example) or other property and arson, where there is any deliberate damage to property belonging to the respondent or their household (including vehicles) caused by fire.

Police recorded 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. Damage which is repairable without cost, or which is accidental, is not included in police recorded crime statistics. Separate recorded crime figures exist for criminal damage to a dwelling, to a building other than a dwelling, to a vehicle and other criminal damage. Figures are also published for racially or religiously aggravated criminal damage.

"Arson" is the act of deliberately setting fire to property, including buildings and vehicles. In the CSEW/TCSEW this is any deliberate damage to property belonging to the respondent or their household caused by fire, regardless of the type of property involved. The only exception is where the item that is set on fire was stolen first (this is coded as theft).

For vehicle crime, if a vehicle is stolen and later found deliberately burnt out by the same offender, one crime of "theft of a vehicle" is recorded by the police and in the CSEW/TCSEW. If there is evidence that someone unconnected with the theft committed the arson, then an offence of "arson" is recorded by the police in addition to the theft. For the CSEW/TCSEW, only an offence of "theft of a vehicle" would be recorded as, in practice, it would often not be possible to establish that the arson was committed by someone unconnected with the theft.

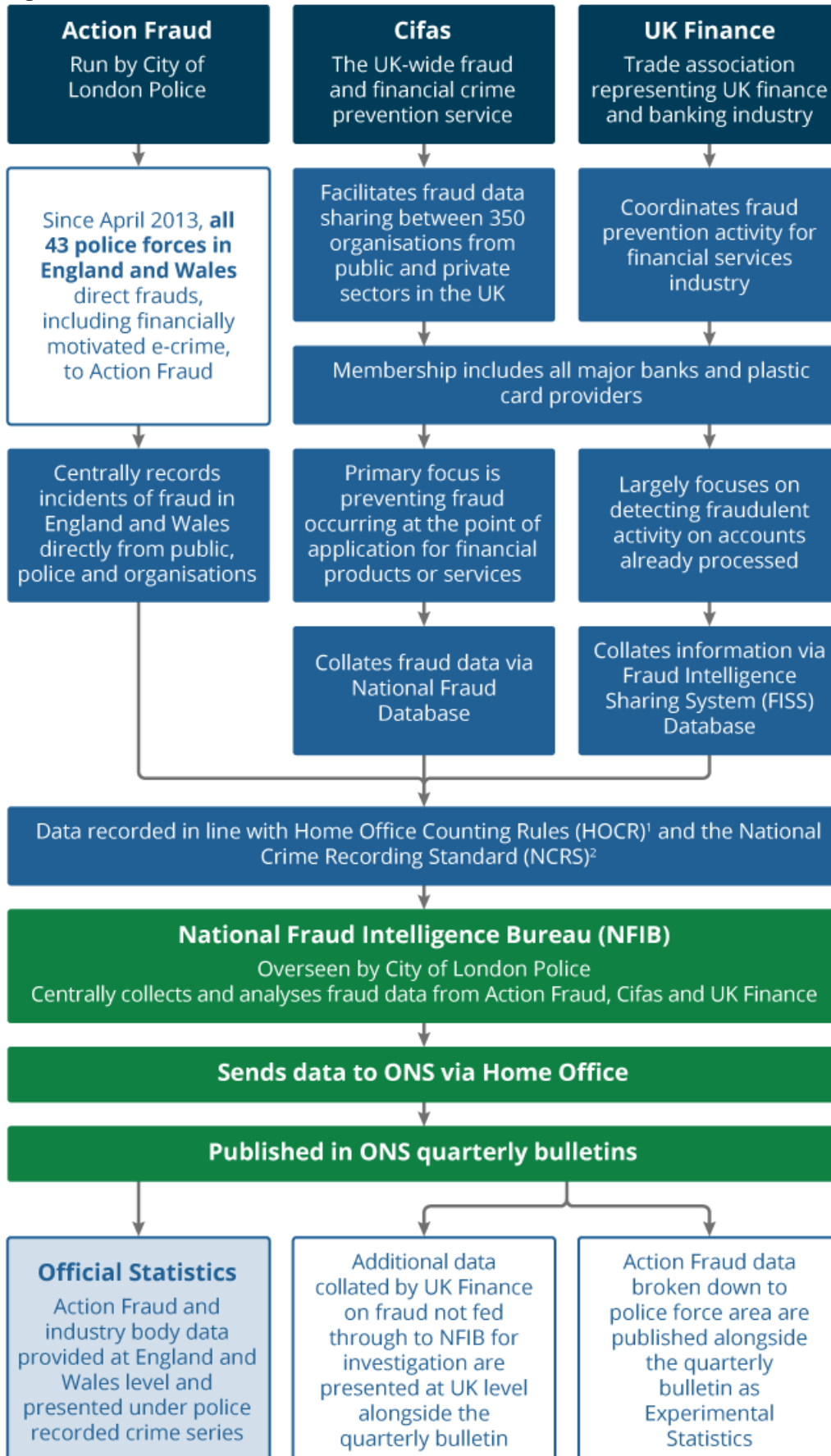
4.4 Fraud and computer misuse

The measurement of fraud is challenging as it is a deceptive crime that is difficult to detect accurately and is often targeted at organisations as well as individuals. It is known to be under-reported to the authorities and difficult to measure on victimisation surveys.

Fraud data from a range of administrative sources are presented in the quarterly statistical bulletins on crime in England and Wales to provide a more complete picture. These are outlined in Figure 5 and include:

- police recorded crime via Action Fraud
- data from industry bodies reported to the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau (NFIB)

Figure 3: Sources of administrative data on fraud



Source: Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. For full definitions of different types of crime recorded by the police see the [Home Office Counting Rules](#) for recorded crime.
2. Further information on decisions around when a crime should be recorded is provided in the [National Crime Recording Standard](#).

Police recorded crime

Under the Fraud Act 2006 (introduced in January 2007 [note 15]), fraud is defined as dishonestly making a false representation to obtain property or money for themselves or another. Previously, it was defined as dishonestly deceiving to obtain either property or pecuniary advantage. Table 2 shows the police recorded fraud and forgery offences before and after the introduction of the Fraud Act 2006.

Table 2: Police recorded fraud and forgery offences

Police recorded fraud and forgery offences before the Fraud Act 2006	Current police recorded fraud and forgery offences under the Fraud Act 2006
Fraud by company director	Fraud by company director
False accounting	False accounting
Bankruptcy and insolvency offences	Bankruptcy and insolvency offences
Forgery or use of false drug prescription	Forgery or use of drug prescription
Cheque and credit card fraud	Cheque and credit card fraud
Other frauds	Other frauds
	Failing to disclose information
	Abuse of position
	Obtaining services dishonestly
	Making, supplying or possessing articles for use in fraud
	Fraud, forgery associated with vehicle driver records
	Other forgery

Source: Home Office

The introduction of the Fraud Act 2006 changed the recording of cheque and plastic card fraud from a "per transaction" to a "per account" basis. This means that if an account is defrauded, one offence is recorded rather than one offence per fraudulent transaction as previously. This change was introduced to reduce bureaucracy and to reflect that the financial loss from this type of fraudulent crime is generally borne by the account holding financial institution, rather than the account holder or those involved in processing the transactions.

The changes resulting from the introduction of the Fraud Act 2006 mean that police recorded fraud and forgery figures from the year ending March 2008 onwards are not comparable with previous years.

Previously, published crime statistics for police recorded forgery offences were presented alongside fraud offences. Following the reclassification in 2013 of some categories in the police recorded crime series, these forgery offences have now been moved to "other crimes against society". The headline total police recorded crime figure for England and Wales includes fraud offences; specifically, those recorded by the police from the year ending March 2003 to the year ending March 2013, and by Action Fraud from the year ending March 2012 (in the year ending March 2012 there was an overlap, as Action Fraud had taken over responsibility for recording fraud offences from five police forces, with a further overlap in the year ending March 2013, as all remaining forces then migrated on a rolling basis during the year). The central recording of fraud offences means that police recorded crime shown at police force area level does not include fraud offences. A breakdown of Action Fraud data by police force area is however available separately (Experimental Statistics).

Action Fraud and the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau

The Fraud Act 2006 and the Attorney General's Fraud Review resulted in the creation of a National Fraud Authority (NFA) [note 16], which acted as an umbrella government organisation to co-ordinate and oversee the fight against fraud and computer misuse, across the UK. One of their main objectives was to better support the reporting of fraudulent crimes and their subsequent investigation. The review of fraud, commissioned by the government, recognised that attempts to tackle fraud and computer misuse were being undermined by the lack of a joined-up approach to reporting, recording and analysing fraud and computer misuse.

The review also resulted in the City of London Police being designated the National Lead Force for fraud and being given the responsibility for setting up a centre of excellence for fraud investigation across the UK.

In the year ending March 2010, the NFA opened Action Fraud, a national fraud and computer misuse reporting centre that records incidents of fraud and computer misuse directly from the public and organisations by phone or internet, in addition to incidents reported directly to individual police forces. Additionally, in the year ending March 2010, the NFA and the police jointly established the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau (NFIB), which is a government-funded initiative run by the City of London Police.

The NFIB currently collates received reports of fraud and computer misuse from Action Fraud, as well as reports of fraud from two industry bodies: Cifas (a UK-wide cross-sector fraud and financial crime prevention service) and UK Finance) [note 17]. Action Fraud works with the NFIB to provide support and fraud prevention advice to individuals who are victims of fraud and computer misuse, and to ensure a joined-up approach to policing and detecting fraud and computer misuse. The NFIB analyses the fraud and computer misuse reports to record them appropriately as offences, and to identify potential lines of enquiry for a police investigation. Where a viable investigational lead is identified, NFIB will disseminate crime packages [note 18] to police forces or other appropriate agencies [note 19] for investigation, and will liaise directly with them until an outcome is reached. Action Fraud reports that do not meet the criteria for further investigation may be reopened at a later date should subsequent information provide sufficient leads.

As of 1 April 2013, Action Fraud took over full responsibility from individual police forces for recording all incidents of fraud and computer misuse. All police forces in England and Wales now refer reports of fraud, including financially motivated e-crime, to the NFIB through Action Fraud. More information about these fraud types is available in the [Home Office Counting Rules for fraud](#).

Action Fraud had a phased introduction between April 2011 and March 2013 to allow for piloting and development of the service. This involved local police forces transferring responsibility over to Action Fraud at different points during this period. The date at which each police force transferred recording to Action Fraud is listed in Table 3.

This phased transition meant that, throughout the year ending March 2012 and the year ending March 2013, two reporting arrangements for fraud were operating in parallel, with some police forces referring cases to Action Fraud and other forces recording them independently. For example, by December 2012, 24 out of the 43 police force areas had completed the transfer to Action Fraud, while the remaining 19 forces still had responsibility for recording fraud locally. All police forces in England and Wales transferred responsibility for recording all fraud and computer misuse offences to Action Fraud by 31 March 2013.

Now, members of the public who have been a direct victim of fraud and computer misuse should report the incident straight to Action Fraud (either via their customer call centres or their online reporting tool), but may still report to the police if they are not aware of the existence or role of Action Fraud. Where this happens, they will be advised by the police to report the incident to Action Fraud. Where a victim declines, the police will inform the victim that they will refer the offence to Action Fraud on their behalf. There is a risk of duplication here if the victim then changes their mind at a later date and reports the same incident to Action Fraud, however, the risk of double counting as a result of this is thought to be very small.

Police forces continue to record forgery offences [note 20], offences which meet the "call for service" criteria [note 21] and crimes passed to them by the NFIB for investigation, but no longer record for statistical purposes any offences amounting to fraud as of 31 March 2013. As a result, the number of frauds recorded by the police over the course of the year ending March 2014 steadily diminished, and amounts to zero for all subsequent bulletins [note 22].

In order to reflect these changes in operation arrangements for reporting and recording fraud and computer misuse, trend data presented in the current bulletin on fraud recorded by the police cover both offences recorded by individual police forces up to the year ending 2013, and those recorded by the NFIB through Action Fraud. This means that any comparison of the current fraud and computer misuse figures with years prior to March 2015 must be treated with caution. Action Fraud collates data for the UK as a whole and the figures for England and Wales are based on victims' address details [note 23], as no information is available on where offences take place (which is often hard to define).

Importantly, in July 2015, the company that was contracted to provide the Action Fraud call centre service went into administration. This led to an immediate downscaling of the call centre operation. A new contractor, who was due to take over the Action Fraud call centre in April 2016, was asked to take over operations early in August 2015. Following the previous call centre service contractor going into administration in July 2015, Action Fraud recorded lower than normal monthly volumes of fraud offences between the period of July 2015 to April 2016. Subsequent to this period, figures started to return to levels seen prior to the contractual issues.

Unlike other crime types (for which recorded crime data are submitted by individual police forces), sub-national breakdowns for offences recorded by Action Fraud have not previously been available; this reflects both Action Fraud's role as the national reporting centre for fraud and computer misuse, and the fact that such offences often cross geographical boundaries and can be difficult to attribute to a specific force. However, following work conducted by the Home Office and Action Fraud, a police force area breakdown of Action Fraud data is now available and was published for the first time as Experimental Statistics alongside the quarterly release "Crime in England and Wales, year ending March 2016". The breakdown is produced based on where the victim resides, although there are a number of "unknown" cases where it is not possible to attribute offences to a victim's police force area, for example, due to missing victim address information, or where the offence occurred outside the UK.

The NFIB also collate further data on fraud from two industry bodies, Cifas and UK Finance, which are now included in the police recorded crime figures published by the ONS (since the bulletin released in October 2015). Previously, these had been reported on separately for the UK as a whole but are now presented at an England and Wales level alongside the figures for Action Fraud, with a time series available back to the year ending March 2012. Further details on these industry bodies, and the data they collate, is found in this section, along with information on how the England and Wales level data were calculated.

Table 3: Police force transition dates for the recording of fraud to Action Fraud

Region/ Force	Go live Date	Region/ Force	Go live Date	Region/ Force	Go live Date
Eastern		South East		South West	
Bedfordshire	01-Dec-12	Kent	01-Dec-11	Avon and Somerset	03-Dec-12
Cambridgeshire	21-Jan-13	Hampshire	03-Dec-12	Devon and Cornwall	03-Dec-12
Essex	17-Dec-12	Surrey	03-Dec-12	Dorset	03-Dec-12
Norfolk	14-Jan-13	Sussex	03-Dec-12	Gloucestershire	03-Dec-12
Suffolk	14-Jan-13	Thames Valley	03-Dec-12	Wiltshire	03-Dec-12
Hertfordshire	01-Nov-12				
East Midlands		West Midlands		North East	
Derbyshire	07-Jan-13	Staffordshire	02-Jan-13	Northumbria	03-Dec-12
Northants	29-Oct-12	Warwickshire	01-Jan-13	Durham	03-Dec-12
Leicestershire	01-Jul-11	West Mercia	01-Jan-13	Cleveland	04-Mar-13
Lincolnshire	01-Jan-13	West Midlands	02-Jan-13		
Nottinghamshire	07-Jan-13				
Yorkshire and Humberside		North West		Wales	
Humberside	25-Mar-13	Cheshire	18-Feb-13	Dyfed Powys	03-Dec-12
North Yorkshire	25-Mar-13	Cumbria	01-Nov-11	Gwent	03-Dec-12
South Yorkshire	25-Mar-13	GMP	01-Jan-12	North Wales	03-Dec-12
West Yorkshire	25-Mar-13	Merseyside	18-Feb-13	South Wales	03-Dec-12
		Lancashire	18-Feb-13		
Others					
Met Police	04-Feb-13				
British Transport Police	03-Mar-13				
MOD Police	21-Feb-13				
City of London	01-Apr-11				

Source: Home Office

Cifas

Cifas facilitates fraud data sharing between around 350 organisations from across the public and private sectors in the UK. It is a Specified Anti-Fraud Organisation (SAFO) under the Serious Crimes Act (2007) and operates as a not-for-profit membership association. Its coverage includes all of the major banks and around 90% of plastic card providers; [a list of all member organisations participating in Cifas data sharing schemes is available](#). Cifas operates the National Fraud Database and the Internal Fraud Database [note 24], and in addition to offering members fraud prevention services, collects data for the UK on a range of different frauds and financial crimes, including:

- banking and credit industry
- insurance related
- telecom industry
- business trading
- fraudulent applications for grants from charities

The category "banking and credit industry fraud" can be broken down further, into:

- cheque, plastic card and online bank accounts (not PSP [note 25])
- application fraud (excluding mortgages)
- mortgage-related fraud

Application fraud covers payment-related frauds, including those offences that occurred outside of the banking sector. Fraudsters may open an account using fake or stolen documents in someone else's name, for example, fraudulent applications made in relation to hire purchase agreements or loans, as well as to insurance, telecommunications or retail companies, or public sector organisations. Mortgage-related frauds often involve individuals or organised criminal gangs, and can include over-valuing properties, overstating a salary or income, and changing title deeds without an owner's knowledge to allow the sale of a property.

Types of plastic card fraud recorded on the Cifas National Fraud Database include fraudulent applications for plastic cards (including instances of identify fraud impersonations), fraudulent misuse of plastic card accounts, and takeover of plastic card accounts (for example, changing the address and getting new cards issued). Cifas data do not currently include data on "remote purchase" (card not present) fraud, which refer 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. In addition, Cifas does not hold data on fraud relating to lost or stolen cards and ATM (cash machine) fraud. This means that a high proportion of plastic card fraud is not included in the NFIB figures.

Cifas data are recorded in line with the National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS) and the Home Office Counting Rules (HOCR), and are now included in published NFIB fraud figures at an England and Wales level geography, broken down directly by Cifas based on available information on the address that the fraudster has used. In some cases this will be the victim's address, while in others it may be an address used by the fraudster (for example, in making a fraudulent application).

UK Finance

UK Finance is responsible for coordinating activities on fraud prevention in the UK payments industry and represents members from retail banks, credit, debit and charge card issuers, and card payment acquirers in the UK.

UK Finance collates information on fraud cases from its members via a central Fraud Intelligence Sharing System (FISS) database. Actionable intelligence from the UK Finance data is then submitted to the NFIB via FISS, and includes:

- mail not received (MNR) fraud, card ID fraud – this includes account takeover and application fraud
- payment fraud – this includes fraud relating to telephone banking and online banking
- cheque fraud – this includes forged, altered and counterfeit cheques
- mule accounts – accounts used for laundering the proceeds of fraud

Like Cifas, UK Finance data are (since October 2015) included in published NFIB fraud figures at England and Wales level. UK Finance produces data at UK level only, therefore an estimate for the total number of fraud offences reported by UK Finance at England and Wales level is calculated from the UK figures. This is achieved by calculating a weighting factor for UK Finance based on the proportion of Cifas data occurring in England and Wales. Specifically, the proportion of Cifas offences recorded as being based in England and Wales (for each fraud type common to both Cifas and UK Finance) is multiplied by the proportion of FISS offences within that fraud type. The sum of these provides an overall weighting for estimating the proportion of fraud offences measured by FISS data that were England and Wales based.

Importantly, the crimes fed through to the NFIB from FISS are those reported for intelligence purposes and the fraud records which hold intelligence value for enforcement purposes, and are not intended to be a complete record of all frauds reported by its members. Consequently, there are many cases recorded separately by UK Finance (via a fraud reporting database called CAMIS) that are not reported to the NFIB because they hold insufficient information to be of value from an intelligence perspective. These include "remote purchase" (card not present) fraud and lost or stolen cards, which account for a high proportion of plastic card fraud that is excluded from the NFIB figures. We present this additional [note 26] to provide further context in our quarterly bulletins and to give a clearer picture on the full scale of fraud experienced by UK Finance members [note 27]. These figures are presented at UK level only and are also available from UK Finance, along with information relating to plastic card fraud in terms of levels of financial loss by value [note 28].

Authorised Push Payment (APP fraud) was included in the UK Finance CAMIS data for the first time for the year ending December 2017. APP fraud relates to cases where victims are tricked into sending money directly from their account to an account that the fraudster controls. These new data were produced in response to investigations by the Payment Systems Regulator (PSR) into a [Super-complaint](#) received from the consumer group Which? in 2016. Following the Super-complaint, the 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 APP scams [note 29]. UK Finance were unable to provide data by payment type for the year ending March 2022 in time for publication.

It is important to note that CAMIS data only include confirmed cases (where a loss was suffered). Therefore, figures exclude incidents of attempted fraud where the attempt has been stopped or prevented for whatever reason (for example, by bank detection systems) before a loss has occurred. UK Finance does collect data on prevented fraud, although this is not supplied to the ONS due to the potential for double-counting. The prevented data are available in the UK Finance [Fraud the Facts 2020](#) publication.

Both sets of industry data from Cifas and UK Finance relate only to fraud that is identified and reported, and only fraud affecting those organisations that are part of the respective membership networks. As such, neither dataset can provide a complete picture of fraud in the industry sectors they represent. While membership of Cifas and UK Finance has remained fairly stable over the last few years, it is possible that coverage could change as new members join or previous members withdraw; the addition or withdrawal of one large member might be sufficient to impact significantly on overall figures for reported fraud.

Cifas and UK Finance provide data from their respective memberships to NFIB via their individual databases; however, a number of member organisations contributing to those separate databases are members of both industry bodies.

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

Crime Survey for England and Wales

For a number of years, the CSEW has included supplementary modules of questions on victimisation across a range of fraud and computer misuse offences. These are reported separately from the headline estimates.

We have more recently completed a substantial project to incorporate new questions on fraud (both online and offline) and computer misuse for inclusion in the CSEW and by extension the telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales (TCSEW). The project involved the development, cognitive testing and piloting of a number of screener questions designed to identify who had experienced different types of fraud and computer misuse. The final screener questions were incorporated into the live survey in April 2015.

New victimisation module questions have also been developed to capture more detailed information about the offence and to allow accurate coding of the offences recorded. These were introduced into the live survey from October 2015, following testing in a large-scale field trial that took place between May and August 2015. This field test was beneficial in testing how the screener and victimisation module questions work together in a live setting, and initial evaluation of the data can be found in the methodological note [CSEW Fraud and Cyber-crime development: Field trial – October 2015](#). Following the success of this large-scale field trial, new victimisation questions were introduced, which aim to cover a wide range of frauds including those operated by traditional and more modern methods and those committed in person, by mail, over the phone and online. In addition, questions cover incidents of crime falling under the Computer Misuse Act, such as incidents where the victim's computer or other internet-enabled device has been infected by a virus, as well as incidents where the respondent's email or social media accounts had been hacked into by others.

Up to the end of September 2017, the new questions were asked of half the survey sample only to test for detrimental effects on the survey as a whole, and to help ensure that the historical time series is protected. From October 2017 onwards, the questions are being asked of a full survey sample. We have accounted for this combination of full and half survey sample by scaling up the weights to represent the total population.

Estimates produced from this new data on fraud and computer misuse have been published (at England and Wales level geography only) alongside the most recent quarterly bulletin, and have formed part of the headline CSEW/TCSEW estimates since the year ending September 2016 quarterly bulletin, when a full year's interview data first became available. It has been possible to look at changes in these estimates from the year ending September 2017 when two full years of estimates first became available. Importantly, as this comparison is currently based on two data points only, caution must be taken in drawing inferences about trends at this early stage.

Previously estimates of fraud and computer misuse have been published as Experimental Statistics due to the need for ongoing evaluation and modification of the questions and coding process. We are satisfied with the work we have done surrounding the quality of the data on fraud and computer misuse and have now also added these to the total estimate of crime. Fraud and computer misuse statistics were formally assessed by the Office for Statistics Regulation against the Code of Practice for Statistics and were awarded National Statistics status in March 2018. It should be noted, however, that all TCSEW estimates are branded as experimental for the time being.

The supplementary module on plastic card fraud continued to be included in the survey while the new questions on fraud and computer misuse were bedded in. As of October 2017 the supplementary module on plastic card fraud was removed from the questionnaire, and all future estimates relating to bank and credit card fraud will be calculated using data from the new questions.

The new statistics on fraud and computer misuse provide data on four major fraud categories:

- bank and credit account fraud – this includes fraudulent access to bank, building society or credit card accounts or fraudulent use of plastic card details
- advance fee fraud – this includes lottery scams, romance fraud and inheritance fraud
- consumer and retail fraud (previously known as non-investment fraud) [note 30] – this includes bogus callers, ticketing fraud, phone scams and computer software service fraud
- other fraud – this includes investment fraud and charity fraud

Data is also provided on two offences covered by the Computer Misuse Act:

- unauthorised access to personal information (including hacking)
- computer virus – this includes any computer virus, malware or Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) attack [note 31]

The previously mentioned CSEW/TCSEW classification broadly aligns with the classification system employed by the NFIB, although some NFIB categories do not apply to the general household population, for example, "fraud by abuse of position", whilst others such as "charity fraud" (where numbers were considered too small for measurement by the survey) have been subsumed into the "other fraud" category.

Importantly, while CSEW/TCSEW estimates will include crimes that have not been reported to the authorities, being a household survey, the CSEW/TCSEW only seeks to capture fraud where an individual has been a victim. Compared with victims of other crime types, it is more likely that some victims of fraud, especially very elderly and vulnerable victims who may have suffered significant financial losses, may not have the confidence to allow an interviewer into their home to conduct an interview.

In addition, these figures are not comparable with the published results from the field trial for several reasons. Firstly, a more sophisticated classification and offence coding process of fraud and cybercrime offences has now been developed, which was not in place when the preliminary field trial was conducted. Secondly, there is a difference in sample size – the field trial was asked of 2,000 respondents, whereas when the new fraud questions were introduced into the live survey they were asked of half of the full survey sample, equating to around 17,000 interviews. In addition, a lower response rate of 53% was achieved in the field trial compared with that achieved for the standard CSEW (preliminary analysis indicates that the 2017 to 2018 CSEW response rate was 73%) reflecting the shorter three-month fieldwork period available for the field trial.

4.5 Other crimes against society

This high-level category was introduced to separate out crimes that do not normally have a specific identifiable victim. Trends in such offences can reflect changes in police activity rather than in levels of criminality. "Other crimes against society" comprises categories of "drug offences"; "possession of weapons"; "public order"; and "miscellaneous crimes against society".

Drug offences

Drug offences now fall within the broad category of "other crimes against society". With effect from April 2004, the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) [note 32] issued guidance to forces over the recording of warnings for cannabis possession (these were termed "formal warnings" for cannabis possession prior to January 2007). These were incorporated into the Home Office Counting Rules (HOCR); there is more information about these rules in [Section 3.3](#). From January 2009 it has also been possible to issue a Penalty Notice for Disorder (PND) for cannabis possession (this detection method was not separated from cannabis warnings in statistics for the period to the end of March 2009).

Cannabis warnings will be an outcome in their own right under the new outcomes framework that was introduced in April 2014. Cannabis warnings will be distinct from all other outcome types in the data collected.

In addition, the Home Office produces a separate National Statistics bulletin on [Drug Misuse Declared](#) for England and Wales, covering illicit drug use based on results from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW).

Possession of weapons

Possession of weapons offences prior to the quarterly bulletin for the year ending March 2013, were included within the "violence against the person" category. Following changes to the presentation of classifications used in the presentation of police recorded crime, a new category of possession of weapons offences is included within "other crimes against society". These offences relate to licensing and ownership of weapons, that is, where there was no violence involved at the time of the offence. Any circumstances in which a weapon has been used against a victim would be covered by other relevant victim-based offences.

Public order offences

These offences cover circumstances where an offender is behaving in a way that causes, or would be likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress. These classifications would not be used in any circumstances where physical violence is used (or attempted) against a specific victim. The classification may include some cases where violence is used, or threatened, and the largest proportion will be accounted for by state-based crimes recorded where the police have acted to restore public order where no individual victim has been identified.

Miscellaneous crimes against society

Miscellaneous crimes against society comprise a variety of offences. The largest volume offences include handling stolen goods, threat to commit criminal damage, and perverting the course of justice.

4.6 Hate crime

Hate crime covers any notifiable offence that is perceived, by the victim or any other person, as having been motivated (entirely or partially) by a hostility or prejudice to a personal characteristic or perceived personal characteristic, such as ethnicity or religion.

In 2007, the police, Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), Prison Service (now the National Offender Management Service) and other agencies that make up the criminal justice system, agreed a common definition of "hate crime" and five "strands" that would be monitored centrally [note 33]. Primarily, this was to ensure a consistent working definition to allow accurate recording and monitoring. The five monitored strands are:

- disability
- gender identity
- race
- religion or faith
- sexual orientation

Crimes based on hostility to age, gender or appearance, for example, can also be hate crimes, although they are not centrally monitored.

Hate crime can take many forms including:

- physical attacks such as assault; grievous bodily harm and murder; damage to property; offensive graffiti; and arson
- threat of attack including offensive letters; abusive or obscene telephone calls; groups hanging around to intimidate; and unfounded, malicious complaints
- verbal abuse, insults or harassment such as taunting; offensive leaflets and posters; abusive gestures; dumping of rubbish outside homes or through letterboxes; and bullying at school or in the workplace

The police have been recording reported hate crimes since April 2008 for the five monitored strands listed in this section. Figures (covering England, Wales and Northern Ireland for 2009) were first published by the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) [note 34] in 2010, and [figures for 2011 were published in September 2012](#).

The Home Office publishes statistics on hate crime recorded by the police annually. These figures are not directly comparable with those published by the ACPO as the time periods for the collections differ, as does the recording methodology (forces record solely one form of monitored hate crime for each offence) and geographical coverage. The latest figures relating to hate crime were published by the Home Office and can be found on the [Hate Crime Statistics](#) page.

Racially or religiously motivated hate crime

The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW), and by extension the telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales (TCSEW), question on whether an incident was motivated by race was first introduced in 1988, and has been kept as a separate question since then. CSEW information on racially-motivated hate crime has been previously published in the Ministry of Justice's publication on [Statistics on Race and the Criminal Justice System](#).

Religiously-motivated hate crime used to be asked about as a separate question (in the year ending March 2006 and the year ending March 2007 CSEW) but was merged into the main CSEW questions when further hate crime questions referring to sexual orientation, age and disability were introduced in the year ending March 2008. In the year ending March 2010, gender was added as a motivation, and transgender or gender identity was added as a motivation to the year ending March 2012 survey. Figures on racially and religiously-motivated crimes from the year ending March 2006 and the year ending March 2007 CSEW were reported in [Attitudes, perceptions and risks of crime: Supplementary Volume 1 to Crime in England and Wales 2006 to 2007](#). Racially-aggravated offences are also collated through police recorded crime data and are legally defined under Section 28 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. The Anti-terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001 (Section 39) added the religiously-aggravated aspect. Racially and religiously-aggravated offences are categorised together in police recorded crime and cannot be separately identified.

4.7 Anti-social behaviour

The term "anti-social behaviour" (ASB) was formalised in the late 1990s to describe a wide range of the nuisance, disorder and crime that affects people's daily lives.

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 defined anti-social behaviour in law as someone "acting in a manner that caused, or was likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress to one or more persons not of the same household as himself."

Police recorded ASB incidents

Anti-social behaviour incidents are recorded by the police in accordance with the National Standard for Incident Recording (NSIR). In many cases these incidents may still be crimes in law, such as littering or dog fouling, but they are not of a level of severity that would result in the recording of a notifiable offence. Thus, they are not included in the main police recorded crime collection.

Figures relating to ASB, however, can be considered alongside those on police recorded (notifiable) crime to provide a more comprehensive view of the crime and disorder that comes to the attention of the police.

The effects on a victim of ASB can be similar to that experienced by a victim of a crime; for example, anger, annoyance or fear. ASB incidents are presented on the national crime map service to inform the public of crime and disorder happening in their local area.

Figures should be interpreted as incidents recorded by the police. These figures do, however, provide an incomplete count of the extent of reported ASB, as incidents are also reported to other agencies, such as local authorities or social landlords (for example, problems with nuisance neighbours). Such reports will not generally be included in these police figures.

Prior to the year ending March 2012, the police had been using 14 categories, defined by the NSIR, for recording ASB incidents that fall short of being notifiable crimes. While these categories provided a suitable dataset for recording ASB, they did not encourage call-handlers to consider vulnerability issues and the risk involved for the caller, other individuals, the community as a whole, or the environment if the ASB continued.

From the year ending March 2012, a new set of simplified categories was introduced to change the emphasis from merely recording and responding to incidents, to identifying those vulnerable individuals, communities and environments most at risk, and therefore in need of a response before the problems escalate. There are now just three categories of ASB:

- personal
- nuisance
- environmental

Personal

Personal ASB includes incidents that are perceived as either deliberately targeted at an individual or group, or having an impact on an individual or group, rather than the community at large.

It includes incidents that cause concern, stress, disquiet and/or irritation, through to incidents that have a serious impact on people's quality of life.

At one extreme of the spectrum it includes minor annoyance; at the other end it could result in risk of harm, deterioration of health and disruption of mental or emotional well-being, resulting in an inability to conduct normal day-to-day activities through fear and intimidation.

Nuisance

Nuisance ASB incidents are where an act, condition, thing, or person causes trouble, annoyance, irritation, inconvenience, offence or suffering to the local community in general rather than to individual victims. It includes incidents where behaviour goes beyond the conventional bounds of acceptability and interferes with public interests including health, safety and quality of life.

Just as individuals will have differing expectations and levels of tolerance, communities will have different ideas about what behaviour goes beyond being tolerable or acceptable.

Environmental

The environmental ASB category deals with the interface between people and places; it includes incidents where individuals and groups have an impact on their surroundings, including natural, built and social environments.

This category is about encouraging reasonable behaviour while managing and protecting the various environments so that people can enjoy their own private spaces, as well as shared and public spaces.

Given the change in emphasis from merely categorising and recording incidents to risk assessing incidents and identifying individual, community and environmental vulnerability, the previous 14 ASB categories cannot simply be mapped to one of the three new categories. In addition, certain types of incidents that previously would have been recorded as ASB, such as hoax calls, are now recorded under other NSIR categories. For these reasons, figures from the year ending March 2012 onwards are not directly comparable with those from previous years.

Quality in recording of ASB incidents

While incidents are recorded under NSIR in accordance with the same "victim-focused" approach that applies for recorded crime, these figures are not accredited National Statistics and are not subject to the same level of quality assurance as the main recorded crime collection.

A [report by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services \(HMICFRS\)](#) raised some concerns over the recording of ASB incidents. From the small number of ASB incidents reviewed (around 1,000 across England and Wales):

- some incidents recorded by the police as ASB should have instead been recorded as crimes – findings show that these varied in number between police forces
- there was poor identification of repeat, vulnerable and intimidated victims of ASB at the first point of contact

It is known that a small number of police forces are erroneously duplicating some occurrences of a singular ASB incident where multiple calls have been made.

In addition, HMICFRS reviews found that there was greater variation in the recording of anti-social behaviour incidents across police forces than in recording notifiable offences. The variation in the type of anti-social behaviour incident recorded into the three new strands of "personal", "nuisance" and "environmental" (from 2011 to 2012 onwards) across police forces suggests that there are some discrepancies in how police forces are categorising incidents.

Another [HMICFRS review](#) in 2012 looked at the police service's approach to dealing with ASB and reported that while this has improved since 2010, there is still a large variation in victim satisfaction levels across England and Wales. More can be done to tackle this problem and to identify those at most risk of harm.

Perceptions and experience measured by the TCSEW

The CSEW has long-standing questions asking respondents about perceptions of problems with different types of anti-social behaviour (ASB) in their local area. These questions were retained in the TCSEW to continue measuring levels of ASB during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic period. These feature within the new COVID-19-specific module. To see how ASB data were collected in the face-to-face CSEW, see the [User guide to crime statistics – March 2020](#).

Respondents are asked about their perceptions of ASB in their local area. They are asked to rate how much they think ASB is a problem in their local area using the following scale:

- a very big problem
- a fairly big problem
- not a very big problem
- not a problem at all

Respondents are also asked whether they have personally witnessed or experienced ASB in their local area within the last three months and if they think the level of ASB in their local area has gone up, down or stayed the same since the beginning of the pandemic.

Notes for: Offence types

1. Domestic violence figures that relate to incidents reported in face-to-face CSEW interviews should be treated with caution. Prevalence rates for domestic violence derived from the self-completion module are significantly higher for adults than those obtained from the face-to-face interviews.
2. The Serious Crime Act 2015 (the 2015 Act) received royal assent on 3 March 2015. The Act creates a new offence of "controlling or coercive behaviour in intimate or familial relationships" (Section 76).
3. These forces were: Derbyshire, Dyfed-Powys, Greater Manchester Police, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Merseyside, Metropolitan, Northamptonshire, South Wales, South Yorkshire, West Midlands and West Yorkshire.
4. For example, if an offender threatens to stab a victim during a robbery and the threat is believed and belongings handed over, this would be considered an offence involving a knife or sharp instrument whether the weapon was seen or not.
5. Prior to this the groups were "most serious sexual crime" and "other sexual offences".
6. "Other miscellaneous sexual offences" consisted solely of the former offence of "indecent exposure" for years prior to the year ending March 2005. This became the offence of "exposure" and was included within "other miscellaneous sexual offences" from May 2004.
7. Prior to the year ending March 2010, a small number of offences continued to be recorded relating to offences repealed by the Sexual Offences Act 2003. While these may have been legitimately recorded for offences committed prior to May 2004, it is also possible that some may have been recorded in these old categories in error.
8. Physical force includes being pushed, slapped, hit, punched or kicked, choked or having a weapon used against you.
9. Emotional or financial abuse includes being prevented from having a fair share of household money, stopped from seeing friends or relatives, or repeatedly belittled.
10. Rape is the penetration of the vagina, anus or mouth by a penis without consent. This is the legal category of rape introduced in 2003.

11. Assault by penetration is the penetration of the vagina or anus with an object or other body part without consent. This was introduced as a legal offence in 2003.
12. The CSEW definition of stalking is not consistent with the legal definition following the introduction of the offence of "coercive and controlling behaviour", which includes stalking by a current partner.
13. From the year ending March 2013 survey onwards, the definition of stalking was changed to meet the criteria of two or more incidents specified in the legal definition.
14. As part of the public consultation, which ran in 2012 on the presentation of crime statistics, a proposal was made with regard to the CSEW classification to move robbery out of violence into a separate standalone category to match its treatment in recorded crime.
15. New offences that were introduced from 15 January 2007 were temporarily recorded as "other fraud" until the new offence codes came into effect on 1 April 2007.
16. The National Fraud Authority closed down in March 2014 and Action Fraud became the responsibility of the City of London Police on 1 April 2014.
17. UK Finance was formerly Financial Fraud Action (FFA) UK. FFA UK was integrated into UK Finance in 2017, a new trade association representing the finance and banking industry in the UK.
18. Crime packages contain batches of offences, which appear to be linked and hold intelligence value for the police.
19. For example: Dedicated Cheque and Plastic Crime Unit (DCPCU) of the City of London Police, Department for Work and Pensions, and the Trading Standards Institute.
20. These fall under "other crimes against society" and include "making, supplying or possessing articles for use in fraud", "forgery or use of drug prescription", "other forgery", "possession of false documents" and "fraud, forgery associated with vehicle driver records".
21. Includes offences where offenders are arrested by police, where there has been a call for service and the offender is committing or has recently committed the offence, or where there is a known suspect.
22. Following the transition to Action Fraud recording all fraud offences by the end of the year ending 2013 there were 7 cases in year ending March 2014 mistakenly recorded as a fraud offence.
23. Cases of fraud where the victim address is known to be outside of England and Wales are removed from the statistics.
24. The Internal Fraud Database is a data-sharing scheme for organisations that are victims of fraud by their own employees, and data from this database does not feed directly into Action Fraud or the NFIB.
25. A PSP is a payment service provider (for example, PayPal, World Pay) that is not a bank, dealing in electronic money transfers. Fraud offences perpetrated using PSPs fall under "online shopping and auctions" (not collected by industry bodies).
26. This additional data also includes other plastic card fraud data such as "card not received" fraud, "counterfeit card" fraud and "account take over" fraud, as well as cheque fraud and remote banking fraud (internet and telephone banking).
27. The CAMIS dataset will include all cases on the FISS dataset as FISS is a subset of CAMIS.
28. UK Finance publish data on the volume of incidents of frauds on all payment types (including "remote purchase"), alongside data on financial fraud losses by the value of losses to customers. Latest figures are reported in their [Fraud the Facts 2020](#) publication.
29. 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 past year.
30. Non-investment fraud was renamed as "Consumer and retail fraud" to reflect the corresponding name change to the Home Office Counting Rules from April 2017.

31. A DDoS attack is an attempt to make a machine or online resource unavailable to its intended users.
32. In April 2015, the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) replaced the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO).
33. An [agreed definition of hate incidents and crime](#) is available.
34. In April 2015, the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) replaced the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO).

5 . Perceptions

5.1 Perceptions of crime levels

Questions on the perception of change in national and local crime have been included in the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) since 1996. Perceptions of local crime levels used to be asked of the whole sample that had lived at their address for three or more years, but since April 2008 the question has been asked of three-quarters of the sample, irrespective of how long they have lived at their address (with the exception of the year ending March 2012, when this question was asked of half the sample). For trend comparisons, respondents who have lived at their address for less than three years have been excluded from the year ending March 2009 to the year ending March 2012 figures. For more information on perceptions data collected from the face-to-face CSEW, see Chapter 6 in [User guide to crime statistics – March 2020](#).

The following sections provide information on 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 from this module are published in [Crime in England and Wales: coronavirus \(COVID-19\) and crime tables](#), published quarterly.

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, and this will affect, and have an impact on interpretation of, responses over time. Questions in this module were adapted as circumstances changed throughout the pandemic period.

5.2 Worry about crime

Respondents to the Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales (TCSEW) are asked what they think has happened to crime in England and Wales and in their local area since the virus outbreak. They are asked whether they think crime has gone up, gone down, and then by how much, or whether it has remained the same.

Respondents are also asked how worried they have become about crime in general and about being a victim of fraud, during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

The levels of the worry indicator for these questions, since the virus outbreak are:

- more worried
- less worried
- about the same/no real change

5.3 COVID-19 rules and breaches

A new set of questions included within the COVID-19 module relate to the respondent witnessing and reporting breaches of virus restrictions in their local area. Respondents who did witness and report breaches are asked how they reported the breach. Those respondents who witnessed but did not report the breach to the police are asked why.

Within this module respondents are asked about their own behaviours during the virus restrictions.

5.4 Experience of COVID-related harassment

Within the new COVID-19 module respondents are asked if they have been treated any differently (for example, with less courtesy or respect) or have been called names or threatened in public since the virus outbreak.

If respondents do perceive they have been treated differently, a follow-up question is asked to understand what the respondent believes were the main reasons for these experiences (for example, race or ethnicity, gender or age).

5.5 Anti-social behaviour

The Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales (TCSEW) measures levels of perceived anti-social behaviour (ASB) in respondents' local areas. Respondents are also asked about their experience of ASB since the start of the pandemic.

More details about these questions can be found in [Section 4.7](#).

5.6 Effectiveness of the Criminal Justice System

Featured within the COVID-19 module are questions about the effectiveness of the Criminal Justice System (CJS). This includes the police, the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), the courts, prisons, and the probation service. Respondents do not need to have had contact with any of the above, they are just asked their general opinions on whether the Criminal Justice System gives victims and witnesses the support they need.

5.7 Ratings, perception, and satisfaction of local police response to COVID

A new set of questions relating to public perceptions of police and their response to the coronavirus pandemic were added to the new COVID-19 module. Questions in this set focus on how strict respondents think the police are in enforcing rules to help reduce the spread of COVID-19 and how strict they think the police should be.

In addition to the questions relating to COVID-19, respondents' perceptions of police in their local area also captured, including:

- how good a job their local police are doing?
- satisfaction with police response to COVID-19
- police visibility

5.8 Online activities in children

As 10- to 15-year-olds are not interviewed in the Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales (TCSEW), a proxy measure of parents with 10- to-15-year-olds living in their households was included as part of the COVID-19-specific module. This proxy measure enables the collection of information on online activities of children.

5.9 Experiences with phishing messages

A new set of questions about experiences with phishing messages were added to the COVID-19 module to provide insights into phishing, as it is one of the main methods of committing fraud. The questions cover whether the participant has received a phishing attempt in the last month and if so, the type of company the phishing message was pretending to have come from. The participants are also asked if they replied to the message or clicked on a link, their reason for doing so, whether they provided any personal information, and if they reported the message.

5.10 Perceptions of safety

Respondents were asked how safe they felt when walking alone in their area (within a 15-minute walk of their house) after dark.

6 . Classifications

6.1 Geographical

ACORN

A classification of residential neighbourhoods (ACORN) was [developed by CACI Ltd and classifies households into 1 of 62 types](#) according to demographic, employment and housing characteristics of the surrounding neighbourhood. ACORN is useful in determining the social environment in which households are located. The main five-group breakdowns are characterised as follows:

- affluent achievers – lavish lifestyles, executive wealth, mature money
- rising prosperity – city sophisticates, career climbers
- comfortable communities – countryside communities, successful suburbs, steady neighbourhoods, comfortable seniors, starting out
- financially stretched – student life, modest means, striving families, poorer pensioners
- urban adversity – young hardship, struggling estates, difficult circumstances

The ACORN classification is still available on the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) dataset but the National Statistics output area classification (OAC) is now used in standard demographic tables released as part of the National Statistics outputs.

Community safety partnerships

Set up under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, the community safety partnerships (CSPs) are, in nearly all cases, coterminous with local authority areas. They include representatives from the police, health, probation and other local agencies and provide strategies for reducing crime in the area. In December 2020, there were 316 CSPs in England and Wales. In England they were previously termed crime and disorder reduction partnerships (CDRPs). Recorded crime figures for headline offences for each CSP are published on the Office for National Statistics (ONS) website.

Regions

Government office regions (GORs) were established across England in 1994. Reflecting a number of government departments, they aimed to work in partnership with local people and organisations to maximise prosperity and the quality of life within their area. In 1996, the GORs became the primary classification for the presentation of regional statistics. There are currently nine regions in England:

- North East
- North West
- Yorkshire and The Humber
- East Midlands
- West Midlands
- East
- London
- South East
- South West

Wales is not subdivided but listed alongside the England regions in UK-wide statistical comparisons. Government offices were closed on 31 March 2011, and from 1 April 2011, the areas covered by the former GORs are referred to as "regions" for statistical purposes.

Indices of deprivation

Local area deprivation is measured in this report using the [English Indices of Deprivation 2019](#) for areas in England and the [Welsh Index of Deprivation 2019](#) for areas in Wales. There are seven domains of deprivation:

- income
- employment
- health and disability
- education, skills and training
- barriers to housing and services
- living environment
- crime

There are a number of indicators of deprivation in each of these domains, such as level of unemployment and incapacity benefit claimants, which are combined into a single deprivation score for each local area on that domain. The analysis in this report uses the employment deprivation indicator.

In order to examine the relationship between experiences of crime and deprivation, the local areas are ranked according to their scores on the employment deprivation domain. The 20% of areas with the highest deprivation scores are identified as the most deprived areas on the employment deprivation domain, and the 20% of areas with the lowest deprivation scores are identified as the least deprived.

An Index of Multiple Deprivation is also available, which combines all seven separate domains into one index. The English Indices of Deprivation 2015 are the responsibility of the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG); further information is available in the [English Indices of Deprivation 2019](#) document. Further information on the Welsh index of deprivation is available in the [Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2014](#) document.

Local authority areas

These areas are a combination of metropolitan and non-metropolitan districts, unitary authorities and London boroughs. As of 19 October 2021, there were 333 local authorities in England and Wales. These areas provide the basis for community safety partnerships; although since their formation a number of partnerships have merged to cover multiple local authority areas. In some cases, figures are reported for local authority areas that applied in the year ending March 2003 for the sake of continuity, even where there have been amalgamations.

Output area classification (OAC)

The 2011 classification of output areas is used to group together geographical areas according to important characteristics common to the population in that grouping. These groupings are called clusters and are derived using 2011 population Census data. The OAC is a classification created in collaboration between the ONS and the University of Leeds and University College London.

The classification is freely available from the ONS and other sources for all to use and complements commercially available classifications.

[Further information and details about OAC are available.](#)

Rural and urban areas

The analysis of crime in rural and urban areas is based on the ONS recommended method for categorising the level of rurality. There are [two approaches](#): the ONS rural and urban definition and the local authority (LA) classification. Both were developed to produce a view of rural and urban areas from government statistics. Where data below the LA level is available, the ONS rural and urban definition must be used to produce rural and urban totals. Where LA-level data are the lowest geographical data available, then the LA classification should be used.

For Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales (TCSEW) analysis, the rural and urban definition has been used, as TCSEW data are collected below the local authority level. For police recorded crime analysis, the LA classification has been used, as police recorded crime data are not collected below the LA level.

Rural and urban 2004 definition (England and Wales)

The rural and urban definition, an official National Statistic, was introduced in 2004 and defines the rurality of output areas. Categories used to aggregate to rural or urban areas are as follows.

Rural areas are those classified as:

- town and fringe – sparse
- village – sparse
- hamlet and isolated dwellings – sparse
- town and fringe – less sparse
- village – less sparse
- hamlet and isolated dwellings – less sparse

Urban areas are those classified as:

- urban – sparse
- urban – less sparse

Rural and urban 2014 definition (England and Wales)

An updated rural and urban definition, an official National Statistic, was introduced in 2014 and defines the rurality of output areas based on the 2011 Census definition. Categories used to aggregate to rural or urban are as follows.

Rural areas are those classified as:

- rural town and fringe
- rural town and fringe in a sparse setting
- rural village
- rural village in a sparse setting
- rural hamlet and isolated dwellings
- rural hamlet and isolated dwellings in a sparse setting

Urban areas are those classified as:

- urban major conurbation
- urban minor conurbation
- urban city and town
- urban city and town in a sparse setting

Rural and urban local authority (LA) classification (England)

The revised LA classification introduced in 2009 differentiates between rural and urban for those statistics that are only available at LA level. The three-way classification at the similar community safety partnership level and police force area level has been applied.

At the community safety partnership level, the classification is as follows:

"Predominantly rural" areas are those classified as:

- rural-80: districts with at least 80% of their population in rural settlements and larger market towns
- rural-50: districts with at least 50% but less than 80% of their population in rural settlements and larger market towns

"Significant rural" areas are those classified as districts with more than 37,000 people or more than 26% of their population in rural settlements and larger market towns.

"Predominantly urban" areas are those classified as:

- major urban: districts with either 100,000 people or 50% of their population in urban areas with a population of more than 750,000
- large urban: districts with either 50,000 people or 50% of their population in urban areas with a population between 250,000 and 750,000
- other urban: districts with fewer than 37,000 people or fewer than 26% of their population in rural settlements and larger market towns

A different methodology, but with similar criteria, is used to produce the three-way classification at the police force area level.

Super output areas

[Super output areas \(SOAs\)](#) are aggregated geographical areas built from output areas. Introduced in 2004 and updated following the 2011 Census, they are designed for the collection and publication of small area statistics and as the building blocks for all National Statistics on a geographical basis. To support a range of potential requirements there are two layers of SOAs:

- lower layer – built from groups of output areas (typically five)
- middle layer – built from groups of lower layer SOAs

6.2 Household

Household accommodation type

The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW), and by extension the Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales (TCSEW), uses this definition of the household's accommodation; based on the [National Statistics harmonised classification](#):

- house or bungalow
- a self-contained flat, maisonette or apartment
- a room or rooms (for example, a bedsit)
- other accommodation types

Household reference person

For some topics it is necessary to select one person in the household to indicate the characteristics of the household more generally. Following the [National Statistics harmonised classifications \(PDF, 259.2KB\)](#), the CSEW /TCSEW replaced head of household with household reference person (HRP) in the year ending March 2002. The HRP is the member of the household in whose name the accommodation is owned or rented, or is otherwise responsible for the accommodation. Where this responsibility is joint within the household, the HRP is the person with the highest income. If incomes are equal, then the oldest person is the HRP.

Because of restrictions to the interview length, households reference person demographics have not been included on the TCSEW. These demographic characteristics have been matched to the corresponding participant on the CSEW.

Household structure

The classification of households in the TCSEW is based on the number and combination of adults and children living within a household, divided into those where there is:

- one adult and one or more children (aged under 16 years) – this does not necessarily denote a lone parent family, as the adult may be a sibling or grandparent of the child
- more than one adult with one or more children (aged under 16 years)
- one or more adults with no children (aged under 16 years)

Tenure

The following definition of tenure is used by the CSEW/TCSEW based on the [National Statistics harmonised classification](#):

- owners: households who own their homes outright, or are buying with a mortgage (includes shared owners, who own part of the equity and pay part of the mortgage or rent)
- social-rented sector tenants: households renting from a council, housing association or other social-rented sector
- rented privately: households privately renting unfurnished or furnished property, including tenants whose accommodation comes with their job, even if their landlord is a housing association or local authority

6.3 Personal

Ethnic group

Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) respondents are asked to make a choice from a card to identify their ethnic background using the standard [National Statistics harmonised classification](#); this classification is based on the 2011 Census question. The standard demographic tables released annually provide breakdowns by ethnic background; the last topic-based analyses from the CSEW, focusing on the experiences of people from different ethnic minorities, are reported in [Attitudes, perceptions and risks of crime: Supplementary Volume 1 to Crime in England and Wales, 2006 to 2007 \(PDF, 501.7KB\)](#).

Because of restrictions on the interview length, the TCSEW contains a reduced number of questions. Demographic characteristics that are unlikely to have changed since they were gathered for the CSEW have been matched to the corresponding participant on the TCSEW.

Marital status

The CSEW, and by extension the TCSEW uses the following categories for marital status, which are based on the [National Statistics harmonised classification](#):

- married – includes same sex civil partnerships
- cohabiting
- single
- separated – includes same sex civil partnerships
- divorced – includes legally dissolved same sex civil partnerships
- widowed – includes surviving civil partners

Employment status

The CSEW and by extension the TCSEW uses the following categories for employment status, which are based on the [National Statistics harmonised classification](#) but includes further breakdowns for those in the "economically inactive" category:

- in employment: includes people doing paid work in the last week; working on a government-supported training scheme; or doing unpaid work for own or family business
- unemployed: actively seeking work or waiting to take up work
- economically inactive: those who are retired; going to school or college full-time; looking after home or family; are temporarily or permanently sick; or doing something else

Base sizes for the student categories of employment status differ from those in the occupational classification. Economically inactive students exclude those who are in employment or in other ways economically active. Full-time students are recognised as such within the occupational coding.

Employment status is asked of all participants in their first interview at Wave 1 (the first interview in a 12-month period). Participants are asked if there has been a change to employment in subsequent waves, however, data published only include estimates from the Wave 1 interview.

Sexual orientation

The CSEW uses the following categories for sexual orientation, which are based on the [Equality Act 2010](#):

- heterosexual or straight
- gay or lesbian
- bisexual
- other

Sexual orientation has not been asked on the TCSEW because of restrictions on the interview length. Sexual orientation information has been gathered from the CSEW and has been matched to the corresponding participant on the TCSEW.

Sex

The CSEW uses the following categories for sex:

- male
- female

Sex is currently interviewer-coded using information on the respondents sex before interview (for example, from respondent title: Mr, Mrs, or Ms) collected at recruitment stage. At interview, if there is any uncertainty then the respondent is asked to confirm. For the TCSEW, sex information has been gathered from the CSEW and has been matched to the corresponding participant on the TCSEW.

Religion

The CSEW uses the following categories for religion, which are based on the [National Statistics harmonised classification](#);

- no religion
- Christian
- Buddhist
- Hindu
- Jewish
- Muslim
- Sikh
- other

Because of restrictions on the interview length, the question asking about the religion of participants has not been included on the TCSEW. These demographic characteristics have been matched to the corresponding participant on the CSEW.

Disability

The definition of disability used is consistent with the core definition of disability under the [Equality Act 2010](#). A person is considered to have a disability if they have a long-standing illness, disability or impairment, which causes difficulty with day-to-day activities.

7 . Statistical conventions and methods

7.1 Confidence intervals and statistical significance

Under normal circumstances the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) estimates are based on a representative sample of the population of England and Wales aged 16 years and over each year. The sample, as used in the CSEW, is a small-scale representation of the population from which it is drawn.

The Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales (TCSEW) draws its sample from former CSEW adult respondents who agreed to be recontacted and supplied a syntactically valid phone number over the previous two years, and therefore remains a representative sample of the population from which it is drawn. The TCSEW also incorporates a panel design (repeat interviewing) mimicking the design employed on other surveys such as the Labour Force survey (LFS). This enabled the sample to be conserved for a much longer period. As a result, while the TCSEW remains a representative sample it does differ from the normal CSEW in two important ways:

- the final sample is based on multiple interviews per person
- the sample covers adults aged 18 years and over and not 16 years and over

Any sample survey may produce estimates that differ from the figures that would have been obtained if the whole population had been interviewed; this is true for both the CSEW and TCSEW. It is however possible to calculate a range of values around an estimate, known as the [confidence interval](#) (also referred to as margin of error). At the 95% confidence level, over many repeats of a survey under the same conditions, one would expect that the confidence interval would contain the true population value 95 times out of 100. Because of this variation, changes in estimates between survey years or between population subgroups may occur by chance.

In other words, the change may simply be caused by which adults were randomly selected for interview. We are able to measure whether this is likely to be the case using standard statistical tests and conclude whether differences are likely to be because of chance, or represent a real difference. Only increases or decreases that are [statistically significant](#) at the 5% level (and are therefore likely to be real) are described as changes within the main bulletin, and in the tables and figures these are identified by asterisks.

Confidence intervals on the CSEW and TCSEW are based on the complex [standard errors](#) (CSEs) around estimates, which reflect the stratified and clustered design of the survey. Adults are re-interviewed over the year which results in a sample that is treated as being clustered by household. The CSEs are calculated using the [SPSS Complex Sample Module](#).

Statistical significance for change in CSEW and TCSEW estimates for overall crime, all theft offences, all property crime, all hate crime and all racially-motivated crime, cannot be calculated in the same way as for other CSEW or TCSEW estimates. This is because these crimes combine a mixture of crimes against household and crimes against the person. As there is an extra stage of sampling used in a personal crime rate (selecting the adult respondent for interview) compared with a household crime rate (where the respondent represents the whole household); technically, these are estimates from two different, though obviously highly-related, surveys.

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) methodology group has provided an approximation method to use to overcome this problem. The approach involves producing population-weighted variances associated with two approximated estimates for overall crime. This has been applied to both the CSEW and TCSEW.

The first approximation is derived by apportioning household crime equally among adults within the household (in other words, converting households into adults), and second by apportioning personal crimes to all household members (converting adults into households). The variances are calculated in the same way as for standard household or personal crime rates (that is, taking into account the complex sample design). An average is then taken of the two estimates of the population-weighted variances. The resulting approximated variance is then used in the calculation of confidence intervals for the estimates and in the calculation of the sampling error, to determine whether such differences are statistically significant.

This method incorporates the effect of any covariance between household and personal crime. By taking an average of the two approximations, it also counteracts any possible effect on the estimates of differing response rates (and therefore calibration rates) by household size.

TCSEW estimates are based on repeat interviews, where a sole adult respondent is re-interviewed at roughly three-monthly intervals, rather than single interviews with a sole adult respondent (as in the CSEW). The standard errors (and by extension 95% confidence intervals) on the TCSEW are therefore higher than those on the CSEW. This is caused by the stronger, within household cluster effect of the repeat interviews.

7.2 Population estimates

Crime Survey for England and Wales

The face-to-face Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) and the Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales (TCSEW) both use population estimates in calibration weighting and in calculating the estimates of numbers of crimes.

For the calculation of estimates for numbers of CSEW and TCSEW incidents, incidence rates are multiplied by estimates (or projections for the most recent time periods) of the household population in England and Wales. For personal-level crimes, the population used for the CSEW was the 16 years and over population, for the TCSEW it is 18 years and over. For household-level crimes the population used for the TCSEW and CSEW consists of only residential households and excludes any communal establishments like student halls or army barracks.

Following the completion of a programme of work to reweight CSEW data on the 2011 Census-based population and household estimates, from the [Crime in England and Wales, year ending March 2014](#) release onwards, both the CSEW and police recorded crime data are using 2011 Census-based estimates.

CSEW estimates from the year ending March 2002 onwards were also reweighted using 2011 Census-based population and household estimates in the year ending March 2014. In addition to the use of 2011 Census-based estimates, two other methodological changes were also made to population data used in the production of CSEW estimates from the year ending March 2002 onwards. These changes were:

- using household-only population estimates
- linearly interpolating population estimates to more closely match the CSEW reference period

Household-only population estimates

Until the year ending March 2002, in order to calculate crime estimates, incidence rates for personal-level crimes were multiplied by estimates for the total population aged 16 years and over in England and Wales, not just those resident in households.

However, the CSEW (and by extension the TCSEW) does not sample from the entire adult population of England and Wales; it interviews adults resident in households and does not cover people living in group residences (for example, students' halls of residence and NHS nurses' accommodation) or other institutions (for example, prisons), or homeless people. Therefore, CSEW estimates had previously been calculated using marginally larger population totals than are most appropriate. It is more logical to multiply incidence rates for personal-level crimes by the household-resident only population, as this is the population the CSEW/TCSEW covers.

By including the non-household-resident population in the calculation of crime estimates, this assumes that the household-resident and non-household-resident populations experience similar levels of crime victimisation, and this is unlikely to be true.

2011 Census-based household-resident only population data have been supplied to enable the calculation of CSEW estimates in accordance with this new approach; these have been incorporated into the reweighting of the year ending March 2002 to year ending March 2013 adults (aged 16 years and over) data, and the reweighting of the year ending March 2010 to the year ending March 2013 children (aged 10 to 15 years) data.

As the 2011 Census-based population estimates only dated back to those since the previous census (2001), CSEW data for years prior to the year ending March 2002 have not been updated to be based upon the household-resident only populations. This has introduced a minor inconsistency in the adult CSEW data time series between the year ending December 1999 and the year ending March 2002.

However, [the effects of the weighting updates on the year ending March 2002 CSEW estimates are minimal](#) (PDF, 1.77KB) and have not altered any trends. It is reasonable to assume that any amendments to pre-year ending March 2002 CSEW estimates would also be minimal, and therefore, comparisons between post-year ending December 1999 and pre-year ending March 2002 CSEW data are still sufficiently robust.

No adjustment was necessary for estimates of the number of households in England and Wales (published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)) when calculating household-level crimes. These data already relate only to households; they exclude communal establishments (for example: students' halls of residence; sheltered accommodation; and prisons).

Linear interpolation of population estimates on CSEW data are typically published for a 12-month interview period; for example, data for the year ending March 2013 relate to interviews that took place between April 2012 and March 2013 (more information is available in Chapter 2).

For the year ending March 2020, the earliest month an interview takes place is April 2019. As respondents are asked about crimes that took place in the 12 months prior to their interview, this means that the earliest crimes recorded by the year ending March 2020 CSEW occur in April 2018 and the latest crimes recorded by the year ending March 2020 CSEW occur in February 2020. The mid-point of the period "April 2018 to February 2020" is March 2019, and therefore, the most appropriate population or household estimates to multiply CSEW incidence rates by would be as at the end of March 2019.

However, published population (and household) estimates are mid-year data; that is, for a given year, they relate to the population or households in England and Wales as at the end of June of that year. Prior to the reweighting programme, CSEW estimates for the year ending March 2013 were calculated from mid-2012 (end of June 2012) population data.

It is possible to calculate an estimate for the population as at the end of March 2012 by linearly interpolating on two surrounding data points in the time series. This approach is valid given that the components of population change, namely births, deaths and net migration, can be assumed to occur equally across the year (for example, not all births occur in January, or all deaths in February; rather, they occur throughout the year).

So, using the example of the year ending March 2020 CSEW, given end of June 2018 and end of June 2019 population estimates, estimates as at the end of March 2019 can be calculated as follows:

March 2019 equals June 2018 plus ((June 2019 minus June 2018) multiplied by 0.75)

Population estimates as at the end of September 2019 and December 2019 could be calculated by replacing the 0.75 multiplication factor by 0.25 and 0.50 respectively.

For households, the linear interpolation was constrained to just two data points: the estimates for the number of households for mid-2001 and mid-2011; at the time the reweighting programme was completed, 2011 Census-based estimates for the intermediate years had not been produced by MHCLG. Estimates for mid-2002 to mid-2010 were themselves linearly interpolated from the mid-2001 and mid-2011 estimates, and end-of-March estimates linearly interpolated from these. Although less accurate (having only two data points 10 years apart), this approach remains valid given that in the pre-2011 Census-based estimates, the estimated number of households had been continually increasing (not fluctuating up and down). Also, similarly to the individual population, the creation and breakup of households can be assumed to occur equally spread out across the time period.

Quarterly crime statistics publications from [Crime in England and Wales, year ending March 2014](#) onwards contain revised CSEW estimates from the year ending March 2002, calculated from population and household estimates that have been successively linearly interpolated (except for year ending June data, as the population and household estimates are already produced as at the end of June). This methodology was incorporated into the reweighting of the year ending March 2002 to the year ending March 2013 adults (aged 16 years and over) data and the reweighting of the year ending March 2010 to the year ending March 2013 children (aged 10 to 15 years) data.

No linear interpolation was necessary for population estimates used for the pre-year ending March 2002 CSEW years (year ending December 1981 to year ending December 1999), because respondents were asked about their experiences of crime in that year, meaning the mid-point of the reference period for these years would be as at the end of June.

The population and household estimates used in the calculation of CSEW and TCSEW estimates are presented in Table 4a.

Further details about the reweighting and methodological changes to the population and household estimates used in the calculation of numbers of CSEW incidents are available in the methodological note accompanying the Crime Statistics, year ending March 2014 release, [Presentational and methodological improvements to National Statistics on the Crime Survey for England and Wales](#).

Table 4a: Population figures used to calculate the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) and Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales (TCSEW) estimates, rounded to the nearest hundred

Survey year [note 1]	Population base	Individual population [note 2]	Households
Year ending December 1982	Mid-1981	38,724,000	18,387,000
Year ending December 1984	Mid-1983	39,127,000	18,618,000
Year ending December 1988	Mid-1987	40,040,700	19,414,000
Year ending December 1992	Mid-1991	40,500,800	20,278,700
Year ending December 1994	Mid-1993	40,531,200	20,524,900
Year ending December 1996	Mid-1995	40,686,300	20,782,400
Year ending December 1998	Mid-1997	40,965,900	21,045,500
Year ending December 2000	Mid-1999	41,325,100	21,347,000
Year ending March 2002	End of March-2001	40,899,400	21,685,500
Year ending March 2003	End of March-2002	41,183,100	21,861,400
Year ending March 2004	End of March-2003	41,463,900	22,030,600
Year ending March 2005	End of March-2004	41,770,500	22,201,300
Year ending March 2006	End of March-2005	42,170,000	22,369,900
Year ending March 2007	End of March-2006	42,560,100	22,539,400
Year ending March 2008	End of March-2007	42,971,300	22,710,300
Year ending March 2009	End of March-2008	43,391,400	22,881,700
Year ending March 2010	End of March-2009	43,752,900	23,051,700
Year ending March 2011	End of March-2010	44,131,000	23,220,600
Year ending March 2012	End of March-2011	44,527,900	23,394,300
Year ending March 2013	End of March-2012	44,900,500	23,615,400
Year ending March 2014	End of March-2013	45,282,400	23,770,300
Year ending March 2015	End of March-2014	45,486,900	23,991,900
Year ending March 2016	End of March-2015	45,864,800	24,222,100
Year ending March 2017	End of March-2016	46,215,300	24,514,500
Year ending March 2018	End of March-2017	46,531,200	24,761,200
Year ending March 2019	End of March-2018	46,824,000	24,533,000
Year ending March 2020	End of March-2019	47,109,100	24,705,000
Year ending March 2021	End of March-2020	46,016,200	-
Year ending March 2021	End of March-2019	-	24,703,500
Year ending March 2022	End of March-2021	46,264,700	25,028,100

Notes

1. All survey years aside from the year ending March 2021 and the year ending March 2022 (which refers to the TCSEW) refer to the CSEW.
2. Individual population for the CSEW includes people aged 16 years and over. Individual population for the TCSEW includes people aged 18 years and over.

Police recorded crime

Crime rates derived from police recorded crime figures are based upon total mid-year population estimates for England and Wales, as shown in Table 4b.

Table 4b: Population figures used to derive crime rates from police recorded crime figures (rounded to nearest hundred)

Year	Population based on mid-year	Resident population of England and Wales
Year ending March 2003	2001	52,360,000
Year ending March 2004	2002	52,602,100
Year ending March 2005	2003	52,863,200
Year ending March 2006	2004	53,152,000
Year ending March 2007	2005	53,575,300
Year ending March 2008	2006	53,950,900
Year ending March 2009	2007	54,387,400
Year ending March 2010	2008	54,841,700
Year ending March 2011	2009	55,235,300
Year ending March 2012	2010	55,692,400
Year ending March 2013	2011	56,170,900
Year ending March 2014	2012	56,567,800
Year ending March 2015	2013	56,948,200
Year ending March 2016	2014	57,408,700
Year ending March 2017	2015	57,885,400
Year ending March 2018	2016	58,381,200
Year ending March 2019	2017	58,744,600
Year ending March 2020	2018	59,115,800
Year ending March 2021	2019	59,439,800
Year ending March 2022	2020	59,719,700

7.3 Weighting data

All Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) and telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales (TCSEW) percentages and rates presented in crime statistics publications are based on weighted data. [Table UG1](#) shows the unweighted base, which for the TCSEW represents the number of interviews. For CSEW data, (for example, year ending March 2020 data), the unweighted base represents the number of people or households interviewed in the specified group.

Two stages are used in the weighting of the CSEW sample.

First, Kantar Public (CSEW contractor) apply weights to the raw data before supplying the dataset to the Office for National Statistics (ONS). Second, calibration weighting is used to adjust for differential non-response; this weighting is conducted by the ONS upon receipt of the data from Kantar Public.

Weighting on the CSEW survey

The weights constructed by Kantar Public are based on a number of components:

- w1: weight to compensate for unequal address selection probabilities between PFAs (given some areas are more populated than others)
- w2: "address non-response weight" to compensate for the observed variation in response rates between different types of neighbourhood (based on region and neighbourhood classification indicators)
- w3: dwelling unit weight (which relates to the number of dwelling units in a household), to compensate for situations in which only one dwelling unit can be selected in multiple "dwelling unit" households
- w4: individual selection weight (to account for different probabilities of a respondent being selected based on different sized households)
- numinc: a weight applied based on the number of incidents reported in each series of victim reports

For the core sample, these components are used to create two design weights, the core household weight and the core individual weight. These are calculated as follows:

- Core household weight equals w_1 multiplied by w_2 multiplied by w_3
- Core individual weight equals w_1 multiplied by w_2 multiplied by w_3 multiplied by w_4

Further scaling, to equalise the quarterly achieved sample size, along with removal of extreme values, is also involved (details of this and of the calculations used to construct the component weights can be found in [2014 to 2015 Crime Survey for England and Wales Technical Report: Volume One](#)).

Numinc is used for the calculation of incidents only.

The methodology for improving the way we estimate repeat victimisation, introduced volatility into the estimates between years. To ensure a usable time series, some minor changes were made to the weights used to compensate for unequal probabilities of selection. This reduces the volatility in estimates between years.

When we explored the effects of removing the cap of five from our measure of the number of incidents in a series, there were some instances in which high levels of repeat victimisation (97) coincided with very high weights. In one instance, final weights of more than 6,000 per individual coincided with a series that included 97 incidents of violence. The combined effect of this meant that by uncapping the estimates, one individual was contributing over 582,000 incidents to our annual violence estimates (as compared with the individuals' contribution of just over 30,000 incidents with the cap of five in place).

The component weight that contributed directly to this issue was the dwelling unit weight (w_3). However, analysis of the data indicated the same issue may arise in the future as a result of the individual component weight (w_4), which has similar variability.

A decision was made to trim the component dwelling unit weight at four for the calculation of household weights in the adults' datasets.

In calculating the core individual weight, the product of the multiplication of the dwelling unit weight and individual component weights has been trimmed at five. Although trimming of extreme weights may introduce a small amount of bias, this is more than compensated for by the resulting improvement in precision.

Further information on the methodology for repeat victimisation can be found in [Improving victimisation estimates derived from the Crime Survey for England and Wales](#).

Additional weighting used on the Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales (TCSEW)

Making use of the fact that the Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales (TCSEW) was sampled from the face-to-face Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) meant much of the non-response bias between the face-to-face survey and the telephone survey could be adjusted for using an additional weighting mechanism and thereby improving the reliability of the TCSEW estimates and its comparability with the CSEW. This was applied to the TCSEW data in addition to the weights as described in previous sections. Further information will be made available in the [2021 Technical report](#) supplied by the contractor KANTAR.

Calibration weighting

[A review of the then British Crime Survey \(PDF, 444.1KB\)](#) (now the CSEW) by survey methodology experts at the ONS and the National Centre for Social Research, recommended that the calibration weighting method be adopted.

The ONS calibration weighting is designed to make adjustments for known differentials in response rates between different regions and different age by sex sub-groups. This is particularly the case in incidences where victimisation levels within sub-groups that are more or less likely to respond, is not equal to that of other respondents. For example, a household containing a man aged 24 years and living in London may be less likely to respond than a household containing a woman aged 50 years living in the South West. The procedure therefore gives different weights to different households and individuals based on their sex, age and region composition, in such a way that the weighted distribution of responding households and individuals in these households matches the known distribution in the population as a whole.

The weights are generated using an algorithm that minimises the differences between the weights implied by sampling and the final weights subject to the weighted data meeting the population controls; they are based on calibrating population estimates and projections provided by the ONS [note 1].

The effects of calibration weights are generally small for household-level crime, but are likely to be more important for estimates of personal-level crime, as for example, young respondents generally have much higher crime victimisation rates than average but also lower response rates to the survey. However, there was only a marginal impact seen in crime trends when calibration weighting was first implemented in the 1996 survey.

When implementing the revised methodology for repeat victimisation, we took the opportunity to make other improvements to the data and have now implemented consistent weighting and calibration techniques back as far as 1991 for the first time.

7.4 Conventions used in figures and tables

The following conventions are used in the crime statistics publications and the user guide (where applicable).

Table abbreviations

- "0" indicates greater than 0% but less than 0.5% (this does not apply when percentages are presented to one decimal point).
- [x] indicates that the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) or Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales (TCSEW) question was not applicable or not asked in that particular year
- [u] indicates that for police recorded crime, percentage changes are not reported because the base number of offences is less than 50; for the CSEW it indicates that data are not reported because the unweighted base is less than 50
- [u1] indicates that rate per 1,000 population data for City of London have been suppressed because of the small population size of the police force area
- [c] indicates that data from the CSEW/TCSEW have been suppressed because of disclosure constraints
- [x] indicates for police recorded crime that data are not available
- [s] indicates for CSEW/TCSEW data that the change is statistically significant at the 5% level
- [z] indicates not applicable

Unweighted base

All CSEW/TCSEW percentages and rates presented in the tables are based on data weighted to compensate for differential non response. Tables show the unweighted base, which for TCSEW data represents the number of interviews.

Percentages

Perception measures are presented as whole numbers; victimisation measures are presented to one decimal place.

Row or column percentages may not add to 100% because of rounding.

Most CSEW/TCSEW tables present cell percentages where the figures refer to the percentage of people or households who have the attribute being discussed and the complementary percentage, to add to 100%, is not shown.

A percentage may be quoted in the text for a single category that is identifiable in the tables only by summing two or more component percentages. To avoid rounding errors, the percentage has been recalculated for the single category and, therefore, may differ from the sum of the percentages derived from the tables.

Year-labels on CSEW figures and tables

For TCSEW data the year ending March 2021 release relates to telephone-interviews conducted between May 2020 and March 2021.

Prior to the year ending March 2002, CSEW respondents were asked about their experience of crime in the previous calendar year, so year-labels identify the year in which the crime took place. Following the change to continuous interviewing in the year ending March 2002, respondents' experience of crime relates to the 12 full months prior to interview (more information can be found in Chapter 2 of the User guide to crime statistics – March 2020) and year-labels identify the CSEW year of interview.

Other questions on the CSEW/TCSEW (for example, attitudes to policing, confidence in the Criminal Justice System) ask the respondent their current views or attitudes and thus the data are referenced as the year in which the respondent was interviewed.

"No answers" (missing values)

All CSEW/TCSEW analysis excludes don't knows or refusals unless otherwise specified.

Numbers of CSEW incidents

Estimates are rounded to the nearest 1,000.

Notes for: Statistical conventions and methods

1. Calibration weights were applied from the year ending December 1996 CSEW onwards using CALMAR (a SAS-based macro); from the year ending March 2007 until June 2020, the CSEW has used g-Calib within a new SPSS-based data processing system (the weights produced by g-Calib are the same as those from CALMAR). Since June 2020, calibration weights have been applied using ReGenesees (an R package). The weights produced in ReGenesees aim to replicate those created in the previous g-Calib SPSS-based processing with some minor tweaks to account for differences in the R package input.

8 . Other reference data

8.1 Nature of crime

Additional analysis is published from the year to March dataset of the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) relating to the "nature of crime". For a number of crime types (for example, bicycle theft, burglary, vandalism, and violence) tables are available detailing characteristics such as:

- timing of when the incident occurred
- location of where the incident occurred, if appropriate
- cost of stolen items or damage incurred as a result of the incident, if appropriate
- level of injuries sustained and types of weapons used in the incident, if appropriate
- emotional impact of the incident on the respondent
- perceived seriousness of the incident to the respondent
- offenders involved in the incident, if known by the respondent

The latest published figures are for the year ending March 2020, available from the Office for National Statistics' (ONS's) [Nature of crime](#) tables. A limited set of tables were produced for the [nature of fraud for the year ending March 2021](#).

8.2 Open data tables (police recorded crime)

[Data tables on police recorded crime](#) broken down by police force or community safety partnership (CSP), quarterly period and individual offence code are available.

8.3 Archived data

Access to all Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) microdata prior to the move to the Office for National Statistics (ONS) was via the UK Data Archive. Once responsibility, including all historic data, passed from the Home Office to the ONS new data arrangements were made. However, since all historic data had previously been available for download from the data archive, it was decided that such data would remain available for download as "End User Licence" and "Special Licence" datasets and be unaffected by the transition of responsibility to the ONS.

In order to access the "Special Licence" datasets the user was required to be an approved researcher. However, following a review of the ONS Approved Researcher scheme [note 1] in 2016, it was concluded that approved researchers should only access legally protected data in a secure environment and therefore the ONS stopped any further distribution of data under the terms of a "Special Licence". CSEW data previously accessible under "Special Licence" are now available via the ONS's Secure Research Service (SRS) and the Secure Data Service.

Users can download "End User Licence" versions of the CSEW datasets from the [CSEW section](#) of the [UK Data Archive](#).

More detailed versions of the CSEW datasets are available via the ONS's [Secure Research Service \(SRS\)](#) and the [Secure Data Service](#).

Notes for: Other reference data

1. The ONS Approved Researcher scheme is the legal gateway used to grant access to potentially disclosive microdata to researchers outside of government, for statistical research purposes.

9 . Appendix 1: Recorded crime list

The classifications defined in this appendix are those used for crime recorded by the police and notifiable to the Home Office, correct as of the year ending March 2022. In general, attempting, conspiring, aiding, abetting, causing or permitting a crime is classified under the heading of the crime itself, though in certain cases it is shown separately.

Recorded crime covers all indictable and triable-either-way offences. Additionally, a few closely associated summary offences are included. Summary offences are identified in the listing, together with the reasons for their inclusion. The crimes on this list are termed notifiable offences and their listing is referred to as the notifiable offences list (NOL).

Most of the offences listed are defined in terms of legal offences (that is, sections of Acts). A comprehensive list of these offences, together with important legal definitions and explanatory notes, appears in the Home Office [Counting Rules for Recorded Crime](#) documentation.

Victim-based crime

Violence against the person

In October 2017, a new sub-category has been introduced within the main violence against the person offence group, for "death or serious injury caused by illegal driving". It contains offences previously counted under violence. Additionally, stalking and harassment offences have been moved out of the sub-category of "violence without injury" and are now in a separate sub-category of "stalking and harassment".

Homicide

1: Murder

4.1: Manslaughter

4.10: Corporate manslaughter

4.2: Infanticide

Applies to infants aged under 12 months killed by the mother while of disturbed mind.

Death or serious injury – unlawful driving

4.4: Causing death or serious injury by dangerous driving

4.6: Causing death by careless driving when under the influence of drink or drugs

4.8: Causing death by careless or inconsiderate driving

4.9: Causing death by driving: unlicensed or disqualified or uninsured drivers

37.1: Causing death by aggravated vehicle taking

Violence with injury

2: Attempted murder

4.3: Intentional destruction of viable unborn child

5D: Assault with intent to cause serious harm

5E: Endangering life

4.7: Causing or allowing death or serious physical harm of child or vulnerable person

8N: Assault with injury

8P: Racially or religiously-aggravated assault with injury

8S: Assault with injury on a constable

8T: Assault with injury on an emergency worker (other than a constable)

Violence without injury

3A: Conspiracy to murder

3B: Threats to kill

11A: Cruelty to children or young persons

13: Child abduction

14: Procuring illegal abortion

36: Kidnapping

104: Assault without injury on a constable

105A: Assault without injury

105B: Racially or religiously-aggravated assault without injury

106: Modern slavery

Stalking and harassment

8L: Harassment

8M: Racially or religiously-aggravated harassment

8Q: Stalking

8R: Malicious communications

8U: Controlling and coercive behaviour

Sexual offences

Rape

19C: Rape of a female aged 16 or over

19D: Rape of a female child under 16

19E: Rape of a female child under 13

19J: Rape of a female – undefined

19F: Rape of a male aged 16 or over

19G: Rape of a male child under 16

19H: Rape of a male child under 13

19K: Rape of a male – undefined

Other sexual offences

17A: Sexual assault on a male aged 13 and over

17B: Sexual assault on a male child under 13

20A: Sexual assault on a female aged 13 and over

20B: Sexual assault on a female child under 13

21: Sexual activity involving a child under 13

22B: Sexual activity involving a child under 16

22A: Causing sexual activity without consent

23: Incest or familial sexual offences

70: Sexual activity with a person with a mental disorder

71: Abuse of children through sexual exploitation

72: Trafficking for sexual exploitation

73: Abuse of position of trust of a sexual nature

88A: Sexual grooming

88C: Other miscellaneous sexual offences

88D: Unnatural sexual offences

88E: Exposure and voyeurism

Robbery

The main elements of the offence of robbery (Section 8 of the Theft Act 1968) are stealing and the use or threat of force immediately before doing so, and in order to do so. Any injuries resulting from this force are not recorded as additional offences of violence.

34A: Robbery of business property

34B: Robbery of personal property

Theft offences

Burglary

The main elements of police recorded burglaries (as defined by the Theft Act 1968) are entry (or attempted entry) to a building as a trespasser with intent to:

- steal property from it (including stealing or attempting to steal)
- inflict grievous bodily harm
- commit unlawful damage to property whilst inside

The offence group also includes aggravated burglary (Section 10 of the same Act), which is defined as a burglary where the burglar is in possession of a weapon at the time. The Home Office [Counting Rules for Recorded Crime](#) documentation contains details of the types of premises that constitute a dwelling.

Police recorded burglary figures recently changed from the categorisation of domestic and non-domestic burglary in the [Home Office Counting Rules for police recorded crime](#). From April 2017, new sub-categories of residential and non-residential burglary have replaced domestic and non-domestic burglary respectively, but with the important distinction that the classification of residential burglary includes all buildings or parts of buildings that are within the boundary of, or form a part of, a dwelling. Any building not directly connected to a dwelling was previously counted as non-domestic burglary. This change was introduced to draw together burglaries to the main dwelling house and those to other buildings that are part of the overall residential property.

This classification change affects percentage change figures for all subcategories of burglary where it is not currently possible to make meaningful comparisons over time, therefore these figures are not shown. Figures for total burglary are unaffected.

Burglary

28A: Burglary in a dwelling

28B: Attempted burglary in a dwelling

28C: Distraction burglary in a dwelling

28D: Attempted distraction burglary in a dwelling

28E: Burglary – Residential

28F: Attempted burglary – Residential

28G: Distraction burglary – Residential

28H: Attempted distraction burglary – Residential

29: Aggravated burglary in a dwelling

29A: Aggravated burglary – Residential

30A: Burglary in a building other than a dwelling

30B: Attempted burglary in a building other than a dwelling

30C: Burglary – business and community

30D: Attempted burglary – business and community

31: Aggravated burglary in a building other than a dwelling

31A: Aggravated burglary – business and community

Vehicle offences

37.2: Aggravated vehicle taking

Part of Section 1 of the Aggravated Vehicle Taking Act 1992. Applies to offences of unauthorised vehicle taking (see classification 48) with additional aggravating factors of dangerous driving, or causing an accident involving injury or damage.

45: Theft from a vehicle

48: Theft or unauthorised taking of a motor vehicle

Unauthorised taking of motor vehicle (part of Section 12 of the Theft Act 1968; also known as taking without consent or TWOC) is a summary offence. It is closely associated with theft of a motor vehicle because at the time of recording it may not be known whether the intention is to permanently deprive the owner.

126: Vehicle interference

Summary offences, closely associated with theft of or from vehicles. The Home Office [Counting Rules for Recorded Crime](#) documentation contains detailed guidance for forces on distinguishing between these offences and criminal damage, where a vehicle is reported damaged.

Theft from the person

39: Theft from the person

Bicycle theft

44: Theft or unauthorised taking of a pedal cycle

Shoplifting

46: Shoplifting

All other theft offences

40: Theft in a dwelling other than from an automatic machine or meter

41: Theft by an employee

42: Theft of mail

43: Dishonest use of electricity

47: Theft from automatic machine or meter

49: Other theft

49A: Making off without payment

35: Blackmail

Criminal damage and arson

Arson

56A: Arson endangering life

56B: Arson not endangering life

Not all malicious fires that the police record are included here. If the owner of the property set alight is wounded, then a crime of violence is recorded. If a stolen vehicle is subsequently burnt out, it is recorded as a vehicle theft. An additional arson offence is recorded only if there is evidence that the arsonist is unconnected with the vehicle thief.

Criminal damage

58A: Criminal damage to a dwelling

58B: Criminal damage to a building other than a dwelling

58C: Criminal damage to a vehicle

58D: Other criminal damage

58J: Racially or religiously-aggravated criminal damage

Other crimes against society

Drug offences

Trafficking of drugs

92A: Trafficking in controlled drugs

Possession of drugs

92C: Other drug offences

Various offences, mostly under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971, including permitting premises to be used for unlawful purposes; failure to comply with notice requiring information relating to prescribing, supply etc. of drugs; supply of intoxicating substance; and supply of articles for administering or preparing controlled drugs.

92D: Possession of controlled drugs (excluding cannabis)

92E: Possession of cannabis

Possession of weapons offences

10A: Possession of firearms with intent

10B: Possession of firearms offences

10C: Possession of other weapons

10D: Possession of article with blade or point

81: Other firearms offences

90: Other knives offences

Public order offences

9A: Public fear, alarm or distress

9B: Racially or religiously-aggravated public fear, alarm or distress

62A: Violent disorder

66: Other offences against the State or public order

Miscellaneous crimes against society

- 15: Concealing an infant death close to birth
- 24: Exploitation of prostitution
- 26: Bigamy
- 27: Soliciting for prostitution
- 33: Going equipped for stealing
- 33A: Making, supplying or possessing articles for use in fraud
- 38: Profiting from or concealing proceeds of crime
- 53H: Making or supplying articles for use in fraud
- 53J: Possession of articles for use in fraud
- 54: Handling stolen goods
- 59: Threat or possession with intent to commit criminal damage
- 60: Forgery or use of drug prescription
- 61: Other forgery
- 61A: Possession of false documents
- 67: Perjury
- 69: Offender Management Act offences
- 76: Aiding suicide
- 79: Perverting the course of justice
- 80: Absconding from lawful custody
- 83: Bail offences
- 86: Obscene publications, etc. and protected sexual material
- 95: Disclosure, obstruction, false or misleading statements etc.
- 96: Wildlife crime
- 99: Other notifiable offences
- 802: Dangerous driving
- 814: Fraud, forgery associated with vehicle driver records

Selected National Fraud Intelligence Bureau (NFIB) offences

Additional data on fraud, reported from industry bodies, are provided by the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau (NFIB). These are still under development and data are included as they become available. The list shows the offences within the NFIB dataset and the date from which they were included.

1 April 2011

"419" Advance fee fraud

Application fraud (excluding mortgages)

Bankruptcy and insolvency

Business trading fraud

Charity fraud

Cheque, plastic card and online bank accounts (not Payment Service Provider (PSP))

Computer software service fraud

Consumer phone fraud

Corporate employee fraud

Corporate procurement fraud

Counterfeit cashiers' cheques and bankers drafts

Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) fraud

Dating scams

Door-to-door sales and bogus tradesmen

False accounting

Fraud recovery

Fraudulent applications for grants from charities

Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) fraud

Inheritance fraud

Insurance broker fraud

Insurance related fraud

Lender loan fraud

Lottery scams

Mandate fraud

Mortgage related fraud

Online shopping and auctions

Other advance fee frauds

Other consumer non-investment fraud

Other financial investment

Passport application fraud

Prime bank guarantees

Pyramid or Ponzi schemes

Rental fraud

Share/bond sales or boiler room fraud

Telecom industry fraud (misuse of contracts)

Ticket fraud

Time shares and holiday club fraud

1 January 2012

Computer virus/malware

Denial of service attack

Denial of service attack (extortion)

Hacking (extortion)

Hacking – PBX/dial through

Hacking – personal

Hacking – server

Hacking – social media and email

1 April 2012

Fraudulent applications for grants from government funded organisations

14 February 2013

Pension fraud by pensioners (or their estate)

Pension fraud committed on pensioners

Pension liberation fraud

1 April 2013

Dishonesty retaining a wrongful credit

Fraud by abuse of position

Fraud by failing to disclose information

Other fraud (not covered elsewhere)

Other regulatory fraud

Retail fraud

1 April 2015

DVLA driver licence application fraud

10 . Appendix 2: Fraud and computer misuse offences recorded by the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau

Fraud

- Advance fee fraud – when a payment is made to fraudsters who claim to be in a position of authority, such as a foreign government official, to transfer money or for a promise of employment, wealth or gifts.
- All charity fraud – this occurs when fraudsters organise the fraudulent collection of money using names of genuine charities or fictional ones, or make fraudulent applications for grants from charities or lottery fund organisations.
- Application fraud (excluding mortgages) – when fraudsters open an account (for example, in respect of hire purchase or loans) utilising fake or stolen documents in someone else's name.
- Banking and credit industry fraud – when fraud is committed against a bank or financial institution, using a false identity, deceitful credit application, credit or debit cards, cloned cards, cheque books or, online accounts.
- Bankruptcy and insolvency – fraud relating to bankruptcy and insolvency can involve companies fraudulently trading immediately before being declared insolvent, or phoenix fraud where a second company starts up overnight with the same directors.
- Business trading fraud – when businesses knowingly carry on trading with the intention of defrauding creditors or for any other fraudulent purposes.
- Cheque, plastic card and online bank accounts (not PSP) – where criminals steal or fake an individual's bank cards or cheque book, or they obtain their card or account details, allowing them to take money from the victim's account or run up credit in the victim's name. This does not include payment service providers (PSP), for example, PayPal and World Pay, which are not banks but deal in electronic money transfers.
- Consumer phone fraud – such frauds often involve victims being tricked into paying premium rate charges, for example, through replying to missed calls and text messages, ring tone scams, and SMS competition and Trivia scams.
- Consumer and retail fraud – when goods or services are made using fraudulent means, when goods or services were paid for, but failed to materialise, were misrepresented at point of sale, or are faulty or stolen. Other forms of non-investment fraud include refund fraud and fraudulent contacts, which make victims respond via premium rate calls and SMS messages.
- Corporate fraud – general frauds that target any business and sector specific frauds, including corporate employee fraud (where employees or ex-employees obtain property, or greater remuneration through fraud) and corporate procurement fraud (where excess goods are ordered and then sold on by the offender, or goods of an inferior quality are delivered to those paid for with the offenders pocketing the difference).
- Counterfeit cashiers' cheques and bankers drafts – when fraudulent cheques or Bankers Drafts are presented as payment for goods or services ordered over the internet in excess of the actual value. The seller reimburses the purchaser with the excess prior to the cheque or draft being discovered as fraudulent.
- Dating scam – where the intended victim is befriended on the internet and eventually convinced to assist their new love financially by sending them money for a variety of emotive reasons.
- Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) fraud – when benefits given out by the Department for Work and Pensions are claimed or sought, fraudulently.
- Dishonestly retaining a wrongful credit – a person is guilty of an offence if (a) a wrongful credit has been made to an account kept by them or in respect of which they have any right or interest; (b) they know or believe that the credit is wrongful; and (c) they dishonestly fail to take such steps as are reasonable in the circumstances to secure that the credit is cancelled.
- Door-to-door sales and bogus tradespeople – where fraudsters attempt to scam individuals after knocking at their door; this usually involves promoting goods or services that are either never delivered or are of a very poor quality.

- DVLA Driving Licence Application Fraud – where fraudsters obtain or try to obtain a United Kingdom driving licence by false representation to the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA).
- False accounting fraud – company assets are overstated or liabilities understated to make a business seem financially stronger than it really is.
- Financial Investments fraud – this fraud consists of a range of investment opportunities to convince victims to part with their savings. The word "investment" is widely used in connection with a wide range of schemes offering income, interest or profit in return for a financial investment.
- Fraud by abuse of position – when someone abuses their position of authority or trust against another person, for personal or financial gain, or to cause loss to another.
- Fraud by failing to disclose information – when there is a failure to disclose information by an individual to another person when they have a legal duty to do so.
- Fraud recovery – where fraud victims are targeted to gain personal details and additional money, by means of posing as recovery agents.
- Fraudulent applications for grants from government organisations – this is where government funded organisations have provided grants based on false representations or where they have received grant applications that contain false representations.
- Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) fraud – when fraud is committed against HMRC.
- Inheritance fraud – victims are told that there is cash from inheritances that have been located in their name, and that an estate report that includes information on where the inheritances are located and how they can be claimed can be provided to them in return for a small fee.
- Insurance broker and insurance related fraud – this occurs when victims obtain insurance cover from fraudsters pretending to be brokers or, when a false claim or application for a policy is made to an insurance company.
- Lender loan fraud – where the victim is contacted and told that they can have a loan for a fee. The fee is paid and no loan is forthcoming.
- Lottery scams – when a victim is informed they have won a non-existent lottery and required to send an advance to release their winnings.
- Mandate fraud – where fraudsters obtain details of direct debits, standing orders or account transfer details and amend them to transfer monies to other accounts.
- Mortgage related fraud – where an individual generally involves one or more associates to fraudulently obtain one or more mortgages for profit or to assist in money laundering.
- Online shopping and auctions – involves fraud attributable to the misrepresentation of a product advertised for sale through an internet auction site or the non-delivery of products purchased through an internet auction site.
- Other advance fee fraud – includes frauds that cannot be classified under any of the other advance fee payment types such as career opportunity scams, clairvoyant or psychic scams, impersonation of officials, racing tipster scams, work from home and business opportunity scams and vehicle matching scams.
- Other consumer and retail fraud – includes frauds involving the misrepresentation of a product advertised for sale or the non-delivery or non-existence of products purchased that do not fit under other types of consumer and retail fraud.
- Other financial investment – includes other investment scams where individuals are offered a return that is more attractive than a conventional investment, and where the return on the outlay is exaggerated or unrealistic, for example, investment seminars.

- Other fraud (not covered elsewhere) – frauds by false representation or obtaining services dishonestly that are not covered elsewhere in other crime types.
- Other regulatory fraud – this crime type is used to record fraud from regulators that is not covered elsewhere. Examples would include fraud against the Land Registry, insider dealing at the stock exchange, or the Gambling Commission.
- Passport application fraud – passport fraud occurs where fraudsters obtain or try to obtain a United Kingdom passport by false representation.
- Pension fraud – pension fraud by pensioners, pension fraud committed on pensioners, and fraudulent pension liberation schemes.
- Prime bank guarantees – involves a bogus investment scheme promising high yields in a short space of time by buying bank guarantees from "prime" banks.
- Pyramid or Ponzi schemes – Pyramid schemes are where individuals are promised rewards for enrolling others into a business that offers a non-existent or worthless product. Ponzi schemes are investment scams that pay returns to investors from their own money, or from money paid in by subsequent investors.
- Rental fraud – where prospective tenants are tricked into paying advanced fees or rent for the rental of premises which, either don't exist, are not for rent, are already rented, or are rented to a multitude of victims at the same time.
- Retail fraud – fraud committed against retailers that does not involve online sales or cheque, or plastic card sales, for example, refund fraud, label fraud, or obtaining goods or services with no intent to pay; it does not include fraudulent transactions as these are captured in 'Cheque, plastic card and online bank accounts (not PSP).
- Share/bond sales or boiler room fraud – where victims are cold-called by fake stockbrokers and encouraged or persuaded to buy shares or bonds in worthless, non-existent or near-bankrupt companies.
- Telecom industry fraud (misuse of contracts) – when contracts are obtained by false representation from service providers, either by using false details or stolen documents or credit cards, or with no intention of paying the contract. Includes mobile phones and internet services.
- Ticket fraud – involves the victim purchasing tickets in advance remotely (for example, over the phone or internet), which are never supplied or turn out not to be valid or worthless.
- Time shares and holiday club fraud – timeshare fraud involves an investment scam that claims you can easily become a property millionaire from buying a timeshare. Holiday club fraud is when you are told you've won a "free" holiday or are pressured into signing a contract for a bogus holiday club.

Computer misuse

- Computer misuse crime – when fraudsters hack or use computer viruses or malware to disrupt services, obtain information illegally or extort individuals or organisations.
- Computer software service fraud – involves the victim being contacted and told that there is a problem with their computer and for a fee, this can be fixed. No fix actually occurs.
- Computer viruses or malware – a computer virus is a computer program that can replicate itself and spread from one computer to another by using executable code; malware is short for malicious software and consists of programming (code, scripts, or other software) designed to disrupt or deny the operation of a computer (it includes Trojan horses and ransomware – a Trojan is often disguised as legitimate software and misleads users of its true intent; while ransomware restricts access to a computer and demands that the user pay a ransom to remove it).
- Denial of service attack – an attempt to make an online service unavailable to its intended users by overwhelming it with a large volume of traffic from multiple sources. This includes an unwarranted demand with menaces (Blackmail) attached to the denial of service attack, or the threat of a denial of service.
- Hacking – this is the unauthorised modification of the contents of any computer, and involves the deliberate targeting of a specific computer by the offender, including computer servers, personal computers (including laptops, games consoles and smart phones), social media and email accounts and telephone systems. Also includes unwarranted demand with menaces (Blackmail) attached to any computer hacking or threat of computer hacking.

11 . Appendix 3: Summary of rolling programme of crime data integrity inspections (Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services)

Police force	Latest overall rating [note 1]	% of audited crime reports recorded accurately	Previous rating
Avon and Somerset	Requires improvement	89.6	n/a
Bedfordshire	Requires improvement	90.4	n/a
Cambridgeshire	Requires improvement	87.8	n/a
Cheshire	Outstanding	96.4	Inadequate
City of London	Good	93.8	n/a
Cleveland	Inadequate	83.4	n/a
Cumbria	Outstanding	93.4	n/a
Derbyshire	N/A	90.9	Inadequate
Devon and Cornwall	Good	Not available [note 2]	Inadequate
Dorset	Good	93.3	n/a
Durham	Good	91.5	n/a
Dyfed-Powys	Requires improvement	87.8	n/a
Essex	Outstanding	95.8	n/a
Gloucestershire	Inadequate	81.6	n/a
Greater Manchester	Requires improvement	89.1	Inadequate
Gwent	Requires improvement	90.5	n/a
Hampshire	Requires improvement	91.3	n/a
Hertfordshire	Requires improvement	87.2	n/a
Humberside	Requires improvement	85.7	n/a
Kent	Outstanding	96.6	Inadequate
Lancashire	Good	93.3	Inadequate
Leicestershire	Inadequate	84.1	Inadequate
Lincolnshire	Good	90.3	Inadequate
Merseyside	Good	90.1	Inadequate
Metropolitan Police	Good	89.5	n/a
Norfolk	Requires improvement	87.5	n/a
North Wales	Requires improvement	88.3	n/a
North Yorkshire	Good	92.8	Inadequate
Northamptonshire	Good	92	n/a
Northumbria	Requires improvement	92.7	n/a
Nottinghamshire	Requires improvement	87.3	n/a
South Wales	Good	90.2	n/a
South Yorkshire	Requires improvement	89.5	n/a
Staffordshire	Good	91	n/a
Suffolk	Requires improvement	91	n/a
Surrey	Good	93	n/a

Sussex	Good	94.6	n/a
Thames Valley	Inadequate	87.9	Inadequate
Warwickshire	Good	93.1	n/a
West Mercia	Good	90.7	n/a
West Midlands	Inadequate	Not available [note 2]	Inadequate
West Yorkshire	Outstanding	94.6	n/a
Wiltshire	Good	90.9	n/a

Source: Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services

Notes

1. All reports can be found on the [inspections page](#) on the HMICFRS website.
2. No overall crime recording rate available.