

User Guide to Crime Statistics for England and Wales

January 2018

Office for National Statistics

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The Office for National Statistics (ONS) is the executive office of the UK Statistics Authority, a non-ministerial department that reports directly to Parliament. ONS is the UK government's single largest statistical producer. It compiles information about the UK's society and economy, and provides the evidence-base for policy and decision-making, the allocation of resources, and public accountability. The Director-General of ONS reports directly to the National Statistician, who is the Authority's Chief Executive and the Head of the Government Statistical Service.

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The Government Statistical Service (GSS) is a network of professional statisticians and their staff operating both within the Office for National Statistics and across more than 30 other government departments and agencies.

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Chapter 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.

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. 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 Victimization 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 [UK National Statistics Publication Hub](#).

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.gsi.gov.uk or write to:

Public Policy Division, 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 changes to National Statistics on police recorded crime in 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, and new estimates of fraud provided by the CSEW. 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) ¹. More detail on this is given in [Chapter 5.4](#) of this user guide. The CSEW introduced new questions on fraud in October 2015, with first estimates included in the main estimate of CSEW overall crime for the year to September 2016 quarterly update (published in January 2017). Two full years worth of data are now available to allow analysis of trends as part of the year ending September 2017 quarterly update. These estimates have previously been published as Experimental Statistics but are due to be assessed by the Office for Statistics Regulation for consideration as National Statistics. Further information is provided in [Chapter 5.4](#).

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.

Chapter 2: Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW)

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 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.

Following crime statistics reviews ([Smith, 2006](#); [Statistics Commission, 2006](#)) and feasibility work ([Pickering et al., 2008](#)) the CSEW was extended to include children aged 10 to 15² from January 2009. The first results for this age group were published as Experimental Statistics in 2010 in the [Experimental statistics on victimisation of children aged 10 to 15: British Crime Survey year ending December 2009 statistical bulletin](#). Estimates of victimisation against children are presented within the quarterly statistical bulletins on crime in England and Wales.

The main aim of the CSEW is to provide robust trends for the crime types and population it covers; the survey does not aim to provide an absolute count of crime and has notable exclusions. The CSEW 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 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 Commercial Victimisation Survey \(CVS\) 2016](#) were published by the Home Office in May 2017. A summary of key results are also incorporated in our quarterly crime statistics bulletins.

For the crime types and population it covers, the CSEW 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. The primary purpose of the CSEW is to provide national-level estimates but some headline figures are available at regional level.

The CSEW is also a better indicator of long-term trends, for the crime types and population it covers, than police recorded crime because it is unaffected by changes in levels of reporting to the police or police recording practices. The methodology and the crime types included in the main count of crime have remained comparable since the survey began in 1981.

Until recently, the survey did not include fraud and cyber crime in its estimates, however, following the success of recent development work, including a [field trial](#), new questions on fraud and computer misuse were added to the CSEW in October 2015. Within 6 months sufficient data had been gathered to produce initial estimates of fraud and computer misuse. These were published alongside the quarterly release, “Crime in England and Wales, year ending June 2016”, on 20 October 2016 as Experimental Statistics. The questions investigate the extent and trends of fraud and computer misuse and were reported separately to the main CSEW crime count³.

² For more information on the extensive development and testing work carried out to extend the CSEW to children aged 10 to 15, read the [Extending the British Crime Survey to children: a report on the methodological and development work report](#), published in 2010.

³ More information can be found in section 5.4 of this User Guide.

The new offences were then included in the CSEW headline estimates for the first time in January 2017, once the questions had been asked for a full 12 months.

There are now two full years worth of data available to draw upon, allowing analysis of trends for the first time as part of the “Crime in England and Wales, year ending September 2017” publication. We are satisfied with the work we have done surrounding the quality of the data and have now also added these to the total estimate of crime. At the same time we have asked the Office for Statistics Regulation to assess the new estimates on fraud and computer misuse for consideration as National Statistics.

From time to time, the CSEW also includes additional questions on new or relevant issues not previously covered and for this reason, the year ending March 2016 CSEW incorporated for the first time a new self-completion module of questions, which asked adult respondents whether they were abused as a child (aged 0 to 15) by an adult. This included psychological abuse, physical abuse, sexual assault and witnessing domestic abuse. The new survey questions also asked information relating to:

- relationship to the perpetrator
- where the incident took place
- the age at which the abuse started and finished
- whether the respondent told anyone at the time

Results were published on 4 August 2016 in the [Abuse during childhood: Findings from the Crime Survey for England and Wales, year ending March 2016](#) article, following the main statistical release in July⁴.

CSEW estimates for the year ending March 2017 are based on face-to-face interviews with 35,248 adults aged 16 and over; a further 2,804 children aged 10 to 15 took part in the children’s survey. The CSEW response rate remains relatively high compared with other random probability household surveys (74% responded to the main survey and 70% of eligible children⁵ within households participating in the adult survey responded in the year ending March 2017). The survey is weighted to adjust for possible non-response bias to ensure the sample reflects the profile of the general population. Being based on a sample survey, CSEW estimates are subject to a margin of error. Unless otherwise specified, any changes in CSEW estimates over time that are described as differences in statistical bulletins are statistically significant ones. More information is available in Chapter 8.

[Annual technical reports](#) provide further detailed information on the survey design and methodology; including response rates.

2.2 Crime Survey for England and Wales methodology

The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) was first conducted in 1982 (covering crime in 1981) and ran at mostly 2-year intervals until 2001, when it became a continuous survey. Although there have been changes to the survey over time (such as the recent addition of fraud and cyber crime victimisation questions), 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 is designed to be representative of the population of households in England and Wales and people living in those households. As such, it is possible to use the small users’ Postcode Address File (PAF), which is widely accepted as the best general population sampling frame in England and Wales. As mentioned earlier, the CSEW does not cover the population living in group residences or other institutions, although excluding the minority of the population that lives in such

⁴ More information can be found in section 5.1 of this User Guide.

⁵ It is not possible to calculate the true composite response rate for children as it is not known what proportion of non-responding households contain children in the eligible age range. If this was in the same proportion as in responding households, the child response rate would be around 50%.

establishments is thought to have little effect on CSEW estimates, [according to a research report from 2008](#).

At each sampled address the interviewer is required to establish that the address is eligible; ineligible addresses include vacant properties, second homes, non-residential addresses and establishments where people are living in group residences, for example, care homes or student halls of residence. In the rare situations where one PAF address leads to two households, the interviewer randomly selects which household to approach.

Once the household is determined to be eligible, a sole adult is selected at random for interview. No substitutes are permitted. Where applicable, a sole child aged 10 to 15 is also selected at random to be interviewed in households that have taken part in the main survey. Again, no substitutes are permitted.

The overall sample size for the CSEW was reduced from 46,000 households per year in the year ending March 2012 to 35,000 households in the year ending March 2013. The sample size reduction took 12 months to implement and readers of the quarterly bulletin will have seen a gradual decrease in the unweighted bases referenced in tables, as data based on the old sample of 46,000 households reduced to the new sample size of 35,000 households.

The survey sample of children aged 10 to 15 automatically reduced from 4,000 children per year in the year ending March 2012 to 3,100 in the year ending March 2013.

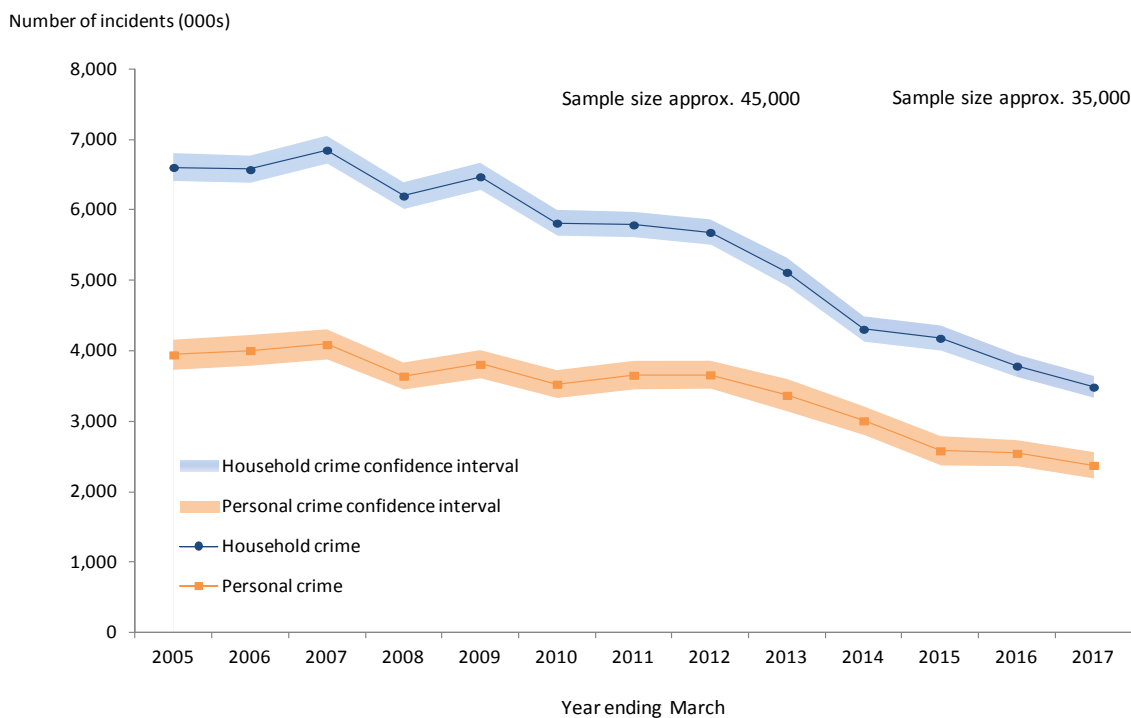
The cluster design of the sample was also revised for the year ending March 2013. The prior sample design employed between 2008 and 2012 had been a mixed design, differing between three types of area, each type defined by the spatial density of its addresses. In high-density areas the sample was unclustered, while in other areas the sample was clustered with 32 addresses issued in each sampled middle layer super output area (MSOA). In low-density areas, a pair of lower level super output areas (LSOAs) was sampled in each sampled MSOA and 16 addresses issued in each one. There is a correlation between the spatial density of addresses and the degree to which victimisation rates vary between neighbourhoods. Consequently, unclustered samples in these areas yielded estimates with greater precision than clustered samples. Inclusion of an unclustered sample component not only improved the precision in these areas but brought a net increase in precision for national and police force area estimates as well. This design was further developed in two ways for the year ending March 2013 survey.

The unclustered sample design in high-density areas was extended so that 3-year datasets became unclustered in every type of area. This was achieved by ensuring that every sample cluster was used at least once over the course of the 3-year period from April 2012 to March 2015. Bespoke sample clusters (relating to victimisation rates) that were more heterogeneous than MSOAs were used, with the aim of increasing the precision of annual estimates. For full details of the new design, including a description of the creation of the bespoke cluster design, see [Survey Methodology Bulletin, No 71, September 2012](#).

The current CSEW sample is designed to yield interviews with a nationally representative sample of 35,000 households in England and Wales each year. With the exception of the City of London PFA (which, for the purpose of analysis, is merged with the Metropolitan PFA), the sample is designed to yield a minimum of 650 interviews with adults (aged 16 and over) in each one of the 42 territorial PFAs. The requirement for a minimum sample of 650 interviews was introduced in 2012, prior to the transfer of responsibility for the survey from the Home Office to the Office for National Statistics, and replaced the previous sample design of 1,000 interviews in each PFA. The driver for the reduction in the sample size was both the abolition of central targets for police forces and the outcome of the government's 2010 Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR). The Home Office conducted a consultation with users and concluded that reducing the sample size was the best option available; the new design would not introduce any discontinuity to important CSEW estimates or trends and would lead to "fairly modest" reductions in the precision of estimates at PFA level.

Figure 1 shows confidence intervals around CSEW 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: Confidence intervals for Crime Survey for England and Wales estimated levels of household crime and personal crime for England and Wales, year ending March 2005 to year ending March 2017



Although CSEW response rates vary from year to year, the target sample sizes are always achieved, either by increasing the sample size when the response rate falls, or reducing the number of repeat calls to sampled households when the response rate increases. Table 1 shows the small variations in the achieved sample size for each year compared with the actual response rate, as well as other sampling changes that have occurred over the life of the survey.

Whilst maintaining an achieved sample size helps uphold the precision of the survey's estimates, it cannot compensate for variations in non-response bias when the response rate varies. To help minimise any bias, the survey has been successful in maintaining a very high response rate with little variation between years (70 to 75% over the past 10 years). The CSEW also uses calibration weighting to adjust for differential non-response (for more information see section 8.3), 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](#).

Table 1: Crime Survey for England and Wales sample history

	1982	1984	1988	1992	1994	1996	1998	2000	2001	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	
Survey company	SCPR	NOP	SCPR/ NOP	SCPR	OPCS	SCPR	SCPR	SCPR & ONS	TNS-BMRB	TNS-BMRB	TNS-BMRB	TNS-BMRB	
Core sample size	10,905	11,030	10,392	10,059	14,520	16,348	14,947	19,411	8,973	32,787	36,450	37,931	
Response rate	81%	77%	77%	77%	77%	83%	79%	74%	73%	73%	74%	75%	
Sampling frame	ER	ER	ER	PAF	PAF	PAF	PAF	PAF	PAF	PAF	PAF	PAF	
Ethnic boost sample	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Young adults boost sample	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Weights used	Weighta Weightb Weighti	Weighta Weightb Weighti	Weighta Weightb Weighti	Weighta Weightb Weighti	Weighta Weightb Weighti	Indivwt Hhdwt Weighti	Indivwt Hhdwt Weighti	Indivwt Hhdwt Weighti	Indivwt Hhdwt Weighti	C11Indivwt C11Hhdwt C11Weighti	C11Indivwt C11Hhdwt C11Weighti	C11Indivwt C11Hhdwt C11Weighti	
CAPI/ PAPI	PAPI	PAPI	PAPI	PAPI	CAPI	CAPI	CAPI	CAPI	CAPI	CAPI	CAPI	CAPI	
No. of victim forms	4	4	4	5	5	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	
Self-completion element	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Sample type	Over sampled in inner city areas							Proportional sample	Over sampled in less populous PFAs (minimum = 600)				

	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Survey company	TNS-BMRB	TNS-BMRB	TNS-BMRB	TNS-BMRB	TNS-BMRB	TNS-BMRB	TNS-BMRB	TNS-BMRB	TNS-BMRB	TNS-BMRB	TNS-BMRB	TNS-BMRB	TNS-BMRB
Core sample size	45,120	47,796	47,203	46,983	46,286	44,638	46,754	46,031	34,880	35,371	33,350	35,248	35,347
Response rate	75%	75%	75%	76%	76%	76%	76%	75%	73%	75%	70%	72%	74%
Sampling frame	PAF	PAF	PAF	PAF	PAF	PAF	PAF	PAF	PAF	PAF	PAF	PAF	PAF
Ethnic boost sample	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
Young adults boost sample	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
Weights used	C11Indivwt C11Hhdwt	C11Indivwt C11Hhdwt	C11Indivwt C11Hhdwt	C11Indivwt C11Hhdwt	C11Indivwt C11Hhdwt	C11Indivwt C11Hhdwt	C11Indivwt C11Hhdwt	C11Indivwt C11Hhdwt	C11Indivwt C11Hhdwt	C11Indivwt C11Hhdwt	C11Indivwt C11Hhdwt	C11Indivwt C11Hhdwt	C11Indivwt C11Hhdwt
CAP // PAP	CAPI	CAPI	CAPI	CAPI	CAPI	CAPI	CAPI	CAPI	CAPI	CAPI	CAPI	CAPI	CAPI
No. of victim forms	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
Self-completion	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sample type	Over sampled in less populous PFAs												
	minimum = 1,000									Minimum= 650			

SCPR – Social and Community Planning Research has now changed its name to National Centre for Social Research (NCSR)

OPCS merged with the Central Statistical Office (CSO) in 1998 to form the Office for National Statistics (ONS)

TNS-BMRB – Taylor Nelson Sofres - British Market Research Bureau

ER – Electoral Register; PAF – (Small Users) postcode address file

PAPI – Paper and pencil interviewing; CAPI – Computer-assisted personal interviewing

2.3 Crime Survey for England and Wales interviewing

Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) estimates are based on analysis of structured face-to-face interviews carried out using computer-assisted personal interviewing (CAPI), where interviewers record responses to the questionnaire on tablets. The mode of interview changed in the 1994 CSEW from a paper-based questionnaire to CAPI. CAPI allows logic and consistency checks to be incorporated into the survey to improve data quality. For example, the interviewer is unable to move on to the next question until a discrepancy or inconsistency has been resolved.

The main CSEW questionnaire has a complex structure consisting of a core set of modules asked of the whole sample, a set of modules asked only of different sub-samples, and self-completion modules asked of all respondents aged 16 to 59. For example, modules include victimisation; performance of the criminal justice system (CJS); contact with and attitudes to the police and the CJS; mobile phone theft; anti-social behaviour; plastic card fraud; and demographic characteristics of the respondent and household.

The primary objective of extending the survey to children aged 10 to 15 was to provide estimates of the levels of crime experienced by children and their risk of victimisation⁶. Like the adult survey, the children's survey also gathers information on a limited number of crime-related topics such as children's experiences of and attitudes towards the police and personal safety. Some results from these supplementary topics were published in [Findings from the 2009 to 2010 British Crime Survey interviews with children aged 10 to 15](#) and [Hate crime, cyber security and the experience of crime among children](#).

Survey development is carried out on an annual basis to reflect emerging issues. While the wording of victimisation questions has not changed and these are included every year, the precise set of other modules asked in each survey year varies.

Self-completion modules are used in the CSEW to collect information on topic areas that respondents could feel uncomfortable talking about to an interviewer. The use of self-completion on laptops allows respondents to feel more at ease when answering questions on sensitive issues, due to increased confidence in the privacy and confidentiality of the survey. The self-completion modules were traditionally only asked of respondents aged 16 to 59, however, the age limit was increased from 59 to 74 from the start of the new survey year in April 2017. From October 2016, the upper age limit on the self-completion module was removed from a quarter of the survey sample and we assessed uptake from older participants alongside consideration of ease of use and other factors to determine whether the upper age limit could be removed. Testing showed that self-completion acceptance declines as age increases, with the proportion of people completing the modules decreasing significantly for those aged 75 and over, therefore the upper age limit was raised to 74 but was not removed completely.

Respondents can complete these self-completion modules on the interviewer's tablet by themselves (computer-assisted self-interviewing (CASI) and, when finished, their answers are hidden. Children also have the option of Audio-CASI, which allows them to listen to questions via headphones and can help those with literacy problems (74% did not use this option at all in the year ending March 2016 CSEW). The self-completion modules are at the end of the face-to-face interviews and, for adults, cover topics such as illicit drug use⁷, domestic abuse and sexual assault. A self-completion module covering abuse during childhood was added in April 2015, which ran for 1 year only⁸. Child respondents are asked a limited set of questions by self-completion on issues such as bullying, truancy and use of alcohol or cannabis.

⁶ The question set for children aged 10 to 15 was specifically designed for this age range, while retaining broad comparability with the adult questionnaire in terms of the classification of offences.

⁷ Section 5.5 provides further details.

⁸ More information on this module is available in section 5.1 of this User Guide.

Self-completion modules were first included in the 1996 and 2001 CSEWs to improve estimates of domestic violence (as shown in [Domestic Violence: Findings from a new British Crime Survey self-completion questionnaire](#) and [Domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking](#)), and a similar module has been included since the year ending March 2005 CSEW. The self-completion module on illicit drug use was introduced in 1996 and comparable questions have been asked since then. These questions are not asked of children on the CSEW.

For the year ending March 2011 CSEW, an alternative set of questions were developed to measure the prevalence of domestic abuse, sexual assault and stalking in the self-completion module. The alternative set of questions was included in the year ending March 2012 and the year ending March 2013 as part of a split-sample. These formed part of a split-sample experiment to assess the effect of question changes on estimates of prevalence of these offence types. [Results from this experiment were published in 2011](#) and formed the basis of a [public consultation on questions to include in the CSEW self-completion module in future](#).

As of the year ending March 2014, the split-sample was dropped and just the new questions were asked. Analyses of the experiment for the year ending March 2013 were published in [Methodological note: split sample for intimate personal violence](#), which includes details of the adjustment applied to the back series to make a comparable time series.

In addition to the self-completion module to measure the prevalence of domestic abuse, sexual assault and stalking, different self-completion modules covering the nature of partner abuse and the nature of sexual assault are also rotated into the survey. These modules are included in alternate survey years, but neither were included in the year ending March 2016 as they were replaced with the new module on experiences of abuse during childhood.

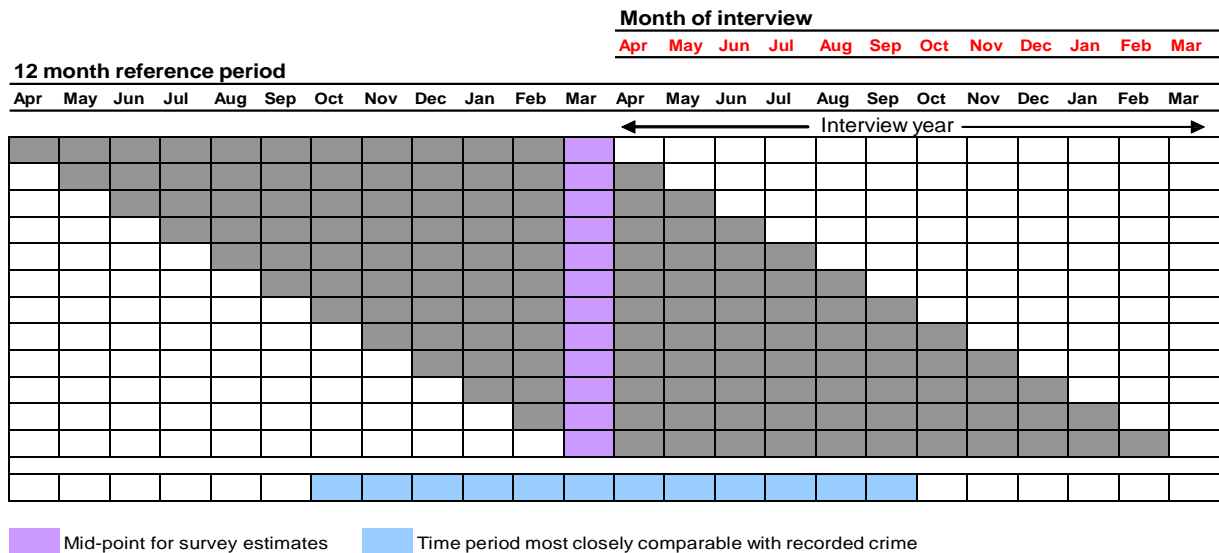
2.4 Time periods covered

Prior to the year ending March 2002, Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) respondents were asked about their crime-related experiences in the previous calendar year; but when the CSEW changed to a continuous survey, respondents were asked about crime in the 12 months prior to interview. Since becoming a continuous survey, CSEW estimates are published based on interviews carried out over a 12-month period; for example, for the publication of the year ending March 2017 CSEW estimates are derived from interviews carried out between April 2016 and March 2017.

As respondents are interviewed on a rolling basis over the course of a year, the time period covered by the data is not directly comparable with any calendar year. Therefore, tables and figures including trends over time refer to the year in which the crime took place for interviews prior to the year ending March 2002 (so interviews conducted in 1996 relate to victimisation in 1995, and will be labelled as 1995 in tables and figures), and the year in which the survey interviews took place for interviews since the year ending March 2002. Other questions on the CSEW (for example, attitudes to policing, confidence in the CJS) ask the respondent their current views or attitudes and thus the data are referenced as the year in which the respondent was interviewed.

Since 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. Hence for the year ending March 2017 CSEW, the reference period includes incidents experienced by respondents between April 2015 and February 2017. The centre point of the period for reporting crime is March 2015, the only month to be included in all respondents’ reference periods, as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2: The reference period in 1 year of Crime Survey for England and Wales interviews (April to March)



Averaging over the moving reference period of the CSEW generates estimates that are most closely comparable with police recorded crime figures to the end of the September 6 months earlier. For example, CSEW figures from the year ending March 2017 survey are most closely comparable with police recorded crime statistics for the 12 months to the end of September 2016.

The Home Office commissioned methodological work to consider the use of an alternative method of presenting the data based on crimes experienced in a particular year. The [British Crime Survey: Methods Review 2009](#) compared the trajectory of a range of crime types, presenting the data based on the year the interview took place compared with the year the incident took place. There was no evidence that this different basis for reporting would have produced different findings over the period of 2001 to 2009. However, during this period a steady decline in crime was experienced. The review also noted that moving to presenting data based on the year that the incident took place would mean that analysts would have to wait an additional year before a complete dataset would be available to them. No changes were made to the CSEW as a result of this study.

2.5 Crime Survey for England and Wales measures of crime

The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) 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.

Published CSEW data excludes sexual offences (except for "wounding with a sexual motive") as the number of sexual offences picked up by the survey is too small to give reliable estimates. [Chapter 5](#) provides a full definition of offence types.

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.

Children aged 10-15

Extending the CSEW to encompass children's experiences of crimes raised some difficult issues with regard to classifying criminal incidents; for example, minor incidents that are normal within the context of childhood behaviour and development can be categorised as criminal when existing legal definitions of offences are applied. The [Experimental Statistics on victimisation of children aged 10 to 15](#) bulletin, published in 2010, proposed four methods for counting crime against children. Following a [National Statistics consultation](#) with users, these measures have been refined. Responses to the user consultation suggested there was some value in all approaches, but the majority favoured the "broad" and "preferred" based measures with regard to estimating levels of victimisation⁹.

Of the other two methods, there was least support during the consultation for the subjective approach, which included only offences perceived to be a crime by the respondent ("victim perceived"), and some limited interest from users in the presentation of the "all in law outside school" approach (which includes all incidents reported by children that are in law a crime except those occurring in school).

The "broad measure" (previously known as the "all in law" approach) is the widest-possible count but will include minor offences between children and family members that would not normally be treated as criminal matters. The "preferred measure" (previously known as the "norms-based" approach) is a more focused method, which takes into account factors identified as important in determining the severity of an incident but will still include incidents of a serious nature, even if they took place at school.

⁹ Since the year ending March 2011, while only two measures are being presented in crime statistics bulletins, data are still collected to enable the other measures to be derived; these will be made publically available through the [UK Data Service](#).

The “preferred measure” includes all offences where:

- the offender^{10,10} was not known (for example, stranger, tradesman, pupil from another school)
- the offender^{10,11} as known, but aged 16 or over and not a family member (for example, neighbour, older friend, teacher)¹¹
- the offender^{10,11} was known and either a family member or aged under 16 (for example, parent, sibling, school-friend) and there was visible injury or theft or damage involving a “high-value” item¹²
- a weapon¹³ was involved

In the year ending March 2010 and the year ending March 2011, a lower level of detail was collected if:

- the incident happened at school
- the offender¹⁰ was a pupil at the respondent’s school
- the offender did not use a weapon¹³
- the victim was not physically hurt in any way

This was to reduce respondent burden and to reflect that some incidents reported by children may be considered relatively minor. Incidents that met these criteria had a limited amount of information collected to enable classification to a high-level crime category and so it was not possible to assign specific offence codes within the appropriate high-level classification according to standard CSEW procedures. As a result, these cases have been designated as “unspecified” offences. Without an offence code it is not possible to tell which detailed crime type the offence would be classified as. For example, data on whether the stolen item was being carried by the respondent at the time of a theft were not collected, so it is not feasible to determine whether this would be “theft from the person” or “other theft of personal property”. However, because the respondent reported that there was intent to commit an offence, these incidents are still considered offences under law.

“Unspecified” offences do not fall within the scope of the “preferred measure” because the detailed information above was not collected.

In the year ending March 2012, this was changed and full information was collected about all incidents of crime. This means that the “unspecified” categories are not derivable and the data are not directly comparable over the three time periods. In the year ending March 2010 and the year ending March 2011, children aged 10 to 15 were asked detailed information about up to four crimes; from the year ending March 2012 this was reduced to three.

A minor revision was made to the calculation of the preferred measure in the year ending March 2013 survey, relating to the classification of incidents in terms of the intention to commit an offence and whether the incident should be classed as serious or non-serious. The need for this revision was identified when, during a broader programme of work to reweight survey estimates, a failure to implement a previous methodological change was uncovered. These changes had the effect of reducing estimates for the preferred measure (in particular, for personal theft and vandalism).

¹⁰ If there was more than one offender, the incident was included if just one of the offenders matched this criteria.

¹¹ The inclusion of offences committed by a known non-family member irrespective of the nature of the offence represents a change to the approach used for the “norms-based” measure that was previously published in [Experimental statistics on victimisation of children aged 10 to 15: British Crime Survey year ending December 2009](#). This recognises the importance of age in addition to relationship in classifying the severity of an incident.

¹² This excludes items such as pens, stationery, food, toys, cards and cigarettes.

¹³ A “weapon” constitutes any item that was considered to be a weapon by the victim; this includes knives, sticks, stones and bottles, among other things.

Some methodological differences between the adult's survey and the children's survey mean that direct comparisons cannot be made between the adult and child victimisation data, although these estimates are presented in the same publication to provide a better understanding of victimisation experiences among adults and children resident in households.

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. CSEW estimates only include the first five incidents in this "series" of victimisations in the count of crime.

Overall, each adult respondent can have a maximum of 30 incidents contained in the count of crime; a maximum of six victim modules with a maximum of five incidents on each victim module¹⁴. In practice, most adult respondents have far fewer than this. More details on victimisation data collection are available in our [annual technical reports](#).

The restriction to the first five incidents in a series has been applied since the CSEW began, to ensure that estimates are not affected by a very small number of respondents who report an extremely high number of incidents and which are highly variable between survey years. In the US National Violence Against Women Survey, which did not include a capping procedure, 24 respondents had been victims of rape in the preceding 12 months. One of these victims had been raped 24 times in this time period and when weighted to the population, this victim accounted for 302,100 incidents estimated from the survey: 34% of the total. The inclusion of such victims could undermine the ability to measure trends consistently. This sort of capping is in line with other surveys of crime and other topics. Prevalence rates are not affected by this procedure (more information on the measurement of series data is available in our [annual technical reports](#)).

Where victimisation is prone to be in a series, such as with domestic violence, the current method of dealing with high levels of repeat victimisation has been shown to disproportionately impact females. We are committed to selecting the best method possible and, as a result, 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. Work has been ongoing to understand the impact that these changes will have on CSEW estimates and time-series for both adults aged 16 and over and children aged 10-15. We will continue to finalise the details of both our new methodology and our revisions plans over the coming months.

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. The full list of CSEW offence codes is shown

¹⁴ A victim module is completed for every incident, or series of incidents, that the respondent or their household has been a victim of, and collects details of the offence such as the severity of injury sustained and the offender characteristics.

in Appendix 2. CSEW 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 or children (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 2017, incidence rates for household-level crimes were multiplied by 24,514,477

households and, for personal-level crimes, by 46,215,306 adults aged 16 and over or 3,809,900 children aged 10 to 15, 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. [Chapter 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 CSEW shows that victimisation rates vary depending on factors associated with personal, area and household characteristics (for example, see [Crime in England and Wales 2009 to 2010](#)).

Since the CSEW 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.

For intimate violence (domestic abuse, sexual assault and stalking), prevalence rates are based on information collected from the intimate violence self-completion module of the survey. Respondents are asked if they have experienced a range of different behaviours, and the proportions of respondents who report having experienced these behaviours provide the prevalence rates (see Chapter 5.1 for more information on the definitions of the different types of intimate violence). These rates do not take account of the impact of the behaviour on the respondent; information on the impact of intimate violence is reported on separately in our annual “Focus on violent crime and sexual offences” publication.

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 CSEW 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

The general principle applied to the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) 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 CSEW revisions policy covers:

- all approved researcher special licence datasets held by funding departments, the UK Data Archive and the ONS's Virtual Microdata Laboratory (VML)
- all end user licence datasets held by funding departments and the UK Data Archive (UKDA)
- data appearing in quarterly bulletins; focus on publications; 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 CSEW 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 it is either published or released for dissemination, errors do on occasion occur. In these instances the following procedure is followed.

The problem is identified and reported to our Public Policy Division (PPD) for consideration. We then establish whether there is an error and whether 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 by PPD and our analysts will check the revision, recording the impact of the revision in terms of scale and necessary publication revisions. A notice will then 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, VML 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 2-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.

Chapter 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). 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, 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 2017 that around 41% of CSEW comparable crime was reported to the police, although this proportion varied considerably for individual offence types.

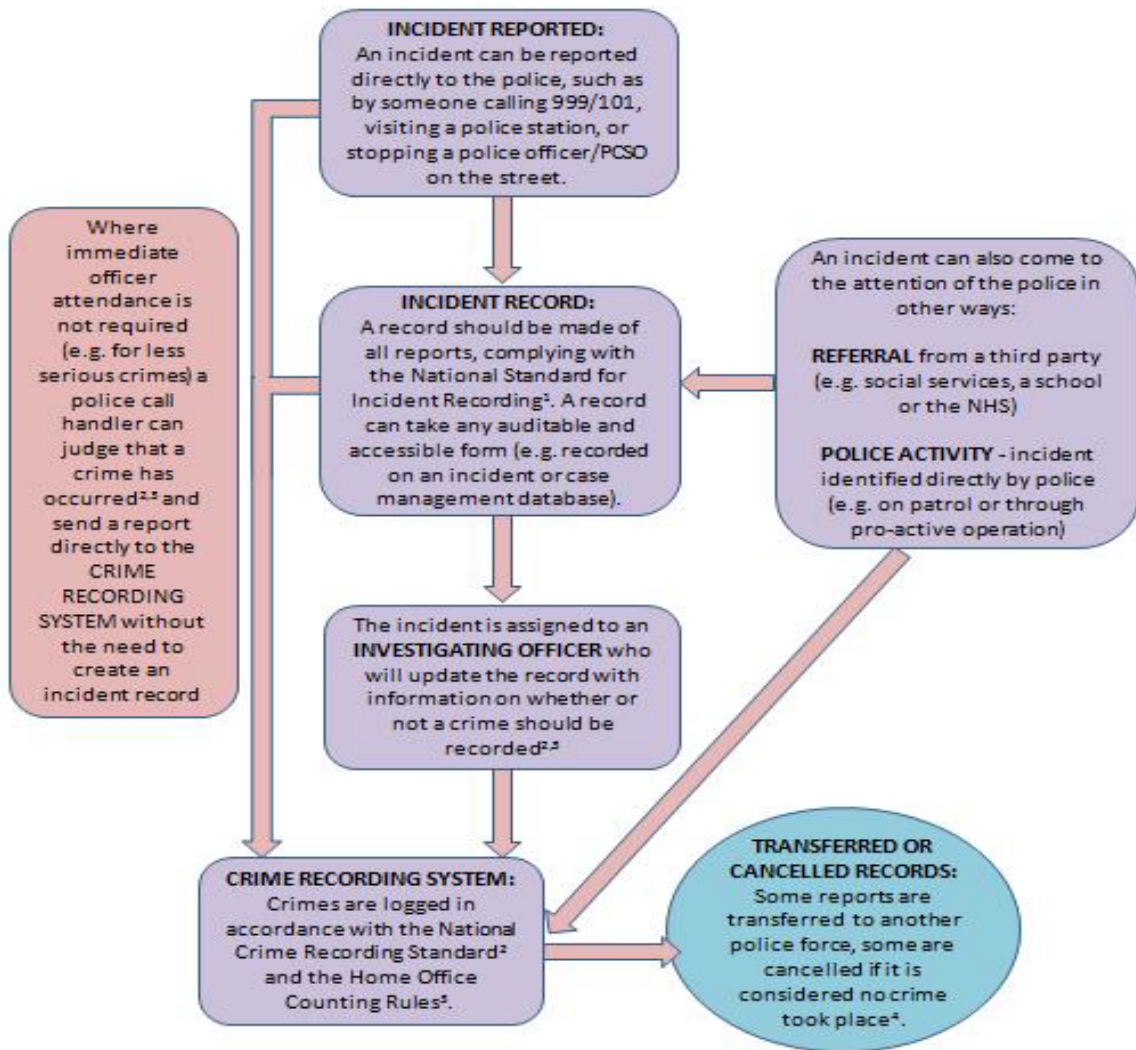
Police recorded crime data are supplied to us by the Home Office, who are responsible for the collation of recorded crime data supplied by the 43 territorial police forces of England and Wales, plus the British Transport Police. These data are supplied to the Home Office on a monthly basis in an aggregated 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 3a: Crime recording process map



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 Service (HMICFRS) provides a clear description of the first stages of the crime recording process. Some extracts from this section of their report are given in [Appendix 5](#)¹⁵.

Home Office Data Hub

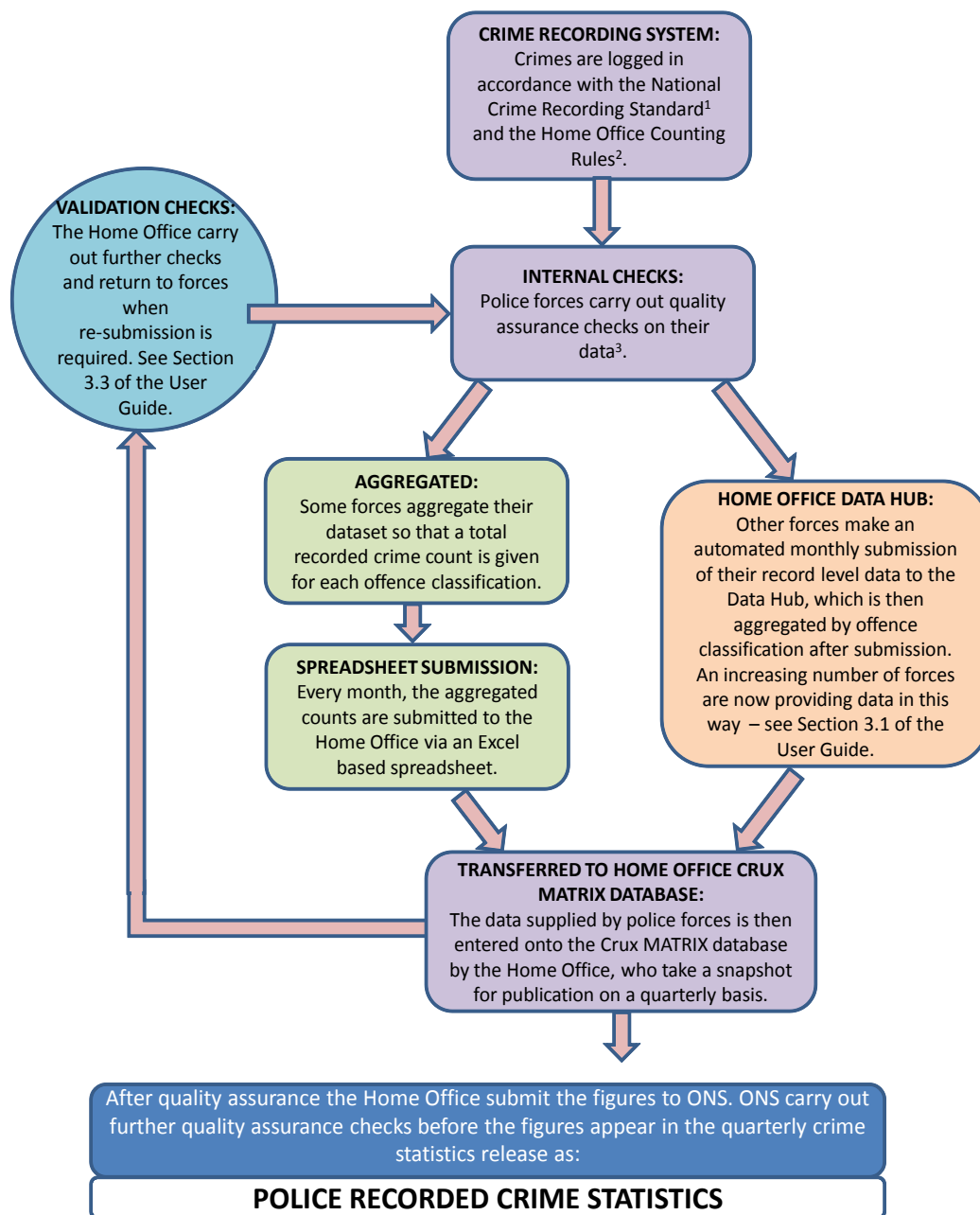
The Home Office have been implementing a new data collection system to streamline the process by which forces submit data. The Home Office Data Hub has been designed to replace the current spreadsheet-based system with automated capture of crime data (via direct extracts from forces' own crime recording 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 38 providing their recorded crime data solely via this route, accounting for around 90% of all crimes. 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 has already been used in the quarterly crime bulletins, and also the "Focus on 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 3b: Data submission process map

¹⁵ In April 2015, changes to NCRS introduced the necessity to record crimes reported by parents, carers and professional third parties, regardless of whether there is victim confirmation of the crime. This change impacts on the recording process described in Box 3a and has resulted in the recording of two additional harassment offences 'Disclosure of private sexual photographs and films with the intent to cause distress or anxiety' and 'Sending letters with intent to cause distress or anxiety'.



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)¹⁶ 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 of 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 audit 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

¹⁶ In April 2015, the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) replaced the Association for Chief Police Officers (ACPO).

shown that crimes have in some cases been misrecorded 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 statistics¹⁷. 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 inspections¹⁸, 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 decisions¹⁹.

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 National Police Chiefs’ Council (NPCC), Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS), and the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS). Any significant changes proposed by these groups in recording will be considered by the independent [National Statistician Crime Statistics Advisory Committee](#) (NSCSAC) – established following a recommendation in the [National Statistician’s review of crime statistics](#) in 2011 – who will advise the National Statistician, who is the government’s principal adviser on Official Statistics.

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.

¹⁷ 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.

¹⁸ 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 HMIC throughout these inspections.

¹⁹As a result of this audit, HMIC made two recommendations. Firstly, the Home Office should revise the HOCR 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.

Prior to submitting data to us, the Home Office Police Data Collection Section (PDCS) and Home Office Statistics Unit 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 (in particular, homicide offences should not usually be transferred or cancelled, so checks include a flag on any negative homicide offences); 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)²⁰. 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 2013²¹, and as part of an [inquiry by the Public Administration Select Committee \(PASC\) into](#)

²⁰ This followed a HMIC 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.

²¹ 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

[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 2014²². 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. [Reports on these inspections are being published by HMICFRS on a rolling basis. Those published to date generally show](#) improvements since the last inspection. However, HMICFRS have identified a number of forces as still requiring improvement to their recording processes and graded the forces inspected as follows:

- Avon and Somerset as requiring improvement (with 90% of crime reports audited correctly recorded)
- Devon and Cornwall as inadequate (with 82% of crime reports audited correctly recorded)

- Greater Manchester as inadequate (with 85% of crime reports audited correctly recorded)
- Merseyside as inadequate (with 84% of crime reports audited correctly recorded)
- Northumbria as requires improvement (with 93% of crime reports audited correctly recorded)
- Staffordshire as good (with 91% of crime reports audited correctly recorded)

information see Section 4.2, or the [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.

²² HMIC'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.

-
- Sussex as good (with 95% of crime reports audited correctly recorded)
 - Wiltshire as good (with 91% of crime reports audited correctly recorded)
 - Cheshire as inadequate (with 84% of crime reports audited correctly recorded)
 - Kent as inadequate (with 84% of crime reports audited correctly recorded)
 - Cambridgeshire as requires improvement (with 88% of crime reports audited correctly recorded)
 - West Midlands as inadequate (with 84% of crime reports audited correctly recorded)
 - North Wales as requires improvement (with 88% of crime reports audited correctly recorded)
 - Leicestershire as inadequate (with 76% of crime reports audited correctly recorded)
 - Lancashire as inadequate (with 84% of crime reports audited correctly at recording)
 - Hertfordshire as requires improvement (with 87% of crime reports audited correctly at the time of recording)
 - South Wales as good (with 90% of crime reports audited correctly at the time of recording)

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 rationalised²³. 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 groupings²⁴.

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 users²⁵. 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

²³ 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

²⁴ 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.

²⁵ 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.

2013, many fraud offences previously recorded by police forces were recorded centrally by Action Fraud (Section 5.4 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 Chapter 5.4 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 transferred²⁶ or cancelled. A table showing the numbers and percentages of transferred or cancelled records by offence group is available in [Table UG13 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

²⁶ 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”.

complete, final data is supplied to the Office for National Statistics (ONS). Thus 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
- Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary AND Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Crime and Policing Comparator
- ["compare your area" data local crime maps](#)

Whilst all of 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. These are outlined in this section and summarised in [Appendix 3](#).

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 Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) and the Commercial Victimisation Survey) 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](#).

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary Crime and Policing Comparator

The [Crime and Policing Comparator](#)²⁷ is HMICFRS's online tool that brings together a range of data from all 43 police forces across England and Wales for the past 3 years. It allows users to compare rates of crime between forces using an interactive charting tool. The Crime and Policing Comparator is updated quarterly based on the same police recorded crime dataset as that used in the ONS statistical bulletin.

In addition to police recorded crime, the Crime and Policing Comparator provides data on:

- anti-social behaviour (ASB) incidents recorded by the police
- quality of service (from victim satisfaction surveys)
- police force data on finances and workforce

“Compare your area” data

Police recorded crime data can be found in the Compare Your Area section of [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](#) 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

²⁷ The Crime and Policing Comparator is no longer being updated whilst a new version is created.

those used to supply data for the Official Statistics, there are some important differences between the [Police.uk crime maps](#) 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).

Chapter 4: Comparison of the CSEW and police recorded crime

4.1 Comparable subset of crime

This section explores the relationship between Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) estimates and police recorded crime. By adjusting each series, comparisons can be made between police recorded crime and the adult element of the CSEW (those aged 16 and over), allowing a better interpretation of overall crime trends. The need for this comparison has been particularly important during periods when various changes have been made to the police recording of crime.

To compare the crime rates measured by the CSEW and police recorded crime, a comparable subset of crimes has been created for a set of offences that are covered by both measures. Various adjustments are made to the recorded crime categories to maximise comparability with the CSEW but they are not adjusted to exclude victims of commercial offences and offences committed against children aged under 16. Over three-quarters of CSEW offences reported via interviews in recent years fall into categories that can be compared with crimes recorded by the police, as shown in Table 4a.

The mapping between CSEW categories and police recorded offence codes are approximate and categories will not be directly equivalent in all cases.

Reporting rates: findings from the CSEW

The CSEW asks whether incidents were reported, or otherwise came to the attention of the police, and it is estimated that only 41% of CSEW comparable crime in the year ending March 2017 was reported to the police. These findings reveal considerable differences in reporting rates between different types of offences and some variability in reporting rates over time. The [Crime in England and Wales 2009 to 2010 statistical bulletin](#) from the Home Office provides analysis of reasons given for not reporting crime to the police.

Discrepancies between the trends in the CSEW and police recorded crime may reflect trends in reporting rates. However, they may also reflect changes in police priorities and recording practices, variation within the CSEW sample, and differences in the time period covered between the two sources.

Table 4a: Comparable subset of crimes

CSEW category	Recorded crime offence included
Violence	Assault with intent to cause serious harm (5D) Assault with injury (8N) Racially or religiously aggravated assault with injury (8P) Assault without injury on a constable (104) Assault without injury (105A) Racially or religiously aggravated assault without injury (105B)
Robbery	Robbery of personal property (34B)
Theft from the person	Theft from the person (39)
Domestic burglary in a dwelling	Burglary in a dwelling (28A) Attempted burglary in a dwelling (28B) Distraction burglary in a dwelling (28C) Attempted distraction burglary in a dwelling (28D) Aggravated burglary in a dwelling (29)
Vehicle-related theft	Aggravated vehicle taking (37.2) Theft from a vehicle (45) Theft and unauthorised taking of motor vehicle (48) Vehicle interference (126)
Bicycle theft	Theft or unauthorised taking of pedal cycle (44)
Criminal damage to a dwelling	Criminal damage to a dwelling (58A)
Criminal damage to a vehicle	Criminal damage to a vehicle (58C)

4.2 Analysis of trends in comparable crime

Introduction

In broad terms, the CSEW and recorded crime series have displayed similar trends for overall crime, with some inconsistencies due to reporting and recording changes. Overall, both series reveal rises from the early 1980s to peaks in the early-to-mid-1990s and falls thereafter.

CSEW crime rose steadily from 1981, peaking well over a decade later in 1995. Subsequently, CSEW crime fell markedly between 1995 and the year ending March 2005 survey. Following this there were smaller changes from year to year but the underlying trend continued downwards, albeit with some fluctuation. Since the survey year ending March 2013 CSEW crime has seen significant reductions each year

As outlined in Section 3.3, police recorded crime has been affected by the implementation of both the [Home Office Counting Rules \(HOCR\)](#) in 1998 and the [National Crime Recording Standard \(NCRS\)](#) in 2002. Both resulted in an increase in the number of crimes recorded. Following this, however, police recorded crime decreased steadily for a decade.

Despite both CSEW and police recorded crime recording broadly similar trends, closer analysis highlights some differences between the two series. In January 2012, we published a methodological note, [Analysis of variation in crime trends](#), which explored the issue of a possible divergence between police recorded crime

and CSEW trends, using two comparable subsets of crime types from both series.

This section updates the analysis conducted in that paper with the most recent data (year to March 2017) available²⁸.

Ratio comparing CSEW reported crime and police recorded crime

It is possible to calculate a ratio using volume measures of both CSEW and police recorded crime using the comparable subset of crimes outlined in Section 4.1. In theory, if all crimes from the CSEW subset were reported to the police and subsequently recorded by the police, the ratio would be 1. In reality, some variation in the ratio is to be expected due to the inherent variability of sampling associated with the survey.

Figure 4 shows that prior to the introduction of expanded HOCR and the NCRS in 1998 and 2002 respectively, the ratio of comparable police recorded crime to the total estimated number of crimes reported to the police from the comparable categories of the CSEW was between 0.50 and 0.62.

This suggests that a relatively large volume of crimes reported by the public to the police were not ultimately being recorded by them.

As expected, this ratio increased substantially around the introduction of the NCRS and from the year ending March 2003 remained around 0.90 for a number of years. This is consistent with the switch to a more victim-focused method of recording, where the police were required to record a victim's report if it amounted to a crime in law and there was no credible evidence to the contrary.

However, from the year ending March 2008, there were year-on-year reductions in the ratio, with the number of police recorded crimes falling as low as 0.71 of reported crimes in the CSEW in the year ending March 2012 and the year ending March 2013.

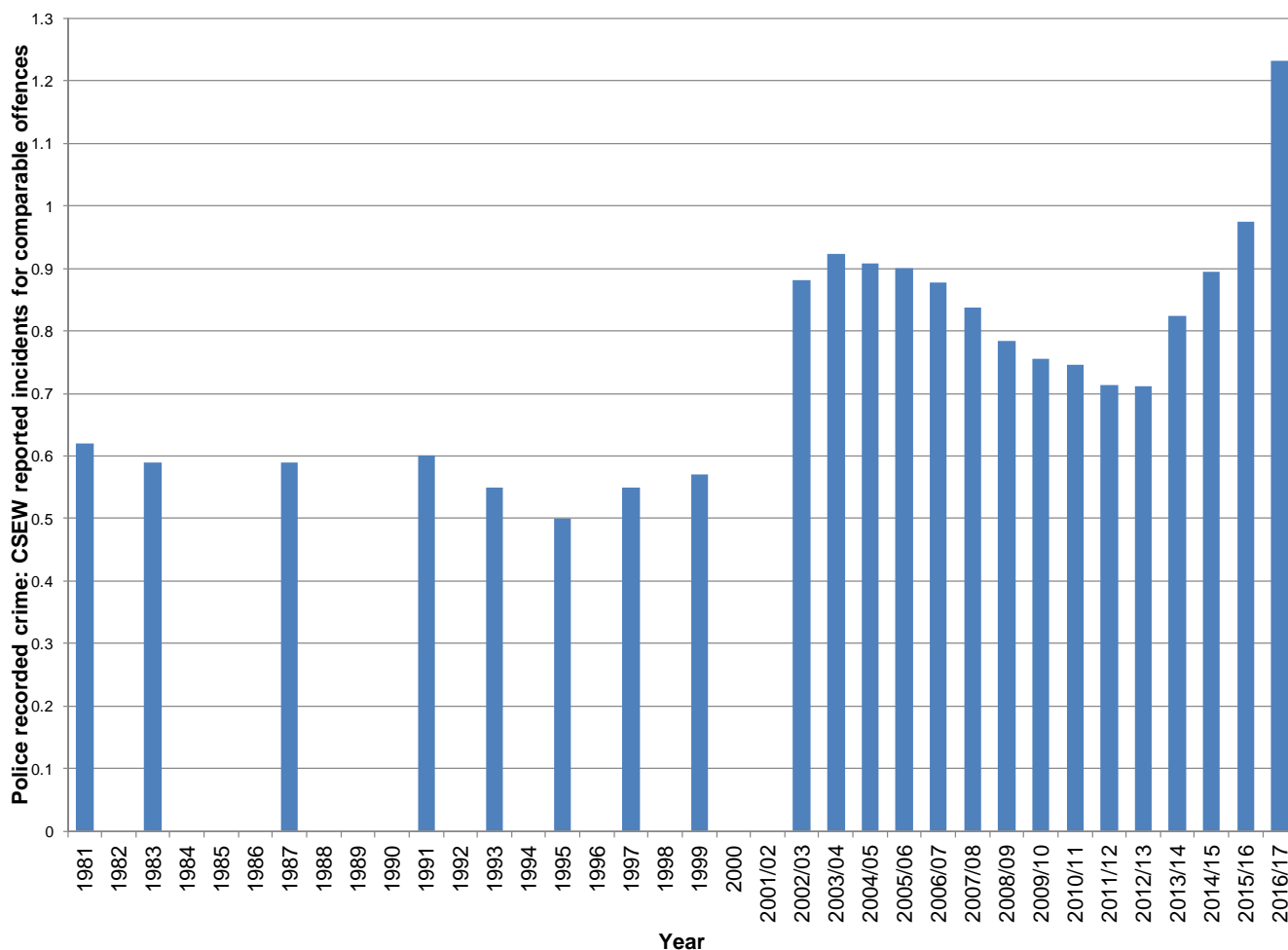
In the last few years, the gap between the two series narrowed substantially. It closed from 0.71 in the year ending March to 0.97 in the year ending March 2016 and the latest figure for the year ending March 2017 show it to be 1.23. Part of the explanation for the recorded crime figures now exceeding the survey's estimate may reflect that, while the same offences are included in the comparable basket of offences, the police recorded series covers a wider range of victims than the survey. Thus if there is an increase in the number of reports of crimes to the police from victims, or on behalf of victims, not covered by the survey this will have an effect. One example of this has been recent changes to crime recording practices for third party reporting. The 2014 HMICFRS inspection report made recommendations for changes to the HOCR with respect to reports of crime received from professional third parties, such as local authority social services or the medical profession. The existing HOCR required forces to record a crime only when confirmation had been received by the victim. In April 2015 the HOCR were changed so that forces were required to record a report from a professional third party as a crime. This is thought to have led to some increases in crimes against vulnerable people such as victims of child abuse, domestic abuse and elder abuse.

Many of the victims related to third party reports may not be covered by the CSEW because they will be resident in care homes (both children and older people) or victims of domestic abuse who may not be willing to disclose such experiences in the context of a face-to-face interview.

²⁸ Please note that the methodology has been revised since that note was published due to the reclassification and reweighting of CSEW offences. Further information can be found in the methodological note [Presentational and methodological improvements to National Statistics on the Crime Survey for England and Wales](#).



Figure 4: Ratio between Crime Survey for England and Wales reported incidents and crimes recorded by the police (in comparable sub-set)



Notes

1. The offences included in the comparable sub-set for the period year ending December 1981 to year ending December 1999 differ slightly from those used from the year ending March 2003 onwards, due to changes in offence coverage.

Impact on volumes of crime

Table 4b shows the impact of these changes on the volume of offences. Overall, since the year ending March 2003, the two series have declined at a similar rate (45% for police recorded crime and 46% for CSEW crimes). A similar rate of decline was also the case in the first few years immediately following the implementation of the NCRS (year ending March 2003 to the year ending March 2008), when police recorded crime dropped 20% and CSEW crime decreased 16%.

Since then, however, the rate of decline has varied. For the following 5 years (up until the year ending March 2013), the two dropped at markedly different rates, with police recorded crime showing a notably faster rate of decline (32%) compared to the CSEW (19%). Since then, the trends have switched completely, with police recorded crime showing an increase of 19% and the CSEW decreasing by 31%.

Table 4b: Volume and percentage reduction in comparable crime categories, years ending March 2003, 2008, 2013 and 2017¹

England and Wales									
	Apr '02 to Mar '03	Apr '07 to Mar '08	Apr '12 to Mar '13	Apr '16 to Mar '17	2002/03 to 2007/08	2007/08 to 2012/13	2012/13 to 2016/17	2002/03 to 2016/17	
	Percentage change ²								
Police recorded crime	3,229,842	2,574,973	1,761,996	2,103,768	-20	-32	19	-35	
CSEW crimes (reported to police)	3,668,905	3,072,780	2,478,062	1,706,495	-16	-19	-31	-53	

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

1. The methodology used to calculate the number of crimes in the comparable sub-set has been revised slightly since the publication of the methodological note 'Analysis of variation in crime trends' due to a loss of detail for some police recorded crime offences and the inclusion of some CSEW offences previously omitted from the comparable sub-set.

2. The percentage change data refers to crimes recorded in the financial year (April to March)

Possible explanations

There is no obvious methodological change to the survey that might explain the gradual separation in the first decade of the NCRS, followed by the two large increases in police recorded crime. One possible hypothesis, given the consistent pattern over a decade, is that there was a gradual erosion of compliance with the NCRS, such that a growing number of crimes reported to the police were no longer being captured in crime recording systems. Then, with regards to the narrowing of the gap between the two data series since the year ending March 2013, increased focus on the quality of crime recording by the police (as a result of, for example, the recent Public Administration Select Committee (PASC) inquiry and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & rescue Services (HMICFRS) inspections (Section 3.3 provides more details)) is likely to have had an effect – through an improvement in compliance levels.

However, the impact of improved crime recording by the police cannot account for all of the divergence between the two sources in some particular individual crime types. HMICFRS inspections have tended to show that offences such as burglary and vehicle theft, along with some categories of high-harm but low-volume violent crimes, have better levels of recording and therefore the increases are more likely to reflect real rises in these types of offences. These rises have not yet been reflected in the survey estimates and it is possible that the sample size may not be large enough to detect small or emerging trends in specific individual crime types, which may in some cases fall within the confidence intervals around the survey estimates.

The [Methodological note: Analysis of variation in crime trends](#) provides further discussions on the analysis of trends, including other possible explanations of the diverging trend series.

Chapter 5: 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) 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 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 in Figure 5 below."

Figure 5. Data quality framework

Crime type	Against individuals and households	Against business and organisations	Against society and the state	Relative volume / trend
Homicide	Source: Police recorded crime Reliable trend available from police recorded crime and Homicide Index. Not covered by the CSEW.	N/A	N/A	Volume: Very low Latest Trend: small rises seen over the last year
Offences involving knives and sharp instruments	Source: Police recorded crime Likely that current trends reflect real changes in crime levels, but recording changes may also be a factor. NHS data on hospital admissions show similar trend. Not covered by the CSEW.	N/A	N/A	Volume: Low Latest Trend: notable rises seen over the last two years
Offences involving firearms	Source: Police recorded crime Some uncertainty over drivers, but likely that current trend reflects real changes in crime levels. Recording changes may also be a factor. Not covered by the CSEW.	N/A	N/A	Volume: Low Latest Trend: small rises seen over the last two years
Other violent crime	Preferred source: CSEW Reliable long term trends available from the CSEW, validated by separate survey results on violence-related attendance at A&E. Recording improvements in police recorded crime mean that these do not provide a reliable measure of trends for this crime type.	N/A	N/A	Volume: High Latest trend: No change in latest CSEW estimates following long term falls

Sexual offences		<p>Preferred source: CSEW Trends in prevalence of sexual assault available from separate module of CSEW, but sample size limitations mean estimates have large margins of error and can fluctuate. Recording improvements, and increasing willingness of victims to report to the authorities, mean that police recorded crime data do not provide a reliable measure of trends for this crime type.</p>	N/A		N/A		<p>Volume: Medium</p> <p>Latest trend: No change in latest CSEW estimates of prevalence. Slight falls seen over last decade.</p>
Criminal damage and arson		<p>Preferred source: CSEW Reliable long term trends available from the CSEW. Recording improvements in police recorded crime data mean that these do not provide a reliable measure of trends for this crime type.</p>		<p>Preferred source: Police recorded crime Covered in police recorded crime data but offences against businesses are not separately identifiable. Not covered in CSEW.</p> <p>Some information available from Home Office Commercial Victimization Survey, but only for some</p>		<p>Preferred source: Police recorded crime Covered in police recorded crime data but criminal damage offences against public or state owned property are not separately identifiable. Not covered in CSEW.</p>	<p>Volume: High</p> <p>Latest trend: No significant change in latest CSEW estimates following long term falls.</p>
Vehicle theft offences		<p>Preferred source: CSEW 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.</p>		<p>Preferred source: Police recorded crime Covered in police recorded crime statistics but offences against businesses are not separately identifiable. Not covered in CSEW.</p> <p>Some information available from Home Office Commercial Victimization Survey, but only for some</p>	N/A		<p>Volume: Medium / High</p> <p>Latest trend: No significant change in latest CSEW estimate after long term falls. However, police recorded crime figures indicate rises in theft of vehicles over the last two years.</p>
Burglary		<p>Preferred source: CSEW 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.</p>		<p>Preferred source: Police recorded crime Covered in police recorded crime data as part of 'Burglary - business and community category'. Not thought to have been subject to extensive changes in recording practice. Not covered in CSEW.</p> <p>Some information available from Home Office Commercial Victimization Survey, but only for some</p>		<p>Preferred source: Police recorded crime Covered in police recorded crime data as part of 'Burglary - business and community category'. Not thought to have been subject to extensive changes in recording practice. Not covered in CSEW.</p>	<p>Volume: High</p> <p>Latest trend: No significant change in latest CSEW estimate after long term falls. However, police recorded crime figures indicate rises in burglary over the last year.</p>
Other household theft		<p>Preferred source: CSEW Reliable long term trends available from the CSEW. Captured in police recorded crime but not separately identifiable from within the 'Other theft offences' category.</p>	N/A		N/A		<p>Volume: Medium / High</p> <p>Latest trend: No significant change in latest CSEW estimate after long term falls.</p>
Theft from the person		<p>Preferred source: Police recorded crime Reasonably reliable long term trend information from the CSEW but relatively small numbers of victims means that there can be some annual volatility in the estimate. 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.</p>	N/A		N/A		<p>Volume: Medium</p> <p>Latest trend: Increases in police recorded crime seen over the last year two years.</p>

Other theft of personal property		Preferred source: CSEW Reliable long term trends available from the CSEW. Captured in police recorded crime but not separately identifiable from within the 'Other theft offences' category.	N/A		N/A		Volume: High Latest trend: Significant falls in CSEW estimates
Bicycle theft		Preferred source: CSEW Reasonably reliable long term trend information from the CSEW but relatively small numbers of victims means that there can be some annual volatility in the estimates. 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.	N/A		N/A		Volume: Medium Latest trend: No significant change in CSEW estimates continuing long term trends.
Shoplifting	N/A			Preferred source: Police recorded crime Trend data available from police recorded crime data but, as shoplifting offences are often not reported to the police, these may reflect changes in reporting rates as well as real changes in crime. Improvements in recording practice may also be a factor. Not covered in CSEW. Some information available from Home Office Commercial Victimization Survey but small sample size results in volatility in estimates and can make	N/A		Volume: Medium / high Latest trend: Increases in police recorded crime seen in the last year.
All other theft offences	N/A			Preferred source: Police recorded crime Theft of business property is covered in police recorded crime but not separately identifiable from personal or household theft offences.	N/A		Volume: High Latest trend: Increases over the last year.
Robbery		Preferred source: Police recorded crime Reasonably reliable long term trend information from the CSEW but relatively small numbers of victims means that there can be some annual volatility in the estimates. 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.		Preferred source: Police recorded crime 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. Not covered in the CSEW	N/A		Volume: Low/Medium Latest trend: Increases in police recorded crime seen in the last year.

Fraud		Preferred source: CSEW CSEW now provides reliable estimates of the extent of fraud against individuals though only covering 2 years, with no long term trend data available. CSEW estimates capture high volume, lower harm offences well, but are less good at providing reliable figures on more serious forms of fraud. Data from Action Fraud cover only those crimes that are reported to them. As such, these figures capture the more serious types of fraud more effectively than the CSEW.		Preferred source: Police recorded crime / data from industry bodies Available sources provide only a partial picture. Some reports to Action Fraud will be from businesses, but only a small proportion of incidents are likely to be reported.		Preferred source: Police recorded crime Available sources provide only a partial picture. Some reports to Action Fraud will be from organisations and public sector bodies but only a small proportion of incidents are likely to be reported.	Volume: High Latest trend: The first two years of CSEW estimates show a fall.
Public order offences	N/A		N/A			Preferred source: Police recorded crime Trends are available from police recorded crime data, but these do not currently provide a reliable indication of trends in this crime type. These figures reflect levels of police activity rather than crime, and have also been subject to improvements in recording.	Volume: High Latest trend: Increases in police recorded crime seen in the last year.
Drug offences	N/A		N/A			Preferred source: Police recorded crime Trends are available from police recorded crime data, but these do not currently provide a reliable indication of trends in this crime type. These figures reflect levels of police activity rather than crime.	Volume: Medium Latest trend: Increases in police recorded crime seen in the last year.
Possession of weapons	N/A		N/A			Preferred source: Police recorded crime Trends are available from police recorded crime data, but these do not currently provide a reliable indication of trends in this crime type. These figures reflect levels of police activity rather than crime.	Volume: Low Latest trend: Increases in police recorded crime seen in the last year.
	Key						
	Reliable		Unreliable				

5.1 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 stabbed, punched, kicked, pushed or jostled, as well as offences where the victim was threatened with violence whether or not there is any injury.

In published crime statistics, violent crime – both as measured by the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) and by police recorded crime – is grouped into two broad, high-level categories: “violence with injury” and “violence without injury”. However, these categories are not directly comparable between the CSEW and police recorded crime, and attempts to cause injury are categorised differently. In addition to the two broad categories, police recorded crime

statistics present a separate category for homicide – such offences are not covered by the CSEW as it is a victim-based survey.

In the year ending March 2017, 47% of all CSEW violent incidents and 40% of all police recorded violence against the person 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 would not include these if no actual injury occurred.

Violence without injury includes all incidents of assault without injury and, from the CSEW only, attempted assaults. From July 2013, police recorded crime no longer includes under this sub-category possession of weapons offences and public order offences, such as public fear, alarm or distress. These offences are now included in new sub-categories within “other crimes against society”, named “possession of weapons offences” and “public order offences”. In order to produce a consistent time series, the year to March 2013 quarterly publication (and all subsequent publications) retrospectively applied the agreed changes to the police recorded crime classification to all data from the year ending March 2003.

Police recorded crime statistics for violence, especially less serious violence, are particularly affected by changes in recording practices over time; for the population and crime types it covers, the CSEW is the better measure for long-term national trends in violence. 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. 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 violence

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”²⁹ 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

²⁹ 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 around five-times higher for adults than those obtained from the face-to-face interviews.](#)

- “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.

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 2017, available from Table D8 in the [Crime in England and Wales: Year ending March 2017](#) 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](#) 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.

Audits undertaken by the Audit Commission on behalf of the Home Office indicated substantial improvements in crime recording across forces in the 2 to 3 years following the NCRS introduction, which would particularly impact on “violence against the person” and result in increases in recorded crimes for this category.

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

- “homicide”³⁰ (murder, manslaughter, infanticide and corporate manslaughter – where an organisation is deemed responsible for a person’s death)
- “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
- “harassment” offences³¹ are those incidents where no other substantive notifiable offence exists, but when looked at as a course of conduct are likely to cause fear, alarm or distress
- “assault without injury” offences are those where at the most a feeling of touch or passing moment of pain is experienced by the victim

The published figures do not separately split individual “homicide” offences across the separate components (such as murder or manslaughter) as, when a homicide is initially recorded by the police, the full circumstances of the incident may not be known. Furthermore, the precise nature of an offence may only become clear once a suspect has been apprehended and appears at court.

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. In contrast to the aggregated recorded crime return, 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. However, due to 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 aggregated recorded crime return are presented as a provisional homicide estimate, with full analysis published in “Focus on Violent Crime and Sexual Offences” 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).

³⁰ Corporate manslaughter was previously included under “violence against the person – with injury”. Following a public consultation in 2012, which addressed the presentation of corporate manslaughter in crime statistics, this offence is now included within the “homicide” sub-category.

³¹ Historical data for harassment was affected by the removal of offence code 9A (public fear, alarm or distress) from the “violence against the person” category introduced in the year to March 2013 quarterly bulletin. Section 3.3 on public order offences provides further information on how figures were affected.

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 vast majority of cases the offence will be recorded in the same year as it took place, this is not always the case.

When a homicide is recorded by the police, they are required to complete a detailed form within 30 days. The first part of this form gives information on the victim (for example, age, gender, ethnicity and relationship of victim and suspect) and the homicide (for example, method of killing, location of killing, and circumstances).

The Homicide Index is subject to regular updates as police investigations progress. If, on further investigation, the police feel a homicide has not taken place, they will contact the Home Office Police Data Collection Section (PDCS) to ask for the Homicide Index entry to be altered to reflect this new information. A statistician will look at each of these cases individually, usually in conjunction with a post-mortem or coroner's report, before deciding whether a homicide has taken place. In some cases (for example, accidental death or natural causes), the record will be deleted from the Homicide Index. In other cases (undetermined cause of death or death arising from actual bodily harm (ABH) not amounting to homicide), the case will be retained but marked as "no longer recorded".

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 or someone in the force performance management team). Police forces are encouraged to contact PDCS or 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 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; and,
- 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 PDCS 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, PDCS check for missing data and inconsistent fields. If an error is found then PDCS contact the police force to explain the error and ask the force to correct the mistake and resubmit a new return form.

PDCS carries out monthly or quarterly checks on the number of homicides from aggregate 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 respect of court outcome, data checks are carried out on 6 years worth of data each annual production period³². Where data are missing the Home Office populate these using data held by other agencies, for example, the National Offender Management Service. The media also plays an important role as the Home Office picks up on cases in newspapers and magazines to identify concluded cases and, where relevant, the police force conducting the concluded investigation is contacted and a new Homicide Index form is requested so the index can be updated.

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 to information from the Homicide Index.

The total number of homicides in each PFA is compared to the totals from the aggregate police recorded crime, 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.

The Home Office Statistics Unit run a range of data validity checks on the Homicide Index data, mainly on the fields that are included in published statistics releases. Some of these checks replicate those carried out by PDCS as the form arrives. 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 10 and the suspect is 40, the relationship of victim to suspect cannot be parent (in this case the force would be asked to amend to son/daughter); and 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 later than the date of the homicide
- Home Office Statistics also corroborate information from the police with newspaper and court reports; any discrepancies identified are referred back to the force to investigate and updated forms returned where applicable

Home Office statisticians also compare the number of forensic autopsies conducted with data from the Homicide Index. Forensic autopsies should be conducted in any investigation likely to lead to serious criminal charges.

Comparing the number of forensic autopsies with the number of homicides shows whether there is any change in

³² The long period of data checks reflects the fact that some cases take a considerable length of time to come to court, and updates on court outcomes can be made to cases a long time after a case was first added to the Homicide Index.

the ratio between the number of autopsies and the number of homicides recorded. This provides an indication of whether the police are consistent in deciding whether to have a forensic post-mortem or whether to refer the matter to the coroner³³. This ratio has remained consistent (between 27% and 30%) since the year ending March 2010.

The data are delivered to the Office for National Statistics (ONS) in the form of aggregate tables for the annual release [“Focus on Violent Crime and Sexual Offences”](#). 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 2 years old; child abduction; and kidnapping.

Generally police recorded crime statistics do not specifically identify offences of domestic violence since 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 law³⁴ 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 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

³³ A forensic autopsy should be carried out by a Home Office Registered Forensic Pathologist (HORFP) in any case where there is, or likely to be, an investigation leading to serious criminal charges; and information derived from the post-mortem examination may be used in the investigation and/or trial. If there are no suspicious circumstances surrounding the death, then the post-mortem examination will normally be carried out by a non-forensic pathologist.

³⁴ ³⁴The 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).

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 "[Focus on Violent Crime and Sexual Offences](#)" bulletin in February each year. The finalised figures include offences involving air weapons.

The Police Data Collection Section (PDCS) and Home Office statisticians both 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 PDCS 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 to the previous year's figures, to check for any vast deviations from the 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. 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 on selected offences involving knives and sharp instruments since April 2007. Knives or sharp instruments are taken to be involved in an incident if they are used to stab or cut, or as a threat. In the year ending March 2008, this group of offences consisted of attempted murder, grievous bodily harm (GBH) with intent, GBH without intent and robbery. In the year ending March 2009, the offence coverage was expanded to include offences of threats to kill, actual bodily harm (ABH), sexual assault and rape. Due to the changes in coverage and issues relating to a clarification in the Home Office Counting Rules (HOCR) for GBH with intent, comparable data for these offences are only available since the year ending March 2009. 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.

Data on offences involving the use of a knife or sharp instrument are supplied to the Home Office and subsequently published by the ONS on a quarterly basis. The collection consists of the number of offences for each of the offences listed where a knife or sharp instrument was used. The return is based on aggregated data rather than record-level information. Offences of homicide where the method of killing was by sharp instrument are taken from the Home Office Homicide Index and published alongside the knife or sharp instrument figures.

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 0.2% 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 “Offences involving knives and sharp instruments” 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 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

Unlike the main police recorded crime data series, this data collection is based on the flagging of offences by the police where they are identified as having involved the use of a knife or sharp instrument. It is worth noting that, unlike the main recorded crime data collection, this flagging process is not currently subject to external audit and, as a result, it is more difficult to judge the quality of these data.

Sexual offences

From the year ending March 2013 bulletin onwards, police recorded crime tables present sexual offences in two groups: “rape” and “other sexual offences”³⁵. 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”^{36 37 38} have been retrospectively reclassified to sexual offences back to the year ending March 2003, to aid comparisons over time.

Due to 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 on intimate violence. These figures have previously been published separately by the ONS in [Focus on Violent Crime and Sexual Offences, England and Wales: year ending Mar 2016](#).

Intimate violence

Intimate violence is the CSEW collective term used to refer to a number of different forms of physical and non-physical abuse consisting of partner abuse, family abuse, sexual assault and stalking. The term reflects the intimate nature

³⁵ Prior to this the groups were “most serious sexual crime” and “other sexual offences”.

³⁶ The Sexual Offences Act 2003, introduced in May 2004, altered the definition and coverage of sexual offences.

³⁷ “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.

³⁸ 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.

either of the victim-perpetrator relationship or of the abuse itself. The CSEW collects information on these types of abuse via a self-completion module.

The category of “domestic abuse” combines the following different types of intimate violence carried out by a current or former partner or other family member:

- non-sexual abuse by a partner: physical force³⁹, emotional or financial abuse⁴⁰, 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: rape⁴¹ or assault by penetration⁴² 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 member⁴³: 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 member⁴⁴

Intimate violence is not limited to domestic abuse. Sexual assault and stalking can also occur outside of domestic abuse if carried out by somebody who is not a current or former partner or other family member of the victim.

The CSEW definition of domestic abuse broadly matches the [cross-government definition](#), but does not completely capture the new offence of [“coercive and controlling behaviour”](#), 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. New survey questions to better estimate experiences of this type of abuse have been developed, tested and implemented into the survey from April 2017. The new coercive and controlling behaviour questions are very different to the previous questions on non-physical abuse. These questions are therefore currently being run on a split sample basis, to allow the impact on the long-standing time series for domestic abuse to be assessed.

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

³⁹ Physical force includes being pushed, slapped, hit, punched or kicked, choked or having a weapon used against you.

⁴⁰ Emotional or financial abuse includes being prevented from having a fair share of household money, stopped from seeing friends or relatives, or repeatedly belittled.

⁴¹ 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.

⁴² 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.

⁴³ The CSEW definition of stalking is not consistent with the legal definition due to the introduction of the offence of “coercive and controlling behaviour”, which includes stalking by a current partner.

⁴⁴ The definition of stalking was changed in the year ending March 2014 survey to be in line with the legal definition of two or more incidents that was introduced in April 2013.

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: psychological abuse; physical abuse; any sexual assault; and witnessing domestic abuse as a child.

Witnessing domestic abuse

The abuse during childhood module asks adults if the respondent had witnessed domestic violence or abuse (witnessing any psychological, physical or sexual assault 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 in the report.

Psychological abuse

The abuse during childhood module defines psychological 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.

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 assault

This includes any sexual assault by penetration or rape, including attempts and any other sexual assault such as indecent exposure or unwanted touching. The following are 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)

The introduction of the module forms part of a comprehensive 4-year programme of work, which aims to improve the design, coverage and presentation of crime statistics for England and Wales. As part of that work, we are currently reviewing data available on child abuse in England and Wales.

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 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.⁴⁵

5.2 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) 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 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 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, 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 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 and comprises burglary where a building was successfully entered and something was stolen.

“Burglary with no loss” is a term used in the CSEW 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 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.

⁴⁵ 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.

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.

Police recorded crime figures are published separately for burglaries that occur in domestic properties and those which occur in commercial or other properties. Domestic burglaries include 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 include 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.

Vehicle-related theft

The CSEW includes offences against private households only but relates to vehicles owned by any member of the household (company cars are included). CSEW 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 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 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 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 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 “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 “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 new metal theft data collection has been established and more information is available in the Home Office publication [Metal theft, England and Wales, financial year ending March 2013](#).

5.3 Criminal damage and arson

In the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW), criminal damage is defined as the intentional and malicious damage to the home, other property or vehicles. Criminal damage in the CSEW 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 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 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 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. 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, 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.

5.4 Fraud

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)

In addition, the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) has previously included a separate module of questions on experience of plastic card fraud from which data has been drawn, and the Office for National Statistics (ONS) has now completed a programme of work to extend the main victimisation module in the CSEW to cover elements of fraud and cybercrime.

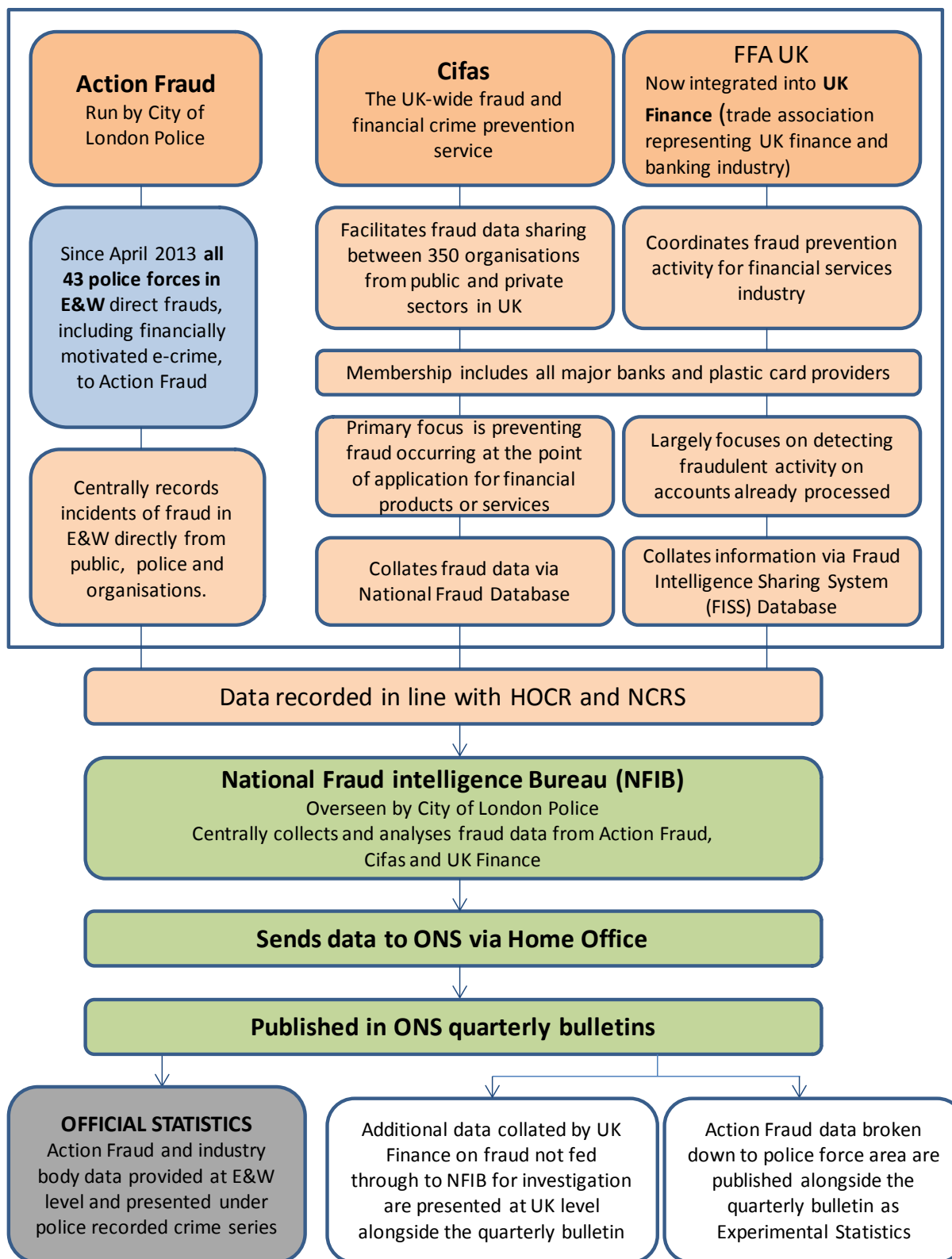
Following the success of a large-scale field trial⁴⁶, new victimisation questions were introduced into the live survey from October 2015, which aim to cover a wide range of frauds including those operated by traditional and more modern methods and those committed in person, by mail, over the phone and 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.

From July 2016 onwards estimates of fraud and computer misuse based on these new questions were published as Experimental Statistics alongside each quarterly crime release. With two full years of estimates on fraud and computer misuse now available from the CSEW we are able to release valid year-on-year comparisons for the first time in the "Crime in England and Wales, year ending September 2017" statistical bulletin. . Estimates on fraud and computer misuse have now also been added to the total estimate of crime, and have been reclassified as Official Statistics until the Office for Statistics Regulation has had time to assess them against the Code of Practice for Statistics for consideration as National Statistics.

Figure 6: Sources of administrative data on fraud

⁴⁶ For more information please see the methodological note [CSEW Fraud and Cyber-crime development: Field trial – October 2015](#).

SOURCES OF ADMINISTRATIVE DATA ON FRAUD



Police recorded crime

Under the Fraud Act 2006 (introduced in January 2007⁴⁷), fraud is defined as dishonestly making a false representation to obtain property or money for themselves or another. Previously, it was defined as dishonestly

⁴⁷ 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.

deceiving to obtain either property or pecuniary advantage. Table 5a shows the police recorded fraud and forgery offences before and after the introduction of the Fraud Act 2006.

Table 5a: 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
Other frauds	Other frauds
Cheque and credit card fraud	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

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)⁴⁸, which acted as an umbrella government organisation to co-ordinate and oversee the fight against fraud, 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 were being undermined by the lack of a joined-up approach to reporting, recording and analysing fraud.

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 reporting centre that records incidents of fraud 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 from Action Fraud, as well as from two industry bodies: Cifas (a UK-wide cross-sector fraud and financial crime prevention service) and Financial Fraud Action UK (FFA UK, now a constituent part of UK Finance)⁴⁹. Action Fraud works with the NFIB to provide support and fraud prevention advice to individuals who are victims of fraud, and to ensure a joined-up approach to policing and detecting fraud. The NFIB analyses the fraud 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 packages⁵⁰ to police forces or other appropriate agencies⁵¹ 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. All police forces in England and Wales now refer reports of fraud, including financially motivated e-crime, to the NFIB through Action Fraud. Fraud offences recorded by the NFIB are described in [Appendix 4](#). 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 5b.

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 offences to Action Fraud by 31 March 2013.

⁴⁸ 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.

⁴⁹ 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.

⁵⁰ Crime packages contain batches of offences, which appear to be linked and hold intelligence value for the police.

⁵¹ 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.

Now, members of the public who have been a direct victim of fraud 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 offences⁵², offences which meet the “call for service” criteria⁵³ 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 bulletins⁵⁴.

In order to reflect these changes in operation arrangements for reporting and recording fraud, 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 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 details⁵⁵, 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 cybercrime, 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 (as of the bulletin released in October 2015) included in the police recorded crime figures published by the ONS. 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

⁵² 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”.

⁵³ 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.

⁵⁴ 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 and 4 cases in year ending June 2016 where police forces mistakenly recorded a fraud offence. These cases may be revised in future quarters, showing as a negative number of fraud offences.

⁵⁵ Cases of fraud where the victim address is known to be outside of England and Wales are removed from the statistics.

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 5b: 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				

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 Database⁵⁶, and in addition to offering members fraud prevention services, collects data for the UK on a range of different frauds and financial crimes, including:

⁵⁶ 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.

-
- 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 PSP⁵⁷)
- 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 (of which Financial Fraud Action UK (FFA UK) is now a constituent part) 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:

⁵⁷ 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).

-
- 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 (as of 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 data⁵⁸ to provide further context in our quarterly bulletins and to give a clearer picture on the full scale of fraud experienced by UK Finance members⁵⁹. 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 value⁶⁰.

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 is available in the UK Finance [Fraud The Facts 2017](#) 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 fraud reported.

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.

⁵⁸ 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).

⁵⁹ The CAMIS dataset will include all cases on the FISS dataset as FISS is a subset of CAMIS.

⁶⁰ 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 2017](#) publication.

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 cybercrime offences, including plastic card fraud. 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. 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](#).

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.

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 estimates since the year ending September 2016 quarterly bulletin, when a full year's interview data first became available. With two full years of estimates from the CSEW now available it is possible for the first time to look at changes in these estimates over the last two years, for inclusion in the quarterly bulletin for the year ending September 2017. Importantly, as this comparison is 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. At the same time we have asked the Office for Statistics Regulation to assess the new estimates on fraud and computer misuse for consideration as National Statistics. Until they have been assessed, these new estimates will be classified as Official Statistics.

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)**⁶¹ – 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) attack⁶²

The above CSEW 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 estimates will include crimes that have not been reported to the authorities, being a household survey, the CSEW 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 the new fraud questions in the survey are currently 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 (the 2016 to 2017 CSEW response rate was 74%) reflecting the shorter 3-month fieldwork period available for the field trial.

5.5 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)⁶³ 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

⁶¹ 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.

⁶² A DDoS attack is an attempt to make a machine or online resource unavailable to its intended users.

⁶³ In April 2015, the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) replaced the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO).

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 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 the state

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.

5.6 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 centrally⁶⁴. 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

⁶⁴ An [agreed definition of hate incidents and crime](#) is available.

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)⁶⁵ in 2010, and [figures for 2011 were published in September 2011](#).

The government made a commitment for the Home Office to publish hate crime figures as part of [The Government's Plan to Tackle Hate Crime](#), published in 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 on 13 October 2016 in [Hate Crime, England and Wales, 2015 to 2016](#).

Racially or religiously motivated hate crime

The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) 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.

5.7 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.

⁶⁵ In April 2015, the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) replaced the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO).

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 [recent 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 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 CSEW

The CSEW has long-standing questions asking respondents about perceptions of problems with different types of anti-social behaviour in their local area. High levels of perceived ASB are determined by responses received to seven individual questions relating to:

- abandoned or burnt-out cars
- noisy neighbours or loud parties
- people being drunk or rowdy in public places
- people using or dealing drugs
- rubbish or litter lying around
- teenagers hanging around on the streets
- vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage to property

Perceptions of ASB are measured using a scale based on answers to the seven questions as follows:

- three equals “very big problem”
- two equals “fairly big problem”
- one equals “not a very big problem”
- zero equals “not a problem at all”

The maximum score for the seven questions is 21. Respondents with a score of 11 or more on this scale are classified as having a high level of perceived ASB. This scale can only be calculated for the 2001 CSEW onwards, as the question on people being drunk or rowdy was only introduced in 2001.

Measures of perceptions of each of the seven types (or strands) of ASB (for example, perceptions of drunk or rowdy behaviour) are based on the proportion of CSEW respondents who perceive that particular strand to be a very or fairly big problem in their local area.

From April 2011, questions about perceptions of ASB have been asked of a reduced sample compared with previous years (questions were asked of half of the sample in the year ending March 2012 and a quarter of the sample in the year ending March 2013). National estimates for these questions are still available from the year ending March 2012, but are no longer available at police force area (PFA) level.

New questions about actual experiences of ASB problems were added for the first time to the year ending March 2012 CSEW. Analysis is presented on the proportions of people who have experienced any of 13 specific types of ASB:

- begging, vagrancy or homeless people
- drink-related behaviour
- groups hanging around on the streets
- inconsiderate behaviour⁶⁶

⁶⁶ Includes repeated and/or inappropriate use of fireworks; youths kicking and/or throwing balls in inappropriate areas; cycling and/or skateboarding in pedestrian areas or obstructing pavements; and people throwing stones and/or bottles.

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- litter, rubbish or dog-fouling
 - loud music or other noise
 - nuisance neighbours
 - out of control or dangerous dogs
 - people being intimidated, verbally abused or harassed
 - people committing inappropriate or indecent sexual acts in public
 - people using or dealing drugs;
 - vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage to property
 - vehicle-related behaviour⁶⁷

⁶⁷ Includes inconvenient and/or illegal parking; abandoned vehicles; speeding cars or motorcycles; car revving; and joyriding.

Chapter 6: Perceptions

6.1 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 3 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 3 years have been excluded from the year ending March 2009 to the year ending March 2012 figures.

6.2 Likelihood of victimisation and worry about crime

Respondents to the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) are asked about their perceived likelihood of being a victim of burglary, vehicle crime or violent crime. The perceived likelihood of being a victim of burglary is based on those who say they are very or fairly likely to have their home burgled in the next year. The perceived likelihood of being a victim of violent crime is a composite measure of anyone who thinks they are very or fairly likely to be mugged and/or robbed or physically attacked by a stranger in the next year, or both. The perceived likelihood of being a victim of vehicle crime is a composite measure of vehicle owners who think they are very or fairly likely to have either a car or van stolen or something stolen from a car or van in the next year, or both. These questions are asked of all respondents, irrespective of whether they have been a victim of crime in the previous 12 months.

The worry about crime indicator on the CSEW has three components: worry about burglary, car crime and violent crime. The measure for worry about burglary is the percentage of respondents who say they are “very worried” about having their home broken into and something stolen. The measure for worry about car crime is based on two questions on worry about “having your car stolen” and “having things stolen from your car”. It uses a scale that scores answers to the questions as follows:

- two equals “very worried”
- one equals “fairly worried”
- zero equals “not very worried” and “not at all worried”

Scores for individual respondents are calculated by summing the scores across each question, resulting in an overall score ranging from zero to four. The percentage for this component is based on respondents residing in households owning, or with regular use of, a car and who score three or four on this scale.

The measure for worry about violent crime is based on a scale constructed from questions on worry about mugging, rape, physical attack by a stranger and racially-motivated assault. The same coding system for question responses is used as for the vehicle crime questions. Once results from the four questions are combined, the scale for the overall score ranges from zero (that is, all responses are either “not very worried” or “not at all worried”) to eight (that is, all responses are “very worried”). The percentage for this component is based on respondents who score four or more on this scale.

6.3 Anti-social behaviour

The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) measures high levels of perceived anti-social behaviour (ASB) based on responses to seven individual questions. These are then collated into a single variable measuring perceptions of ASB, an approach that has been used for the 2001 CSEW onwards. These questions are asked of a quarter of all respondents from the year ending March 2013 survey onwards.

More details about these, and the new questions on experience of ASB asked for the first time in the year ending March 2012 CSEW, can be found in Section 5.7.

6.4 Confidence in the police and local council

A new set of questions relating to levels of confidence in the police working with local councils was added to the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) in October 2007, asking respondents to what extent they agree or disagree with a set of statements. The current question asks respondents for the extent to which they agree that the police and local council are dealing with the anti-social behaviour and crime issues that matter in their local area.

In April 2011, changes were made to the filtering of questions in the “Performance of the Criminal Justice System (CJS)” module for the year ending March 2012 survey year, which may have brought about unintentional order effects to responses to questions in this module. A separate [methodological note](#) was produced alongside the year ending March 2012 publication on “Public perceptions of policing”, to explore whether changes to questions within the “Performance of the Criminal Justice System” module led to an order effect on responses to questions on attitudes to the police and the CJS.

The analysis concluded that changes to the filtering of questions in the “Performance of the Criminal Justice System” module in the year ending March 2012 CSEW had an effect on responses to some of the later questions within that module on:

- overall rating of the local police
- perceptions of the local police
- confidence in the police and local council

As such, the year ending March 2012 data for these questions are not directly comparable with those for earlier years.

The changes do not seem to have had an effect on responses to the questions on confidence in the CJS and therefore data for these questions are comparable over time. A full breakdown of the findings is shown in [Table 5 of the methodological note](#).

6.5 Ratings and perceptions of the local police

The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) measures perceptions of the local police both in general terms and in specific aspects of their work. Since April 2003, the CSEW has measured the proportion of those who believe the local police are doing “a good or excellent” job. In addition, people’s perceptions of specific aspects of police work have been measured since October 2004. These questions ask how much people agree or disagree with the following statements:

- the police in this area can be relied on to be there when you need them
- the police in this area would treat you with respect if you had contact with them for any reason

-
- the police in this area treat everyone fairly regardless of who they are
 - the police in this area understand the issues that affect this community
 - the police in this area are dealing with the things that matter to people in this community
 - taking everything into account I have confidence in the police in this area

Crime maps

Since January 2009, every police force has made maps available on their website giving local crime statistics and details of neighbourhood policing teams in the local area. Questions were included in the year ending March 2010 and the year ending March 2011 CSEW to find out more about the public's awareness and use of online crime maps. Results from the questions included in the year ending March 2010 CSEW are published in the [Public perceptions of policing, engagement with the police and victimisation publication](#), and results from 2010 to 2011 are published in [Crime in England and Wales 2010 to 2011](#).

The crime map questions were extended in April 2011, to ask about awareness of street-level data (introduced in January 2011). The year ending March 2013 and the year ending March 2014 CSEW also included a question about awareness of information showing how crimes have been dealt with by the police and courts.

Police and Crime Commissioners and other police initiatives

From November 2012, Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) were elected by the public to be responsible for overseeing police forces. A CSEW question introduced in April 2012 asks people whether they were aware of this. The survey also contains questions about awareness of other police initiatives, such as neighbourhood beat meetings, the single non-emergency number (101), and neighbourhood policing teams.

Chapter 7: Classifications

7.1 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
- comfortably 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 July 2012, there were 324 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 of England
- 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 2015. 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; further information is available in the [English Indices of Deprivation 2015](#) 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 at 1 April 2010, there were 348 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 geographic 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.](#)

Physical disorder

The term “physical disorder” is used in the CSEW to describe a measure based on the interviewer’s assessment of the level of:

- vandalism, graffiti and deliberate damage to property
- rubbish and litter
- homes in poor condition in the area

Using guidance, the interviewer has to make an assessment as to whether each of these problems is very common, fairly common, not very common or not at all common. For each, very and fairly common are scored as one and not very common and not at all common are scored as zero. A scale is then constructed by summing the scores for each case. The scale ranges from zero to three, with high disorder areas being those with a score of two or three. The measurement of respondents’ own perceptions of disorder in the local area is described under anti-social behaviour in Section 5.7.

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 is the lowest geographic data available, then the LA classification should be used. More detail is given below.

For CSEW analysis, the rural and urban definition has been used, as CSEW 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 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

7.2 Household

Household accommodation type

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

- house or bungalow: detached, semi-detached and terraced
- flat or maisonette: includes purpose-built block, non-purpose built and all flats and maisonettes
- other accommodation types: includes caravans and mobile homes; includes bedsits

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, the CSEW 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.

Household structure

The classification of households in the CSEW 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) – 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)
- one or more adults with no children (aged under 16)

Household income

Total household income is the combined income of all members of the household. It includes income from all sources including earnings from employment and self-employment, pensions (both state and private), benefits and tax credits, interest from savings and investments, maintenance, student grants and rent payments received. Due to the nature of the question, over one-fifth of respondents gave insufficient information to classify their household income or declined to answer the question. Those cases with insufficient information may include respondents who did not know the income of other household members.

Tenure

The following definition of tenure is used by the CSEW 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

7.3 Personal

Black and minority ethnic groups and ethnicity

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](#).

Marital status

The CSEW 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 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.

Occupation

The [National Statistics socio-economic classification](#) (NS-SEC) is an occupationally based classification, but provides coverage of the whole adult population. The NS-SEC aims to differentiate positions within labour markets and production units in terms of their typical “employment relations”.

CSEW analysis is based on the three analytic classes provided within NS-SEC, but also describes full-time students in a separate category (usually included within the “not classified” category). Base sizes for the student categories differ in NS-SEC from those in the economic classification, as economically inactive students exclude those who are in employment, or in other ways economically active, but full-time students are recognised as such within the occupational coding of NS-SEC.

Chapter 8: Statistical conventions and methods

8.1 Confidence intervals and statistical significance

The main Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) estimates are based on a representative sample of the population of England and Wales aged 16 and over each year. A sample, as used in the CSEW, is a small-scale representation of the population from which it is drawn (more information can be found in [Table UG1 of the User Guide tables](#) for sample sizes within the CSEW).

Any sample survey may produce estimates that differ from the figures that would have been obtained if the whole population had been interviewed. 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) of the estimate. 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 due to 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 due to 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 are based on complex standard errors (CSEs) around estimates, which reflect the stratified and semi-clustered design of the survey and are calculated using the [SPSS Complex Sample Module](#). Where standard errors are calculated without the complex element, a design effect of 1.2 is applied to the confidence interval and significance testing to allow for the fact that the survey design is not a simple random sample.

Statistical significance for change in CSEW 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 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.

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.

[The User Guide tables](#) provide 95% confidence intervals around CSEW estimates for incidents of crime victimisation by age and sex, and key perception measures from the adult survey. Additional user guide tables showing confidence intervals around estimates of incident and prevalence rates for fraud and computer misuse for the year ending March 2017 are also included. Tables UG11 to UG12 provide confidence intervals around estimates of incident rates and prevalence rates for crime amongst children aged 10 to 15.

8.2 Population estimates

Crime Survey for England and Wales

The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) uses population estimates for two purposes: in calibration weighting and in calculating the estimates of numbers of crimes.

For the calculation of estimates for numbers of CSEW incidence rates, personal-level crimes are multiplied by estimates (or projections for the most recent time-period) of the household population aged 16 and over in England and Wales and household-level crimes by estimates (or again, projections for the most recent time-period) of the number of households in England and Wales.

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 and over in England and Wales, not just those resident in households.

However, the CSEW 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 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 and over) data, and the re-weighting of the year ending March 2010 to the year ending March 2013 children (aged 10 to 15) 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 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](#) 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 Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG)) 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 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 2017, the earliest month an interview takes place is April 2016. 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 2017 CSEW occur in April 2015 and the latest crimes recorded by the year ending March 2017 CSEW occur in February 2017. The mid-point of the period "April 2015 to February 2017" is March 2016, and therefore, the most appropriate population or household estimates to multiply CSEW incidence rates by would be as at the end of March 2016.

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 spread out 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 2017 CSEW, given end of June 2015 and end of June 2016 population estimates, estimates as at the end of March 2016 can be calculated as follows:

March 2016 equals June 2015 plus ((June 2016 minus June 2015) multiplied by 0.75)

Population estimates as at the end of September 2016 and December 2016 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 DCLG. 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 break-up 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 and over) data and the reweighting of the year ending March 2010 to the year ending March 2013 children (aged 10 to 15) 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 estimates are presented in Table 8a.

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 8a: Population figures used to calculate Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) estimates (rounded to nearest hundred)

CSEW year	Population base	Individual population (16 and over)	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	45,486,800	23,991,900
Year ending March 2016	End of March-2015	45,864,800	24,222,100
Year ending September 2017	End of September -2016	46,377,100	24,639,100

The calculation of estimates of CSEW incidence rates for personal crimes experienced by children aged 10 to 15 are multiplied by the estimates of the population aged 10 to 15 in England and Wales in the same manner (Table 8b).

Table 8b: Population figures used to calculate Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) estimates for crime experienced by children aged 10 to 15 (rounded to nearest hundred)

CSEW year	Population base	Individual population (children aged 10 to 15)
Year ending March 2010	End of March-2009	3,969,500
Year ending March 2011	End of March-2010	3,936,100
Year ending March 2012	End of March-2011	3,898,500
Year ending March 2013	End of March-2012	3,830,700
Year ending March 2014	End of March-2013	3,763,400
Year ending March 2015	End of March-2014	3,769,100
Year ending March 2016	End of March-2015	3,770,400
Year ending September 2017	End of September-2016	3,842,600

All population and household estimates and projections used in the actual calculations of CSEW data are unrounded.

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 8c.

Table 8c: 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 June 2017	2016	58,381,200

All population estimates used in the actual calculations of police recorded crime rates are unrounded.

8.3 Weighting data

All Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) percentages and rates presented in crime statistics publications are based on weighted data. [Table UG1](#) shows the unweighted base, which represents the number of people or households interviewed in the specified group for the year ending March 2016.

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 adult 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 w1 multiplied by w2 multiplied by w3**
- **Core individual weight equals w1 multiplied by w2 multiplied by w3 multiplied by w4**

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 the [2014 to 2015 Crime Survey for England and Wales Technical Report: Volume One](#)).

Numinc is used for the calculation of incidents only.

Weighting on the children aged 10 to 15 survey

The final weight produced by Kantar Public for each case in the children aged 10 to 15 sample is equal to the household weight multiplied by the product of the reported number of children aged 10 to 15 in the household, and the estimated (conditional) response probability (as derived from a logistic regression model described further in the [2014 to 2015 Crime Survey for England and Wales Technical Report: Volume One](#)).

Calibration weighting

[A review of the then British Crime Survey](#) (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 and living in London may be less likely to respond than a household containing a woman aged 50 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 ONS⁶⁸.

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.

8.4 Conventions used in figures and tables

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

⁶⁸ Calibration weights were applied from the year ending December 1996 CSEW onwards using CALMAR (a SAS-based macro); since the year ending March 2007, 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).

Table abbreviations

- “0” indicates greater than 0% but less than 0.5% (this does not apply when percentages are presented to one decimal point).
- “:” indicates that the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) question was not applicable or not asked in that particular year.
- “-“ indicates that for police recorded crime, percentage changes are not reported because the base number of offences is less than 50; and for the CSEW it indicates that data are not reported because the unweighted base is less than 50.
- “.” indicates for police recorded crime that data are not available.
- “**” indicates for CSEW data that the change is statistically significant at the 5% level.
- “+” indicates that rate per 1,000 population data for City of London have been suppressed due to the small population size of the police force area.

Unweighted base

All CSEW percentages and rates presented in the tables are based on data weighted to compensate for differential non response. Tables show the unweighted base, which represents the number of adults or households interviewed in the specified group.

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% due to rounding.

Most CSEW 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

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](#)) and year-labels identify the CSEW year of interview.

Other questions on the CSEW (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 analysis excludes don’t knows or refusals unless otherwise specified.

Numbers of CSEW incidents

Estimates are rounded to the nearest 1,000.

Chapter 9: Crime Survey for England and Wales open data tables

9.1 Introduction to open data tables

This chapter contains information on the content and use of the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) open data tables. These tables contain CSEW estimates related to victimisation and perceptions of crime and the Criminal Justice System (CJS) broken down by demographic characteristics. These tables are released as part of an initiative to make government data more transparent and accessible to the public and external researchers.

For users wanting to access full CSEW datasets, these are available from the [CSEW section](#) of the [UK Data Archive](#) – [Chapter 10](#) provides further information.

It is recommended that prior to using these open data tables, users read Chapter 2, in particular, of this user guide to familiarise themselves with the context of the data and the scope and limitations of the CSEW as a whole.

We also produce editions of the open data tables (these are available from the first quarter of 2012 following the responsibility for the publication of crime statistics transferring to the Office for National Statistics (ONS) from the Home Office). At present there are no plans to produce a back series to cover earlier CSEW years.

9.2 Table format

The main Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) release consists of six data tables, all with an identical layout. The files have been split by theme, but because all have the same layout they can all be combined into a single table after download.

Tables are laid out in rows and columns with the first row containing column headings. Each row consists of a single CSEW estimate, while each column contains information about the estimate. Estimates are principally broken down by respondent characteristics (identified by the “Sex”, “Age”, “Household type”, and “Characteristic” columns). However, other columns provide further information on the estimate, such as the time period it relates to (identified by the “Period”, “Last quarter” and “Last year” columns). Further details can be found in the “Data table specification” section of this chapter.

This layout is intended to provide CSEW estimates in the most transparent and versatile form for users and allow data to be linked with, for example, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) population estimates for the calculation of numbers of crimes. Further details can be found in the “How to use open data tables” section of this chapter.

All files are made available in CSV (comma separated values) format, which arranges data in rows and columns as outlined in this section. This type of file can be opened in most data analysis programmes.

9.3 File naming

The six main tables are contained in files which use the following naming structure:

“[Measurement type]-[Measurement subcategory]-[Date].csv”

For example, Household-Incidence-2017-Q1.csv

The [Measurement type] and [Measurement subcategory] sections of the filename are used to identify the content of the data file. There are three different values for [Measurement type], each containing two values for [Measurement subcategory]. An outline of what these values are and a description of what is contained in the files can be found in Table 9a.

The [Date] section of the filename identifies the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) dataset that the release was taken from. It follows the same convention as the “Last year” and “Last quarter” columns in the tables themselves (more information is available in the “Data table specification” section of Chapter 9).

Table 9a: File naming

Measurement type	Measurement subcategory	Description	Example of data in file
Household	Incidence	Contains incidence rates for household crime	Number of incidents of burglary per 1,000 households in the 12 months prior to interview
	Prevalence	Contains prevalence rates for household crime	Percentage of households that have been victims of burglary in the 12 months prior to interview
Personal	Incidence	Contains incidence rates for personal crime	Number of incidents of violence per 1,000 adults in the 12 months prior to interview
	Prevalence	Contains prevalence rates for personal crime	Percentage of adults who have been victims of violence in the 12 months prior to interview
Perceptions	CJS	Contains perceptions of the police and the criminal justice system	Percentage of adults who think that their local police are doing a good or excellent job
	Other	Contains other perceptions of crime	Percentage of adults who perceive a high level of anti-social behaviour in their local area

9.4 Data table specification

Data tables are laid out in rows and columns. Each row contains a single Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) estimate, while each column contains information about that estimate. This section provides a description of the meaning behind the values in each column.

Source

Possible values: CSEW

This column identifies the source of the estimate. For this release, this column contains only one value: “CSEW”. This field is provided to allow future releases to include data from different sources.

Period

Possible values: 12 months

This column identifies the period covered by the data used to generate the estimate. For this release, this column contains only one value: “12 months”. This indicates that the estimate is based on 12 months of CSEW interviews. This field is provided to allow future releases to include data from different period lengths.

Last yearPossible values: Various

Combined with the “Period” and “Last quarter” columns, this column identifies the CSEW interview period that the estimate is based on. The combination of “Last year” and “Last quarter” identifies the last quarter of interviews that “Period” covers. For example, “period” equals “12 months”, “last year” equals “2017” and “last quarter” equals “1” denotes that the estimate is based on CSEW interviews between April 2016 and March 2017 – that is, the 12 months ending in Quarter 1 (Jan to Mar) 2017.

Last quarter

Possible values: Various

Combined with the “Period” and “Last year” columns, this column identifies the CSEW interview period that the estimate is based on. The combination of “Last year” and “Last quarter” identifies the last quarter of interviews that “Period” covers. For example, “Period” equals “12 months”, “Last year” equals “2017” and “Last quarter” equals “1” denotes that the estimate is based on CSEW interviews between April 2016 and March 2017 – that is, the 12 months ending in Quarter 1 (Jan to Mar) 2017.

MeasurementVar

Possible values: Various (see reference table)

This is the name of the variable that is being measured by the estimate. It could also be considered a dependent variable. In this release it is a crime incidence rate, a crime prevalence rate or a perception of crime. Future releases may contain a wider range of measurements. The variable name is a shorthand way of referring to the measurement in question, therefore the meaning of the values in this column may not be immediately obvious to users. A reference table has been provided with this release that contains more descriptive labels for each of the variable names in this column. For users who have access to the main CSEW dataset from the UK Data Archive, the names here match directly with the variable names on the main CSEW dataset.

GeographyPossible values: England and Wales

This column identifies the geographical area that the estimate relates to. For this release, only estimates for the whole of England and Wales are included. A breakdown by region is available via the “Characteristics” column.

Age

Possible values: 16+; 16-24; 25-34; 35-44; 45-54; 55-64; 65-74; 75+

This column identifies the age of the respondent at the time of interview. Respondents are arranged into banded age groups, with the category of “16+” covering respondents in all age groups combined. This column only contains values where “Measurement level” is “Person”.

Sex

Possible values: All adults; Male; Female

The column identifies the sex of the respondent. The category of “All adults” covers men and women combined. This column only contains values where “Measurement level” is “Person”.

Household type

Possible values: All households; Vehicle-owning households; Bicycle-owning households

This column identifies the type of household that the estimate relates to, specifically whether the household owns a vehicle or bicycle. Most estimates relate to “All households”. “Vehicle-owning households” and “Bicycle-owning households” provide an alternative measure for the prevalence of vehicle-related crime and bicycle theft respectively, and as such, only have a value for these measures. This column only contains values where “Measurement level” is “Household”.

CharacteristicVar

Possible values: Various, GOR, Total

This column identifies the variable that is used to provide the full breakdown of estimates by respondent characteristics in the “Characteristic” column. It could also be considered an independent variable. It is similar to the “MeasurementVar” column in that it contains variable names that match the variable names on the main CSEW dataset. More descriptive labels for the variable names in this column can be found in the reference table for this column.

The value “GOR” identifies estimates for each of the English regions and for England and Wales separately. The value “Total” in this column identifies an estimate that covers all respondents, regardless of individual characteristics. Users should be aware that some characteristics only exist at the personal level and some only exist at the household level (identified in the “Measurement level” column).

Characteristic

Possible values: Various; Total

This column identifies respondent characteristics that the estimate relates to. Characteristics are grouped by “CharacteristicVar” such that each value of “CharacteristicVar” has a number of unique values for “Characteristic” associated with it. As well as those characteristics included on the main CSEW dataset within each “CharacteristicVar”, the open data tables also include some combined categories that are not included on the CSEW core variables. The value “Total” in this column identifies an estimate that covers all respondents, regardless of individual characteristics and is the only “Characteristic” for the “CharacteristicVar” of “Total”.

Estimate

Possible values: Various

This column contains the estimate for “MeasurementVar” for respondents with the characteristics referred to as “Geography”, “Age”, “Sex”, “Household type” and “Characteristic” from CSEW interviews conducted in the period identified by “Period”, “Last quarter” **and** “Last year”. When “Measurement type” is “Incidence rate” it is a rate per 1,000 adults or households; where “Measurement type” is “Prevalence rate” or “Perception” it is a percentage.

Standard error

Possible values: Various

This column contains the standard error of the value of “Estimate”. As the CSEW is a sample survey, all estimates are subject to a degree of error, reflected in the size of the standard error – the “How to use open data tables” section provides more information. More advanced users may also want to know that as the CSEW is based on a complex sample design, the standard errors included in these tables are complex standard errors that take the sample design into account. This means that no further adjustments, such as design factors, need to be applied to calculations involving these standard errors.

Unweighted count

Possible values: Various

Also referred to as the “Unweighted base”, this column shows the total number of respondents who contributed to the calculation of “Estimate”. Estimates based on a larger number of respondents are generally more reliable, and those based on a very small number of respondents should be treated with caution. It is recommended that users refrain from using estimates based on fewer than 50 respondents. They have been included here for reference and in the interests of completeness. Estimates based on fewer than 10 respondents are not provided.

9.5 Reference data tables

There are two reference data tables included with this release; one each for the columns “MeasurementVar” and “CharacteristicVar”. These provide additional information on the variables included in these two columns in the main data tables. They can be used as lookups to include this additional data in combined tables. The data specification for these tables is provided in this section.

Measurement

MeasurementVar

Possible values: Various

This includes all the values in the “MeasurementVar” column of the main data tables.

Measurement label

Possible values: Various

This column contains a text description of the measure that “MeasurementVar” relates to.

Measurement level

Possible values: Person; Household

This column identifies the level at which the measurement applies. For personal crimes and perception measures, this column has a value of “Person” to indicate that the estimate applies to people (specifically adults aged 16 and over). For household crimes, this column has a value of “Household” to indicate that the estimate applies to households in England and Wales.

Measurement type

Possible values: Incidence rate; Prevalence rate; Perception

This column identifies the type of measurement. “Incidence rate” means that the measurement shows the number of crimes per 1,000 adults or per 1,000 households (identified by the “Measurement level” column) in the last 12 months. “Prevalence rate” means that the measurement shows the percentage of adults or households (identified by the “Measurement level” column) who have been victims of crime in the last 12 months. “Perception” means that the measurement shows the percentage of adults who have a particular perception about crime or the Criminal Justice System.

Characteristic

CharacteristicVar

Possible values: Various

This includes all the values in the “CharacteristicVar” column of the main data tables.

Characteristic label

Possible values: Various

This column contains a text description of the measure that “CharacteristicVar” relates to.

9.6 How to use open data tables

At the simplest level, Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) open data tables can be used to find CSEW estimates for certain demographic groups. The CSV files can be imported into most data analysis programmes for this purpose. A full list of the measurements that are included in these tables can be found in the “MeasurementVar” reference table. A full list of demographic characteristics that these measurements can be analysed by using these tables can be found in the “CharacteristicVar” reference table.

The data specification table should make clear to users that to find the estimate they are interested in requires filtering or searching data across different columns to identify the population group they are interested in. For example, overall national estimates for all adults aged 16 and over can be found by selecting “16+” from the “Age” column, “All” from the “Sex” column, and “Total” from the “Characteristic” column (for personal crime or perception estimates). At the other extreme level of detail, users could find estimates for 16-to24-year-old married women by selecting the appropriate categories from the “Age”, “Sex” and “Characteristic” columns. Other levels of detail can be found by selecting the appropriate values in these fields (or “Household type” for household crime estimates).

When using these estimates, users should be aware of the fact that the CSEW is a sample survey and produces estimates with a margin of error around them. As such, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) recommends that users do not use estimates based on fewer than 50 respondents (identified by the “Unweighted count” column). This feature of the data should also be considered when comparing differences between groups. Standard statistical tests can be used to identify whether differences between demographic groups are “statistically significant”. That is, whether the differences seen in the CSEW data are due to differences in the population of England and Wales as a whole, or whether they occurred by chance as a result of the random selection of respondents for the CSEW sample. Users should familiarise themselves with this concept before using these tables.

When comparing estimates, users should ensure that they are only comparing estimates from independent samples. Although the current set of tables only include data for a single time period, future releases may cover other time periods. When comparing data over time, users should consider the time periods that are being used to ensure that they are not overlapping. This can be identified by consideration of the “Period”, “Last year”, and “Last quarter” columns in the data tables.

Some users may want to combine data in these tables with data from other sources. One common use of this would be to produce counts of crime and numbers of victims by combining the CSEW open data tables with population data. Incidence rates in these tables show the number of crimes per 1,000 adults or 1,000 households. By multiplying the values in the CSEW open data tables by the ONS estimates of the total number of adults or households in England and Wales, divided by 1,000, it is possible to calculate the estimated total number of crimes that took place over a 12-month period.

Similarly, prevalence rates show the percentage of adults or households who were victims of crime in a 12-month period. If these percentages (once converted to a decimal) are multiplied by the total number of adults or households in England and Wales, it is possible to calculate the estimated number of victims of crime. Users should bear in mind that when doing this, it is important to use a population estimate for the same subpopulation as that used in the CSEW open data tables. So, for example, an incidence rate for men aged 16 to 24 in England and Wales from the CSEW open data tables should be multiplied by a population estimate for men aged 16 to 24 in England and Wales to calculate the number of crimes against men aged 16 to 24 in England and Wales.

9.7 Changes to the open data tables variables

For the survey year of year ending March 2013 (that is, interviews from April 2012 onwards) changes were made to the demographic questions in the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) questionnaire. The changes have been made in accordance with [harmonised standards set by the Office for National Statistics \(ONS\)](#) with the aim of providing consistent data series across government. As these questions were introduced into the survey in April 2012, any annual dataset produced over the previous 12-month period will necessarily have included both the new and the old style questions. This affected datasets for the reporting periods “Year to June 2012”, “Year to September 2012” and “Year to December 2012”.

Chapter 10: Other reference data

10.1 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 2016, available from the Office for National Statistics’ (ONS’s) [Nature of Crime](#) tables⁶⁹. Data relating to the year ending March 2017 CSEW are published in line with the new publication cycle, which was consulted on with users in 2012, the findings of which can be found in [Future Dissemination Strategy Summary of Responses](#). Nature of Crime data for the year ending March 2017 that focuses on property crime are due to be published by November 2017. Nature of Crime data that focuses on violence are due to be published in February 2018 alongside the Focus of Violence publication

10.2 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.

10.3 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 scheme⁷⁰ in 2016, it was concluded that approved researchers should only access legally protected data in a secure environment and therefore the

⁶⁹ Nature of Crime tables can be found with the “Focus on Property Crime, year ending March 2016” and the “Focus on Violent Crime and Sexual Offences, year ending March 2016” publications.

⁷⁰ 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.

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 Virtual Microdata Laboratory (VML) 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 [Virtual Microdata Laboratory](#) (VML) and the [Secure Data Service](#).

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 year ending June 2017. 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 caused by illegal 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

Violence without injury

- 3A Conspiracy to murder
- 3B Threats to kill
- 11A Cruelty to children /young persons13Child 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

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
- 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

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

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 to the categorisation of domestic and non-domestic burglary in the [Home Office Counting Rules for police recorded crime](#) that were introduced in March 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.

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 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

Appendix 2: Crime Survey for England and Wales offences

Crime categories and the offence codes used in the Crime Survey for England and Wales

The list in this appendix gives a breakdown of which offence codes make up the different crime categories that are referred to in the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW). Details of how offences reported in CSEW are placed into the offence codes used can be found in the [Offence Coding Coders' Manual in the Technical Report](#). For household crimes the respondent is answering on behalf of the household and when an offence occurs, the whole household is considered to have been victimised. For personal crimes, the respondents themselves have to be the victim of a personal crime for it to be inside the survey's coverage.

Due to the small numbers of rape, attempted rape and indecent assault offences identified by face-to-face CSEW interviews, results from the main CSEW are too unreliable to report. Due to this, they 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").

Household crimes

All household offences

50. Attempted burglary to non-connected domestic garage or outhouse
51. Burglary in a dwelling (nothing taken)
52. Burglary in a dwelling (something taken)
53. Attempted burglary in a dwelling
55. Theft in a dwelling
56. Theft from a meter
57. Burglary from non-connected domestic garage or outhouse – nothing taken
58. Burglary from non-connected domestic garage or outhouse – something taken
60. Theft of car or van
61. Theft from car or van
62. Theft of motorbike, motorscooter or moped
63. Theft from motorbike, motorscooter or moped
64. Theft of pedal cycle
65. Theft from outside dwelling (excluding theft of milk bottles)
71. Attempted theft of, or from, car or van
72. Attempted theft of, or from, motorcycle, motorscooter or moped
80. Arson
81. Criminal damage to a motor vehicle (£20 or under)
82. Criminal damage to a motor vehicle (over £20)
83. Criminal damage to the home (£20 or under)
84. Criminal damage to the home (over £20)
85. Other criminal damage (£20 or under)
86. Other criminal damage (over £20)

Acquisitive crime against the household

- 50. Attempted burglary to non-connected domestic garage or outhouse
- 51. Burglary in a dwelling (nothing taken)
- 52. Burglary in a dwelling (something taken)
- 53. Attempted burglary in a dwelling
- 55. Theft in a dwelling
- 56. Theft from a meter
- 57. Burglary from non-connected garage or outhouse – nothing taken
- 58. Burglary from non-connected garage or outhouse – something taken
- 60. Theft of car or van
- 61. Theft from car or van
- 62. Theft of motorbike, motorscooter or moped
- 63. Theft from motorbike, motorscooter or moped
- 64. Theft of pedal cycle
- 65. Theft from outside dwelling (excluding theft of milk bottles)
- 71. Attempted theft of, or from, car or van
- 72. Attempted theft of, or from, motorcycle, motorscooter or moped

Domestic burglary

- 50. Attempted burglary to non-connected domestic garage or outhouse
- 51. Burglary in a dwelling (nothing taken)
- 52. Burglary in a dwelling (something taken)
- 53. Attempted burglary in a dwelling
- 57. Burglary from non-connected domestic garage or outhouse – nothing taken
- 58. Burglary from non-connected domestic garage or outhouse – something taken

Domestic burglary with entry

- 51. Burglary in a dwelling (nothing taken)
- 52. Burglary in a dwelling (something taken)
- 57. Burglary from non-connected domestic garage or outhouse – nothing taken
- 58. Burglary from non-connected domestic garage or outhouse – something taken

Domestic burglary with loss

- 52. Burglary in a dwelling (something taken)
- 58. Burglary from non-connected domestic garage or outhouse – something taken

Domestic burglary with no loss

- 51. Burglary in a dwelling (nothing taken)
- 57. Burglary from non-connected domestic garage or outhouse – nothing taken

Domestic burglary attempts

- 50. Attempted burglary to non-connected domestic garage or outhouse
- 53. Attempted burglary in a dwelling

Domestic burglary in a dwelling

- 51. Burglary in a dwelling (nothing taken)
- 52. Burglary in a dwelling (something taken)
- 53. Attempted burglary in a dwelling

Domestic burglary in a dwelling with entry

-
- 51. Burglary in a dwelling (nothing taken)
 - 52. Burglary in a dwelling (something taken)

Domestic burglary in a dwelling with loss

- 52. Burglary in a dwelling (something taken)

Domestic burglary in a dwelling with no loss

- 51. Burglary in a dwelling (nothing taken)

Domestic burglary in a dwelling attempts

- 53. Attempted burglary in a dwelling

Domestic burglary in a non-connected building to a dwelling

- 50. Attempted burglary to non-connected domestic garage or outhouse
- 57. Burglary from non-connected domestic garage or outhouse – nothing taken
- 58. Burglary from non-connected domestic garage or outhouse – something taken

Domestic burglary in a non-connected building to a dwelling with entry

- 57. Burglary from non-connected domestic garage or outhouse – nothing taken
- 58. Burglary from non-connected domestic garage or outhouse – something taken

Domestic burglary in a non-connected building to a dwelling with loss

- 58. Burglary from non-connected domestic garage or outhouse – something taken

Domestic burglary in a non-connected building to a dwelling with no loss

- 57. Burglary from non-connected domestic garage or outhouse – nothing taken

Domestic burglary in a non-connected building to a dwelling attempts

- 50. Attempted burglary to non-connected domestic garage or outhouse

Other household theft

- 55. Theft in a dwelling
- 56. Theft from a meter
- 65. Theft from outside dwelling (excluding theft of milk bottles)

Theft from a dwelling

- 55. Theft in a dwelling
- 56. Theft from a meter

Theft from outside a dwelling

- 65. Theft from outside dwelling (excluding theft of milk bottles)

Vehicle-related thefts

- 60. Theft of car or van
- 61. Theft from car or van
- 62. Theft of motorbike, motorscooter or moped
- 63. Theft from motorbike, motorscooter or moped
- 71. Attempted theft of, or from, car or van
- 72. Attempted theft of, or from, motorcycle, motorscooter or moped

Theft from vehicles

- 61. Theft from car or van

-
63. Theft from motorbike, motorscooter or moped

Theft of vehicles

60. Theft of car or van
62. Theft of motorbike, motorscooter or moped

Attempted theft of and from vehicles

71. Attempted theft of, or from, car or van
72. Attempted theft of, or from, motorcycle, motorscooter or moped

Bicycle theft

64. Theft of pedal cycle

Criminal damage

80. Arson
81. Criminal damage to a motor vehicle (£20 or under)
82. Criminal damage to a motor vehicle (over £20)
83. Criminal damage to the home (£20 or under)
84. Criminal damage to the home (over £20)
85. Other criminal damage (£20 or under)
86. Other criminal damage (over £20)

Criminal damage to a vehicle

81. Criminal damage to a motor vehicle (£20 or under)
82. Criminal damage to a motor vehicle (over £20)

Arson and other criminal damage

80. Arson
83. Criminal damage to the home (£20 or under)
84. Criminal damage to the home (over £20)
85. Other criminal damage (£20 or under)
86. Other criminal damage (over £20)

Personal crimes

All personal (not including rape and indecent assault⁷¹)

11. Serious wounding
12. Other wounding
13. Common assault
21. Attempted assault
32. Serious wounding with sexual motive
33. Other wounding with sexual motive
41. Robbery
42. Attempted robbery
43. Snatch theft from the person
44. Other theft from the person

⁷¹ Due to the small numbers of rape, attempted rape and indecent assault 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 (except for the categories of "serious wounding with sexual motive" and "other wounding with sexual motive", which are included in the offence category of "wounding").

-
- 45. Attempted theft from the person
 - 67. Other personal theft
 - 73. Other attempted theft

All violence

- 11. Serious wounding
- 12. Other wounding
- 13. Common assault
- 21. Attempted assault
- 32. Serious wounding with sexual motive
- 33. Other wounding with sexual motive

Other violence categories exist beyond this list but largely depend on details of the offence, such as the level of injury (for example, violence with injury) and victim-offender relationship (for example, domestic violence) that are not reflected in different offence codes. [Chapter 5](#) contains more information on different crime categories as a result of these offence characteristics.

Common assault

- 13. Common assault
- 21. Attempted assault

Wounding

- 11. Serious wounding
- 12. Other wounding
- 32. Serious wounding with sexual motive
- 33. Other wounding with sexual motive

Robbery

- 41. Robbery
- 42. Attempted robbery

Acquisitive crime against the individual

- 41. Robbery
- 42. Attempted robbery
- 43. Snatch theft from the person
- 44. Other theft from the person
- 45. Attempted theft from the person
- 67. Other personal theft
- 73. Other attempted theft

Theft from the person

- 43. Snatch theft from the person
- 44. Other theft from the person
- 45. Attempted theft from the person

Snatch theft from person

- 43. Snatch theft from the person

Stealth theft from person

- 44. Other theft from the person

Attempted snatch or stealth theft from person

-
45. Attempted theft from the person

Other theft of personal property

67. Other personal theft
73. Other attempted theft

All theft

43. Snatch theft from the person
44. Other theft from the person
45. Attempted theft from the person
50. Attempted burglary to non-connected domestic garage or outhouse
51. Burglary in a dwelling (nothing taken)
52. Burglary in a dwelling (something taken)
53. Attempted burglary in a dwelling
55. Theft in a dwelling
56. Theft from a meter
57. Burglary from non-connected domestic garage or outhouse – nothing taken
58. Burglary from non-connected domestic garage or outhouse – something taken
60. Theft of car or van
61. Theft from car or van
62. Theft of motorbike, motorscooter or moped
63. Theft from motorbike, motorscooter or moped
64. Theft of pedal cycle
65. Theft from outside dwelling (excluding theft of milk bottles)
67. Other personal theft
71. Attempted theft of, or from, car or van
72. Attempted theft of, or from, motorcycle, motorscooter or moped
73. Other attempted theft

Total CSEW crime (not including rape, indecent assault⁷²)

11. Serious wounding
12. Other wounding
13. Common assault
21. Attempted assault
32. Serious wounding with sexual motive
33. Other wounding with sexual motive
41. Robbery
42. Attempted robbery
43. Snatch theft from the person
44. Other theft from the person
45. Attempted theft from the person
50. Attempted burglary to non-connected domestic garage or outhouse
51. Burglary in a dwelling (nothing taken)
52. Burglary in a dwelling (something taken)

⁷² Due to the small numbers of rape, attempted rape and indecent assault 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 (except for the categories of “serious wounding with sexual motive” and “other wounding with sexual motive”, which are included in the offence category of “wounding”).

-
53. Attempted burglary in a dwelling
 55. Theft in a dwelling
 56. Theft from a meter
 57. Burglary from non-connected domestic garage or outhouse – nothing taken
 58. Burglary from non-connected domestic garage or outhouse – something taken
 60. Theft of car or van
 61. Theft from car or van
 62. Theft of motorbike, motorscooter or moped
 63. Theft from motorbike, motorscooter or moped
 64. Theft of pedal cycle
 65. Theft from outside dwelling (excluding theft of milk bottles)
 67. Other personal theft
 71. Attempted theft of, or from, car or van
 72. Attempted theft of, or from, motorcycle, motorscooter or moped
 73. Other attempted theft
 80. Arson
 81. Criminal damage to a motor vehicle (£20 or under)
 82. Criminal damage to a motor vehicle (over £20)
 83. Criminal damage to the home (£20 or under)
 84. Criminal damage to the home (over £20)
 85. Other criminal damage (£20 or under)
 86. Other criminal damage (over £20)

Fraud and cyber crime offences

Fraud

200. Bank and credit account fraud – with loss
201. Bank and credit account fraud – with full loss reimbursed
202. Bank and credit account fraud – no loss
203. Advance fee fraud – with loss
204. Advance fee fraud – with full loss reimbursed
205. Advance fee fraud – no loss
206. Non-investment fraud – with loss
207. Non-investment fraud – with full loss reimbursed
208. Non-investment fraud – no loss
210. Other fraud – with loss
211. Other fraud – with full loss reimbursed
212. Other fraud – no loss

Computer misuse

320. Hacking and unauthorised access to personal information
321. Computer virus – with loss
322. Computer virus – with full loss reimbursed
323. Computer virus – no loss
324. Other computer misuse

Appendix 3: Published sources of police recorded crime statistics covering England and Wales

Source	Description	What data does it use?	Geographic breakdowns	Frequency of release	Where can you access it/find out more?
Official Statistics published by the Office for National Statistics	Comprehensive quarterly statistical bulletins on crime. Including: - Detailed commentary - Long-term trend data - Other sources of crime statistics	Data supplied by police forces to the Home Office – aggregate data returns are subject to comprehensive checks including reconciling figures against forces' own systems. Includes data from the British Transport Police (BTP).	Police force and community safety partnership	Quarterly	http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/taxonomy/index.html?nscl=Crime+and+Justice
Home Office open data tables	Data files containing police recorded crime figures broken down by offence type, geography and time period. Intended to enable further analysis of data.	Data supplied by police forces to the Home Office – aggregate data returns are subject to comprehensive checks including reconciling figures against forces' own systems. Includes data from the British Transport Police (BTP).	Police force and community safety partnership	Quarterly	https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-recorded-crime-open-data-tables
Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary Crime and Policing Comparator	Presents charts comparing police recorded crime data between all police forces in England and Wales.	Published ONS Official Statistics (as above) Excludes data from BTP.	Police force	Quarterly	http://www.hmic.gov.uk/crime-and-policing-comparator/ The Crime and Policing Comparator is no longer being updated whilst a new version is created.
'Compare your area' data (Police.uk website)	Presents charts of police recorded crime at the local area level to enable comparisons between areas.	Published ONS Official Statistics (as above) Excludes data from BTP.	Community safety partnership	Quarterly	http://www.police.uk/ See the "Performance" pages of the website.
Local crime maps available on the Police.uk website	Presents counts of police recorded crime at street level in the form of crime maps. Intended to provide an indication of recent levels of crime at the neighbourhood level.	Police forces submit recorded crime data that is not subject to the same rigorous level of quality assurance process as the Official Statistics published by the ONS.	Street level (minimum of 8 addresses).	Monthly	http://www.police.uk/

Appendix 4: Fraud offences recorded by the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau

- **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.
- **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 (Trojans) and ransomware. Ransomware restricts access to a computer system that it infects in some way, and demands that the user pay a ransom to the operators of the malware to remove the restriction. A Trojan refers to any malicious computer program which is often disguised as legitimate software and misleads users of its true intent.
- **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.
- **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.
- **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.
- **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.
- **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.
- **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.
- **Non-investment 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.
- **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 non-investment fraud** – includes frauds involving the misrepresentation of a product advertised for sale or the non-delivery/non-existence of products purchased which do not fit under other types of non-investment 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.

Appendix 5: Extracts from Crime Recording: A matter of fact (Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, 2014)

Crime recording – extracts from Crime Recording: A matter of fact (HMIC, 2014)

How do forces receive reports of crime?

3.40 Police forces receive reports of crime from the public through a number of routes. The two main ones are by telephone:

directly to a force control room, where an incident record is created and, when it is considered appropriate – sometimes some time later – a crime record is made;

directly from a victim of a crime to a call-handler where a crime record is made immediately and the victim receives a crime reference number.

3.41 Most other crime is reported to the police through a specialist department, such as through referrals from other statutory bodies and charities or to officers on the street or at the front counters of police stations.

When is an “incident” a crime?

3.27 The first principle the police must follow is that all reports of incidents, whether from victims, witnesses or third parties and whether crime-related or not, must result in the registration of an incident report by the police. It is important to note that an incident report can take any form as long as it is auditable and accessible. For example, a report made directly to an officer on the street may be recorded in his pocket book.

3.28 From the moment a victim of crime calls the police, the requirement to record a crime is based on the victim's statement to the police. The allegations about a crime are recorded on the basis of the victim's own account. The correct approach by staff receiving reports of crime is to ask some initial questions to establish the facts, but they do not conduct an investigation.

To determine whether an incident is a crime, the Home Office Counting Rules (HOCR) state that:

“An incident will be recorded as a crime (notifiable to the Home Secretary) for offences against an identified victim if, on the balance of probability:

*The circumstances as reported amount to a crime defined by law (the police will determine this, based on their knowledge of the law and counting rules), and
There is no credible evidence to the contrary.”*

This is followed by rule 2:

“For offences against the state the points to prove to evidence the offence must clearly be made out, before a crime is recorded.”

3.31 So there are two primary types of crime: the first aimed at identified victims; the second against the state, for example the possession of drugs, carrying a weapon, and public order offences that have no victim.

3.32 Because these rules place an obligation on the police to accept what the victim says unless there is “credible evidence to the contrary”, a crime should still be recorded where:

the victim declines to provide personal details;

the victim does not want to take the matter further; and

the allegation cannot be proved.

3.33 The balance of probability test is detailed in the National Crime Recording Standard. It provides that:

“In most cases, a belief by the victim (or person reasonably assumed to be acting on behalf of the victim) that a crime has occurred is sufficient to justify its recording as a crime, although this will not be the case in all circumstances. Effectively, a more victim-orientated approach is advocated.”

“An allegation should be considered as made, at the first point of contact, i.e. the stage at which the victim or a person reasonably assumed to be acting on behalf of the victim first makes contact with the police, be that by phone, etc. or in person. If an alleged or possible victim cannot be contacted or later refuses to provide further detail, the Crime Recording Decision Making Process (CRDMP) should be based on all available first contact information.”

3.34 The HOCR describe when a crime need not be recorded; if a victim does not confirm a crime, then it is not recorded. For instance, if someone other than the victim reports an apparent street robbery, but police cannot find the victim, then a crime is not recorded, but the incident must be recorded.

3.35 Also, the HOCR do not require a force to record a crime if it happens in another force area or in another country but is reported in England or Wales.

When is an incident not a crime?

3.46 Many incidents reported to the police turn out not to be crimes. For example, someone reports a man on a ladder breaking the first floor window of a house and climbing in. A police patrol immediately goes to the house and finds the man who is inside is the owner and had forgotten his key. When there is such an incident, or when the police have clear evidence to believe that a crime has not been committed, this is not a crime and not recorded as such.

3.47 It should be emphasised that the HOCR do not expect police to record reports of crimes made by a third person (unless that person is reasonably assumed to be acting on behalf of the victim) if the victim cannot be found to verify that a crime has occurred. So, if someone witnesses an assault in the street and reports it to the police, but the victim of the assault is unknown to the witness and cannot be traced, the police are not required to record the incident as a crime. The incident itself must be recorded but, under this rule, the police are actively prevented from recording all the crimes that come to their attention.