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## Crime in England and Wales: Quarterly Update to June 2009

15/09

22 October 2009

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## MAIN POINTS

- Based on British Crime Survey (BCS) interviews in the year to June 2009, the overall level of crime is stable compared with the year ending June 2008. The number of crimes recorded by the police fell by four per cent for the period April to June 2009 compared with the same quarter a year earlier.
- BCS interviews showed the risk of being a victim of crime (22%) is stable compared with the previous year and still historically low.
- Compared with the year ending June 2008 BCS household crime showed a decrease of four per cent, mainly due to a statistically significant fall of six per cent in vandalism. There was no change in the level of personal crime as estimates of all BCS personal crime categories (violence, theft from the person and other personal theft) remained stable.
- The fall in police recorded crime for April to June 2009 compared with the same period in 2008 reflected falls in violence against the person (by 1%), recorded offences against vehicles (by 12%), criminal damage (by 5%) and 'other theft' offences (by 3%). However, within 'other theft' there were increases of five and 22 per cent respectively for theft from the person and theft of pedal cycles.
- BCS burglaries for the year ending June 2009 remained stable compared with the previous year. For the period April to June 2009, police recorded domestic burglaries rose by three per cent and other burglaries rose by one per cent.
- Police recorded robberies rose by one per cent overall and those involving knives or sharp instruments also increased by one per cent over the same period.
- There was a five per cent fall in firearm offences recorded by the police in April to June 2009, compared to the same period in 2008.
- There was no change in the overall level of perceived anti-social behaviour compared with the previous year (16%) but four of the seven indicators making up the composite index showed reductions.
- BCS interviews in the year to June 2009 showed that 50 per cent of people agreed that the police and local agencies were dealing with the anti-social behaviour and crime issues that mattered in their area, compared with 45 per cent for the nine months to June 2008.

**Annex B of this bulletin contains proposals for public consultation on amending the presentation of police recorded crime figures in quarterly bulletins to compare figures for the most recent 12 month period with those for the previous 12 months. The deadline for responses to this consultation is 15<sup>th</sup> January 2010.**

This statistical bulletin is a National Statistics output produced to the highest professional standards and free from political interference. It has been produced by statisticians working in the Home Office Statistics Unit under the direct line management of a Chief Statistician, who reports to the National Statistician with respect to all professional statistical matters.

This update presents the most recent crime statistics from two different sources: the British Crime Survey (BCS) and police recorded crime. Both data sets represent the most up-to-date information, but they cover different time periods. The BCS results are from interviews conducted in the period July 2008 to June 2009; police recorded crime refers to the April to June 2009 quarter. Police recorded crime figures presented in quarterly updates are provisional.

## LEVELS OF CRIME

Based on BCS interviews in the year to June 2009, overall BCS crime is stable compared with June 2008 (Figure 1 and Table 1).<sup>1</sup> BCS household crime showed a statistically significant decrease of four per cent but there was no change in the level of personal crime.<sup>2</sup>

The overall level of crime recorded by the police in April to June 2009 decreased by four per cent compared with the same quarter in 2008 (Figure 2 and Table 2).<sup>3</sup>

The BCS showed the risk of being a victim of crime (22%) remained stable compared with the year to June 2008. This level of risk of being a victim of crime is historically low.

BCS interviews for the year to June 2009 showed levels of violent crime overall to be stable compared with the year to June 2008; the apparent four per cent decrease was not statistically significant. The two sub-categories of violence (violence with injury and violence with no injury) were also stable.

The level of violence against the person<sup>4</sup> recorded by the police showed a one per cent fall between April to June 2009 and the same quarter in 2008. Recorded robbery figures showed a one per cent rise in April to June 2009 compared with the same quarter in 2008, with those involving knives or sharp instruments also increasing by one per cent over the same period (see Annex A for a full discussion of issues in interpreting knife crime trends, together with latest figures). There was a two per cent fall in recorded sexual offences over the same period.

Provisional figures<sup>5</sup> for firearm offences recorded by the police show they account for 0.2 per cent of all recorded crime. There was a five per cent fall from 2.1 thousand to 2.0 thousand in these offences in April to June 2009 compared with the same period in 2008, continuing previous quarterly falls.

BCS burglary remained stable based on interviews to June 2009 compared with the previous year; the apparent five per cent decrease was not statistically significant. Other household theft also remained stable. Police recorded crime figures showed a rise of three per cent in domestic burglaries in April to June 2009 compared with the same quarter in 2008.<sup>6</sup> There have been small increases in these comparative changes in three of the last four quarters following a period of decline. Other burglary is up one per cent in April to June 2009 compared with the same period in 2008.

Based on BCS interviews to June 2009, vandalism decreased by six per cent compared with the year to June 2008. There was also a five per cent decrease in police recorded criminal damage in April to June 2009 compared with the same period a year earlier.

The level of vehicle-related thefts remained stable (the apparent decrease was not statistically significant), according to BCS interviews to June 2009 compared with the year to June 2008.

<sup>1</sup> Table 1 is presented in a different format to previous updates. It now includes figures for bicycle theft, other household theft and other theft of personal property.

<sup>2</sup> See Section 8 of Crime in England and Wales 2008/09: Volume 2 for more information on statistical significance.

<sup>3</sup> Table 2 is presented in a different format to previous updates. It now shows figures for theft from the person and theft of a pedal cycle.

<sup>4</sup> This definition does not cover sexual offences or robbery.

<sup>5</sup> These figures exclude offences involving air weapons. A detailed breakdown of finalised firearm offence figures for 2007/08 is published in Povey *et al.* (2009)

<sup>6</sup> Recorded domestic burglary was particularly low in April to June 2008 – the lowest quarterly volume since before the introduction of the National Crime Recording Standard in 2002/03.

There was a 12 per cent fall in recorded offences against vehicles<sup>7</sup> in April to June 2009 compared with the same period a year earlier.

The latest BCS estimates for bicycle theft and personal theft show no statistically significant changes compared to the 12 months ending June 2008. Previous estimates showed significant rises for the 12 months ending March 2009 compared to the previous year so the current trend remains unclear. Other evidence from police recorded crime showed that offences of bicycle thefts rose by 22 per cent<sup>8</sup>, having been flat for the previous two quarters, while offences of theft from a person recorded by the police rose by five per cent in April to June 2009 compared with the same quarter in the previous year.

BCS estimates of other theft of personal property also remained stable.

Drug offences recorded by the police fell by four per cent in April to June 2009 compared with the same quarter in the previous year. This is the second consecutive quarterly fall following a sustained period of increased recording of drug offences which was mainly attributable to increased use of police powers to issue cannabis warnings.

Fraud and forgery offences recorded by the police showed a 10 per cent fall in April to June 2009, compared with the same quarter in 2008. Fraud offences are known to be very substantially underreported to the police. BCS estimates together with figures supplied by the financial industry are now used in the annual crime statistics publication as they provide a much more comprehensive picture as to the scale and trend of fraudulent transactions (see Walker *et al.* (2009) for more information).

#### **Box 1 Police recording of violence against the person**

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) has recently undertaken a quality assurance exercise of forces' recording of most serious violence offences (HMIC, 2009). This exercise was commissioned by the Home Secretary following a clarification to counting rules covering offences of GBH with intent in April 2008 (see Smith and Hoare (2009), section 3.3 for more information). HMIC report both under-recording of most serious violence and some less serious violence being recorded as 'most serious'. It is acknowledged that some of this mis-recording could be due to omission of relevant information from records, but this in itself would be a problem of compliance with expected recording standards. The HMIC inspection raises important issues that will need close consideration by the Home Office, ACPO and the statisticians publishing police recorded crime and a full response will be made in due course.

Alongside this exercise a great deal of quality assurance work has been undertaken in forces, leading to ongoing revisions of figures during 2008/09. Further revisions to data have been received since the publication of the annual 2008/09 bulletin (Walker *et al.* (2009)). All affected tables from the annual bulletin have been updated to take account of the revisions, and can be found at <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/crimeew0809.html>.

It should be stressed that the clarification in the counting rules does not alter the overall figure for the violence against the person offence group or for the subcategories of violence against the person with injury and violence against the person without injury reported in this bulletin.

<sup>7</sup> Theft of and from a vehicle, aggravated vehicle taking and interfering with a vehicle.

<sup>8</sup> These figures cover a different period to the BCS interviews to March 2009 that showed a similar rise.

**Figure 1 Percentage change in BCS crime based on interviews in the 12 months to June 2009 compared with the previous 12 months**



Changes in Figure 1 which are statistically significant at the 5% level are indicated by a fully shaded bar. Other apparent changes are not statistically significant at the 5% level. Statistical significance for the change in all BCS crime cannot be calculated in the same way as for other BCS figures (a method based on approximation is used). See Section 8 of Crime in England and Wales 2008/09: Volume 2 (Smith and Hoare (2009)), for more information on statistical significance.

**Figure 2 Percentage change in numbers of recorded crimes, April to June 2009 compared with the same quarter a year earlier**



\* See Table 2, which contains a more detailed breakdown. Other theft offences include theft from the person and theft of a pedal cycle, which rose by five and 22 per cent respectively.

**Table 1 Number of crimes and risk of being a victim based on BCS interviews in the year to June 2009 compared with the previous year**

	BCS			
	Interviews in July 2007 to June 2008 <sup>1</sup>	Interviews in July 2008 to June 2009	Change between years	Statistically significant change <sup>2</sup>
<i>Number of incidents (000s) and percentage change<sup>3</sup></i>				
Vandalism	2,778	2,604	-6	**
Burglary	734	699	-5	
Vehicle-related theft	1,489	1,424	-4	
Bicycle theft	499	492	-2	
Other household theft	1,127	1,137	1	
Household acquisitive crime	3,849	3,752	-3	
<b>All household crime</b>	<b>6,627</b>	<b>6,356</b>	<b>-4</b>	<b>**</b>
<i>Unweighted base - household crime</i>	<i>46,447</i>	<i>45,185</i>		
Theft from the person	638	671	5	
Other theft of personal property	1,015	1,057	4	
All violence	2,197	2,115	-4	
<i>with injury</i>	<i>1,084</i>	<i>1,111</i>	<i>2</i>	
<i>without injury</i>	<i>1,113</i>	<i>1,004</i>	<i>-10</i>	
Personal acquisitive crime	1,968	2,013	2	
<b>All personal crime</b>	<b>3,849</b>	<b>3,843</b>	<b>0</b>	
<i>Unweighted base - personal crime</i>	<i>46,587</i>	<i>45,184</i>		
<b>All BCS crime</b>	<b>10,476</b>	<b>10,199</b>	<b>-3</b>	
<i>Percentage risk of being a victim once or more and percentage point change<sup>4</sup></i>				
Vandalism	7.6	7.1	-0.5	**
Burglary	2.4	2.3	-0.1	
Vehicle-related theft <sup>5</sup>	6.4	6.1	-0.3	
Bicycle theft <sup>6</sup>	4.1	4.0	-0.1	
Other household theft	3.6	3.6	0.0	
Household acquisitive crime	11.7	11.4	-0.4	
<b>All household crime</b>	<b>17.6</b>	<b>16.9</b>	<b>-0.6</b>	
<i>Unweighted base - household crime</i>	<i>46,447</i>	<i>45,185</i>		
Theft from the person	1.3	1.4	0.0	
Other theft of personal property	2.0	2.1	0.1	
All violence	3.2	3.2	0.0	
<i>with injury</i>	<i>1.7</i>	<i>1.8</i>	<i>0.1</i>	
<i>without injury</i>	<i>1.7</i>	<i>1.6</i>	<i>-0.1</i>	
Personal acquisitive crime	3.8	3.8	0.1	
<b>All personal crime</b>	<b>6.2</b>	<b>6.2</b>	<b>0.0</b>	
<i>Unweighted base - personal crime</i>	<i>46,587</i>	<i>45,184</i>		
<b>All BCS crime</b>	<b>22.8</b>	<b>22.4</b>	<b>-0.4</b>	

1. Estimates based on BCS interviews for the year ending June 2008 have been revised using LFS microdata reweighted to the latest (2007) population estimates and differ slightly from those previously published, although this may not be evident in rounded figures. See Section 8 of Crime in England and Wales 2008/09: Volume 2 for more information.

2. Statistically significant change at the 5% level is indicated by a double asterisk. Statistical significance for change in all BCS crime cannot be calculated in the same way as for other BCS figures (a method based on approximation has been developed). See Section 8 of Crime in England and Wales 2008/09: Volume 2 for more information on statistical significance.

3. A percentage change of less than 0.5 is shown as 0.

4. A discrepancy may appear between trends in number of crimes and risk of being a victim (the proportion of the population victimised once or more) due to repeat victimisation.

5. Risk for 'Vehicle-related theft' is based only on households owning, or with regular use of, a vehicle. It includes theft of vehicles, theft from vehicles and attempted theft of and from vehicles.

6. Risk for bicycle theft is based only on households owning a bicycle.

7. For more information about the crime types included in this table, see Section 5 of Crime in England and Wales 2008/09: Volume 2.

**Table 2 Number of recorded crimes and percentage change compared with the same quarter in the previous year**

Offence group	Number of crimes recorded by the police (000s) <sup>1,2</sup>					Percentage change compared with the same quarter in the previous year <sup>3</sup>			
	Apr-Jun 2008	Jul-Sep 2008	Oct-Dec 2008	Jan-Mar 2009	Apr-Jun 2009	Jul-Sep 2008	Oct-Dec 2008	Jan-Mar 2009	Apr-Jun 2009
Violence against the person	236.7	236.6	217.5	212.7	233.3	-6	-6	-4	-1
Violence against the person - with injury <sup>4</sup>	110.5	110.1	100.5	99.8	110.6	-8	-7	-4	0
Violence against the person - without injury <sup>5</sup>	126.2	126.5	116.9	112.9	122.8	-5	-5	-5	-3
Sexual offences	14.1	13.3	11.9	12.1	13.9	-8	-1	-6	-2
Robbery	19.5	19.6	20.6	20.4	19.6	-2	-2	-1	1
Burglary	138.9	144.5	150.7	147.4	141.7	3	4	-2	2
Domestic burglary	65.2	69.5	75.5	74.2	67.0	4	4	0	3
Other burglary	73.7	75.0	75.3	73.2	74.8	3	4	-4	1
Offences against vehicles <sup>6</sup>	152.2	153.7	148.2	137.8	133.8	-6	-7	-16	-12
Other theft offences	287.1	285.4	261.1	246.4	277.9	-1	-4	-5	-3
of which:									
Theft from the person	21.6	21.7	24.7	21.6	22.8	-13	-4	-7	5
Theft of a pedal cycle	25.9	32.4	25.7	20.2	31.6	10	1	0	22
Fraud and forgery	44.3	43.8	38.0	37.1	39.7	16	3	-9	-10
Criminal damage	243.2	230.9	232.3	229.9	231.5	-8	-9	-11	-5
Total property crime	865.8	858.4	830.2	798.6	824.6	-2	-5	-8	-5
Drug offences	60.9	62.3	62.5	57.8	58.3	11	6	-2	-4
Other miscellaneous offences	18.8	18.6	16.8	16.9	18.4	4	3	-1	-2
Total recorded crime - all offences	1,215.8	1,208.7	1,159.5	1,118.4	1,168.3	-3	-4	-7	-4
of which: Firearm offences <sup>7</sup>	2.1	2.1	2.0	2.0	2.0	-28	-15	-3	-5

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

2. The figures given in the table are the latest available. They may therefore differ slightly from figures published in previous bulletins. The table does not contain a breakdown of offences for most serious violence (see Box 1 on page 4).

3. Comparisons are made with the same quarter in the preceding year in order to take seasonality into account. Comparisons with the previous quarter are not shown.

4. Includes homicide, attempted murder, intentional destruction of a viable unborn child, causing death by dangerous driving/careless driving when under the influence of drink or drugs, more serious wounding or other act endangering life (including grievous bodily harm with and without intent), causing death by aggravated vehicle taking and less serious wounding offences.

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

6. Includes aggravated vehicle taking, theft of and from a vehicle and interfering with a motor vehicle.

7. Excludes offences involving the use of air weapons and offences recorded by British Transport Police. Includes crimes recorded by police where a firearm has been fired, used as a blunt instrument against a person or used as a threat.



## PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS

Based on BCS interviews in the year ending June 2009, the proportion of people who had a high level of perceived anti-social behaviour in their local area remained stable compared with the previous year (the apparent one percentage point decrease was not statistically significant). Of the seven indicators that make up the composite measure, four showed a statistically significant decrease since the previous year: problems with abandoned or burnt-out cars (from 7% to 5%), problems with teenagers hanging around (from 31% to 29%), problems with rubbish or litter lying around (from 31% to 30%) and problems with vandalism or graffiti (from 27% to 26%). The other three indicators showed no statistically significant change (Table 3).

**Table 3 Anti-social behaviour indicators**

Percentages	Interviews in July 2007 to June 2008 <sup>1</sup>	Interviews in July 2008 to June 2009	BCS Statistically significant change <sup>2</sup>
<i>Percentage</i>			
High level of perceived anti-social behaviour <sup>3</sup>	17	16	
<i>Percentage saying very/fairly big problem in their area</i>			
Abandoned or burnt-out cars	7	5	**↓
Noisy neighbours or loud parties	10	11	
People being drunk or rowdy in public places	26	26	
People using or dealing drugs	27	27	
Teenagers hanging around on the streets	31	29	**↓
Rubbish or litter lying around	31	30	**↓
Vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage to property	27	26	**↓
<i>Unweighted base<sup>4</sup></i>	<i>44,444</i>	<i>42,737</i>	

1. Estimates based on BCS interviews for the year ending June 2008 have been revised using LFS microdata reweighted to the latest (2007) population estimates and differ slightly from those previously published, although this may not be evident in rounded figures. See Section 8 of Crime in England and Wales 2008/09: Volume 2 for more information.

2. Statistically significant change at the 5% level is indicated by a double asterisk. See Section 8 of Crime in England and Wales 2008/09: Volume 2 for more information on statistical significance.

3. This measure is derived from responses to the seven individual anti-social behaviour strands reported in the table.

4. Unweighted bases refer to high level of perceived ASB. Bases for each individual strand will be similar.

BCS interviews during the 12 months to June 2009 showed that the proportion of adults with a high level of worry about burglary, car crime and violent crime remained stable, the apparent one percentage point decreases were not statistically significant (Table 4).

**Table 4 Worry about crime**

Percentages	Interviews in July 2007 to June 2008 <sup>1</sup>	Interviews in July 2008 to June 2009	BCS Statistically significant change <sup>2</sup>
<i>Percentage with high level of worry about<sup>3</sup>:</i>			
Burglary	12	11	
Car crime	12	11	
Violent crime	15	14	
<i>Unweighted base<sup>4</sup></i>	<i>37,650</i>	<i>11,267</i>	

1. Estimates based on BCS interviews for the year ending June 2008 have been revised using LFS microdata reweighted to the latest (2007) population estimates and differ slightly from those previously published, although this may not be evident in rounded figures. See Section 8 of Crime in England and Wales 2008/09: Volume 2 for more information.

2. Statistically significant change at the 5% level is indicated by a double asterisk. See Section 8 of Crime in England and Wales 2008/09: Volume 2 for more information on statistical significance.

3. For more information about the worry about crime measures in this table, see Section 6 of Crime in England and Wales 2008/09: Volume 2.

4. Unweighted bases refer to high levels of worry about burglary. Bases for violent crime will be similar but for car crime they will be slightly lower as these are based on those residing in households owning, or with regular use of, a vehicle only. Since April 2008, this question has only been asked of a quarter of the sample and therefore bases for the year ending June 2009 will be lower than in previous years.



The proportion of people who thought that the police in their local area did a good or excellent job increased in the 12 months to June 2009 compared with the same period in the previous year (from 52% to 54%) (Table 5).

A new set of questions was included in the BCS from October 2007 relating to levels of confidence in the police working with local agencies to tackle the anti-social behaviour and crime issues that matter in the local area. One of these questions forms the basis for new targets set by the Home Secretary for police forces to improve the level of public confidence. BCS interviews in the year to June 2009 showed that 50 per cent of people agreed that the police and local council were dealing with the anti-social behaviour and crime issues that mattered in their area, an increase from 45 per cent in the nine months to June 2008 (Table 5). There has been a related decrease in the proportion of people who disagree with this statement (from 25% in the nine months to June 2008 to 21% in the year to June 2009) while the proportion with no opinion has remained stable.

A new set of questions to measure confidence in the effectiveness and fairness of the criminal justice system (CJS) was also introduced in October 2007. Previous questions about confidence in seven aspects of the CJS were phased out following the introduction of these new questions. Based on interviews in the year to June 2009, 39 per cent of people were confident that the CJS as a whole is effective, an increase from 37 per cent in the nine months to June 2008. BCS interviews in the year to June 2009 also showed that 59 per cent of people thought that the CJS as a whole is fair, an increase from 57 per cent in the nine months to June 2008 (Table 5).

**Table 5 Confidence in the police and CJS**

Percentages	Interviews in October 2007 to June 2008 <sup>1</sup>	Interviews in July 2008 to June 2009	BCS Statistically significant change <sup>2</sup>
	<i>Percentage agreeing</i>		
Police in the local area doing a good or excellent job <sup>3</sup>	52	54	**↑
<i>Unweighted base</i>	45,505	44,295	
Police and local council are dealing with the anti-social behaviour and crime issues that matter in the local area	45	50	**↑
<i>Unweighted base</i> <sup>4</sup>	31,309	43,969	
	<i>Percentage confident</i>		
Confidence that the CJS as a whole is effective	37	39	**↑
Confidence that the CJS as a whole is fair	57	59	**↑
<i>Unweighted base</i> <sup>5</sup>	21,312	43,726	

1. Estimates based on BCS interviews for the year ending June 2008 have been revised using LFS microdata reweighted to the latest (2007) population estimates and differ slightly from those previously published, although this may not be evident in rounded figures. See Section 8 of Crime in England and Wales 2008/09: Volume 2 for more information.

2. Statistically significant change at the 5% level is indicated by a double asterisk. See Section 8 of Crime in England and Wales 2008/09: Volume 2 for more information on statistical significance.

3. This measure is based on interviews between July 2007 and June 2008.

4. Base for the data to June 2008 is smaller as it is based on nine months of data from October 2007, when the relevant question was introduced to the survey.

5. Unweighted base refers to effectiveness of the CJS. Base for the other measure will be similar. Data to June 2008 has a smaller base as it is based on a partial sample for nine months of data from October 2007, when the relevant questions were introduced to the survey.

## NOTES

The latest British Crime Survey (BCS) figures are based on interviews with adults aged 16 or over resident in households in England and Wales conducted between July 2008 and June 2009 (BCS year ending June 2009) and incidents experienced by survey respondents in the 12 months prior to their interview. Averaging over the moving reference period generates estimates that are most closely comparable with police recorded crime figures for the 12 months up to the end of December 2008, about six months behind the latest recorded crime figures reported here. BCS results for the year ending June 2009 are compared with the results from the interviews in the year ending June 2008.

The BCS fieldwork was carried out by BMRB Social Research. In the year ending June 2009 the BCS had a nationally representative sample of 46,286 adults with a response rate of 76 per cent.<sup>9</sup> Further information about the BCS and access to recent publications can be found at <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/bcs1.html>.

For more information on statistical significance and confidence intervals for BCS data, see Section 8 of Crime in England and Wales 2008/09: Volume 2 (Smith and Hoare (2009)).

Recorded crime figures relate to crimes recorded by the police in England and Wales in the quarterly period. Unlike the BCS, they do not include crimes that have not been reported to the police, and do not include those that the police decide not to record, but do cover crimes against those aged under 16 and businesses.

Police recorded crime figures presented in quarterly updates are provisional. The annual National Statistics on police recorded crime at police force level are published after a full reconciliation and quality assurance process has been completed by the Home Office Statistics Unit in liaison with individual police forces. The figures are published as part of the annual bulletin in July.

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<sup>9</sup> Based on BCS interviews achieved during the year ending March 2009. The response rate for the year ending June 2009 cannot be calculated as finalised response figures are not yet available.

## ANNEX A: VIOLENT AND SEXUAL OFFENCES INVOLVING THE USE OF KNIVES AND OTHER SHARP INSTRUMENTS

Figures for certain types of offences recorded by the police that involve the use of a knife or other sharp instrument have been collected quarterly since April 2007.

Tables A1 and A2 provide the latest figures at the national level. Knife and sharp instrument offences for April to June 2009 fell by two per cent compared with the same period in 2008. This is largely due to a fall in the number of GBH and ABH offences, which fell by 160 offences, a decrease of four per cent, and threats to kill, which fell by 62 offences, or 15 per cent. The number of robbery offences where a knife or sharp instrument was involved has increased by 38 offences, or one per cent. The relatively low number of knife or sharp instrument offences of homicide, attempted murder, rape and sexual assault means that care should be taken when comparing these figures.

The proportion of selected violent offences where a knife or sharp instrument has been involved is six percent for April to June 2009, the same as for April to June 2008.

### Note on recording

Sharp instruments included in this special collection cover any weapons that are sharp and can pierce the skin. Included in this definition are broken bottles and glass. A recent audit of how bottle and glass offences are recorded in this special knife and sharp instrument data collection identified that some forces were including unbroken bottle and glass offences in their returns, which are outside the scope of this collection. This means there has previously been an overstatement of the extent of knife and sharp instrument offences. Some of the affected forces have been able to submit revised figures but five remain unable to provide figures that separate out the unbroken bottle and glass offences.<sup>10</sup>

It is estimated that the inclusion of unbroken bottles and glass offences by these forces results in national knife and sharp instrument figures being overstated by about three per cent.<sup>11</sup> While this affects the level of offences reported for these forces it does not affect trends, as practice within each force has been consistent over time. It has no effect on the main counts of violence with injury.

As some forces have revised data for the year 2008/09, tables 3.10 and 7.12 have been updated in the annual Crime in England and Wales bulletin 2008/09. These are available at: <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/crimeew0809.html>.

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<sup>10</sup> The affected forces were asked whether their returns could be further split on a historic basis. Eleven forces have submitted revised figures back to 2008/09 to match the intended definition, although five remain unable to provide figures that separate out the unbroken bottle and glass offences. The five police forces are: Derbyshire, West Midlands, Surrey, Sussex and the British Transport Police.

<sup>11</sup> This overstatement of around three per cent is largely due to the inclusion of unbroken bottle and glass offences within the ABH and GBH categories. The use or threat of an unbroken bottle or glass is less common for other offence types.

**Table A1 Selected violent and sexual offences recorded by the police involving knives or sharp instruments with percentage change**

Selected offence type	Number of selected violent and sexual offences recorded by the police which involved knives or sharp instruments					Percentage change compared with the same quarter in the previous year <sup>1</sup>
	Apr-Jun 2008	Jul-Sep 2008	Oct-Dec 2008	Jan-Mar 2009	Apr-Jun 2009	
Homicide <sup>2</sup>	71	81	55	49	46	-35
Attempted murder	69	71	67	67	76	10
Robbery	3,762	4,288	4,395	4,229	3,800	1
Threats to kill	413	422	380	339	351	-15
Actual bodily harm & grievous bodily harm	4,522	4,739	4,074	4,317	4,362	-4
Rape	66	64	46	55	55	-17
Sexual assaults	28	42	29	35	26	-7
<b>Total selected violent offences<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>8,931</b>	<b>9,707</b>	<b>9,046</b>	<b>9,091</b>	<b>8,716</b>	<b>-2</b>

1. Comparisons are made with the same quarter in the preceding year in order to take seasonality into account. Comparisons with the previous quarter are not shown.

2. Figures currently recorded by the police as at 23 September 2009. Figures are provisional and subject to revision as cases are dealt with by the police and by the courts, or as further information becomes available.

3. Five police forces include unbroken bottles and glass in their returns, which are outside the scope of this special collection. While this affects the level of offences for these forces it does not affect the trends over time. See Annex A text for more information. The forces are: Derbyshire, West Midlands Surrey, Sussex and the British Transport Police.

**Table A2 Proportion of selected violent and sexual offences recorded by the police involving knives or sharp instruments**

Selected offence type	Percentage of selected violent and sexual offences recorded by the police which involved knives or sharp instruments <sup>1</sup>				
	Apr-Jun 2008	Jul-Sep 2008	Oct-Dec 2008	Jan-Mar 2009	Apr-Jun 2009
Homicide <sup>2</sup>	40	45	36	31	35
Attempted murder	46	49	48	49	41
Robbery	19	22	21	21	19
Threats to kill	15	17	18	16	14
Actual bodily harm & grievous bodily harm	4	4	4	4	4
Rape	2	2	1	2	1
Sexual assaults	0	1	1	1	0
<b>Total selected violent offences</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>

1. The data include unbroken bottle/glass offences for five forces. See Annex A text for more information.

2. Figures currently recorded by the police as at 23 September 2009. Figures are provisional and subject to revision as cases are dealt with by the police and by the courts, or as further information becomes available.

## ANNEX B: PROPOSALS FOR CHANGES IN THE PRESENTATION OF RECORDED CRIME FIGURES

This section proposes a number of changes to the presentation of police recorded crime statistics in future quarterly bulletins.

### Background

The quarterly bulletin presents data from both the British Crime Survey and police recorded crime, presenting the most up to date statistics from both data sets. This and previous quarterly reports show police recorded crime figures for the most recent quarter compared to the same quarter in the previous year (and including intervening quarters for completeness) (Table 2) whereas the BCS figures shown are based on interviews carried out in the latest twelve month period (Table 1). The annual bulletin always presents recorded crime figures for the latest financial year (twelve month period) and provides greater level of detail than shown in the quarterly updates.

### Proposed changes

We propose to move to reporting recorded crime figures on a rolling 12 month basis, that is comparing figures for the most recent 12 month period with the previous 12 month period. Currently we report on a rolling three month period that focuses comparisons on the most recent three month period with the equivalent three month period 12 months previously.

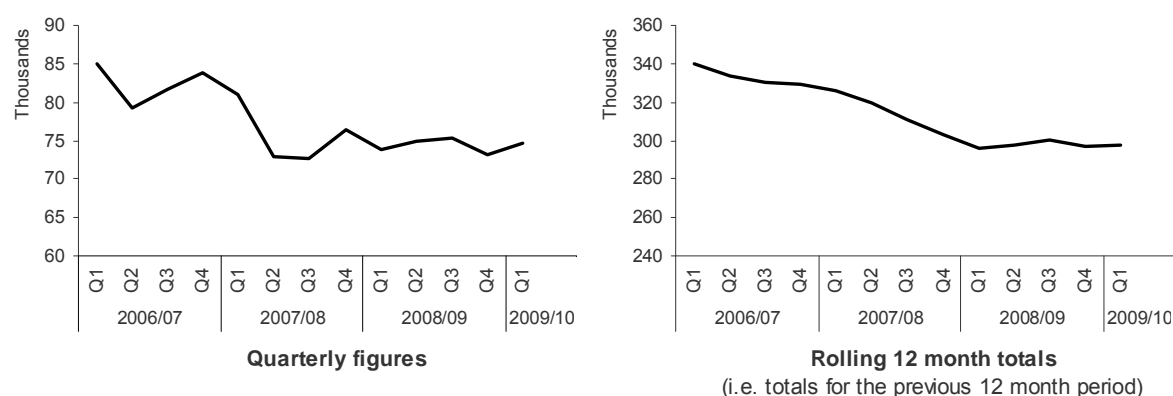
This change would bring greater consistency between the quarterly and annual bulletins, and also between the treatment of BCS and recorded crime data (of course, the BCS compares figures for the most recent 12 months of interviewing with the previous 12 months). We also propose reporting using the same total and subtotal groupings presented in Table 2.04 of the annual bulletin (Walker *et al.*, (2009)), again for greater consistency with the current annual reporting.

This proposal is based on the premise that reporting on a 12 month basis leads to a less erratic indication of trends in levels of recorded crime, being less subject to the large apparent variations which can occur when comparing shorter time periods.

### Example – ‘other burglary’

The levels of ‘other burglaries’ from the second quarter of 2007/08 onwards are below those for previous quarters going back through 2007/06, and from the second quarter of 2007/08 have not shown a clear trend upwards or downwards. The most recent quarterly percentage changes (+3, +4, -4, +1, see table B2) represent fluctuations in what is a fairly flat trend. One could argue that the 12 month trend provides a clearer picture of change over a 12 month period.

**Figure B1 Comparing rolling three month and rolling 12 month trends for recorded ‘other burglary’**



**Table B1 Comparing rolling three month and rolling 12 month totals for recorded other burglary**

		Rolling three months		Rolling 12 months	
		Crimes recorded by the police (000s)	Percentage change compared to same period in previous year	Crimes recorded by the police (000s)	Percentage change compared to same period previous year
2006/07	Q2	79.3		333.5	
	Q3	81.6		329.9	
	Q4	83.9		329.8	
2007/08	Q1	81.1		325.9	
	Q2	72.9	-8	319.5	-4
	Q3	72.6	-11	310.5	-6
	Q4	76.4	-9	303.0	-8
2008/09	Q1	73.7	-9	295.6	-9
	Q2	75.0	3	297.7	-7
	Q3	75.3	4	300.3	-3
	Q4	73.2	-4	297.1	-2
2009/10	Q1	74.8	1	298.2	1

### Consultation

Table B2 shows the suggested new presentation of police recorded crime data. It is proposed that this table will become a regular feature of future quarterly update bulletins, replacing Table 2. Figure 2 will also be amended to reflect 12 month changes. Data for discrete quarters for the previous two years will be made available in a supplementary table to be published on the RDS website alongside future bulletins (Table B3).

Recorded crime figures reported in quarterly bulletins will remain provisional.

**Please send any comments on these proposals to [crimestats.rds@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:crimestats.rds@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk) by 15th January 2010.**

**We would intend that any changes to be introduced as a result of this consultation would be adopted in the April 2010 Quarterly Update covering data to December 2009.**

**Table B2 Number of recorded crimes in the year to June 2009 compared with the previous year**

Numbers <sup>1,2</sup> and percentage changes	Recorded Crime		
	July 2007 to June 2008	July 2008 to June 2009	% change between years
Offence group			
<i>Violence against the person - with injury</i> <sup>3</sup>	441,939	421,037	-5
<i>Violence against the person - without injury</i> <sup>4</sup>	500,580	479,074	-4
Total violence against the person offences	942,519	900,111	-4
<i>Most serious sexual crime</i>	41,701	40,614	-3
<i>Other sexual offences</i>	11,781	10,562	-10
Total sexual offences	53,482	51,176	-4
<i>Robbery of business property</i>	8,974	9,330	4
<i>Robbery of personal property</i>	72,076	70,965	-2
Total robbery offences	81,050	80,295	-1
<i>Total burglary in a dwelling</i>	279,041	286,163	3
<i>Total burglary in a building other than a dwelling</i>	295,627	298,178	1
Total burglary offences	574,668	584,341	2
Offences against vehicles <sup>5</sup>	638,468	573,537	-10
Other theft offences	1,106,061	1,070,734	-3
<i>Of which:</i>			
<i>Theft from the person</i>	95,558	90,814	-5
<i>Theft or unauthorised taking of a pedal cycle</i>	100,944	109,905	9
Fraud and forgery offences	159,523	158,563	-1
Criminal damage offences	1,008,344	924,593	-8
<b>Total property crime</b>	<b>3,487,064</b>	<b>3,311,768</b>	<b>-5</b>
Drug offences	235,240	240,781	2
Other miscellaneous offences	70,151	70,748	1
<b>Total recorded crime - all offences</b>	<b>4,869,506</b>	<b>4,654,879</b>	<b>-4</b>
<i>of which: Firearm offences</i> <sup>6</sup>	9,429	8,087	-14

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

2. The figures given in the table are the latest available. They may therefore differ slightly from figures published in previous bulletins.

3. Includes homicide, attempted murder, intentional destruction of viable unborn child, causing death by dangerous driving/careless driving when under the influence of drink or drugs, more serious wounding or other act endangering life (including grievous bodily harm with and without intent), causing death by aggravated vehicle taking and less serious wounding offences.

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

5. Includes aggravated vehicle taking, theft of and from a vehicle and interfering with a motor vehicle.

6. Excludes offences involving the use of air weapons and offences recorded by British Transport Police.

The offence group headings shown in this table, and their ordering, correspond with those used in table 2.04 of the annual bulletin (Walker *et al.* (2009)).



**Table B3 Number of recorded crimes in the year to June 2009 compared with the previous year**

Number of crimes recorded by the police (000s) <sup>1,2</sup>	Recorded Crime							
	Jul-Sep 2007	Oct-Dec 2007	Jan-Mar 2008	Apr-Jun 2008	Jul-Sep 2008	Oct-Dec 2008	Jan-Mar 2009	Apr-Jun 2009
Offence group								
<i>Violence against the person - with injury</i> <sup>3</sup>	119.4	108.4	103.7	110.5	110.1	100.5	99.8	110.6
<i>Violence against the person - without injury</i> <sup>4</sup>	133.5	122.6	118.3	126.2	126.5	116.9	112.9	122.8
Total violence against the person offences	252.9	231.0	222.0	236.7	236.6	217.5	212.7	233.3
<i>Most serious sexual crime</i>	11.1	9.5	10.1	11.0	10.3	9.7	9.7	10.9
<i>Other sexual offences</i>	3.3	2.5	2.9	3.1	3.0	2.2	2.4	3.0
Total sexual offences	14.4	12.1	12.9	14.1	13.3	11.9	12.1	13.9
<i>Robbery of business property</i>	1.9	2.5	2.6	2.0	2.0	2.7	2.7	2.0
<i>Robbery of personal property</i>	18.2	18.5	18.0	17.5	17.6	18.0	17.7	17.7
Total robbery offences	20.0	21.0	20.6	19.5	19.6	20.6	20.4	19.6
<i>Total burglary in a dwelling</i>	66.9	72.5	74.4	65.2	69.5	75.5	74.2	67.0
<i>Total burglary in a building other than a dwelling</i>	72.9	72.6	76.4	73.7	75.0	75.3	73.2	74.8
Total burglary offences	139.8	145.1	150.8	138.9	144.5	150.7	147.4	141.7
Offences against vehicles <sup>5</sup>	163.6	159.3	163.4	152.2	153.7	148.2	137.8	133.8
Other theft offences	288.0	271.7	259.2	287.1	285.4	261.1	246.4	277.9
<i>Of which:</i>								
<i>Theft from the person</i>	25.1	25.7	23.2	21.6	21.7	24.7	21.6	22.8
<i>Theft or unauthorised taking of a pedal cycle</i>	29.5	25.3	20.2	25.9	32.4	25.7	20.2	31.6
Fraud and forgery offences	37.8	36.8	40.6	44.3	43.8	38.0	37.1	39.7
Criminal damage offences	250.0	256.6	258.5	243.2	230.9	232.3	229.9	231.5
<b>Total property crime</b>	<b>879.1</b>	<b>869.6</b>	<b>872.6</b>	<b>865.8</b>	<b>858.4</b>	<b>830.2</b>	<b>798.6</b>	<b>824.6</b>
Drug offences	56.3	58.8	59.2	60.9	62.3	62.5	57.8	58.3
Other miscellaneous offences	18.0	16.3	17.1	18.8	18.6	16.8	16.9	18.4
<b>Total recorded crime - all offences</b>	<b>1,240.7</b>	<b>1,208.7</b>	<b>1,204.3</b>	<b>1,215.8</b>	<b>1,208.7</b>	<b>1,159.5</b>	<b>1,118.4</b>	<b>1,168.3</b>
<i>of which: Firearm offences</i> <sup>6</sup>	2.9	2.4	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.0	2.0	2.0

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

2. The figures given in the table are the latest available. They may therefore differ slightly from figures published in previous bulletins.

3. Includes homicide, attempted murder, intentional destruction of viable unborn child, causing death by dangerous driving/careless driving when under the influence of drink or drugs, more serious wounding or other act endangering life (including grievous bodily harm with and without intent), causing death by aggravated vehicle taking and less serious wounding offences.

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

5. Includes aggravated vehicle taking, theft of and from a vehicle and interfering with a motor vehicle.

6. Excludes offences involving the use of air weapons and offences recorded by British Transport Police. Includes crimes recorded by police where a firearm has been fired, used as a blunt instrument against a person or used as a threat.

The offence group headings shown in this table, and their ordering, correspond with those used in table 2.04 of the annual bulletin (Walker *et al.* (2009)).

## References

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**Povey, D. (Ed.), Coleman, K., Kaiza, P. and Roe, S.** (2009). *Homicide, Firearm Offences and Intimate Violence 2007/08: Supplementary Volume 2 to Crime in England and Wales 2007/08*. Home Office Statistical Bulletin 02/09. London: Home Office.  
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## Further information

Copies of other Home Office publications are available from the Research Development and Statistics internet pages: <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/>

For further information about Home Office crime statistics and crime statistics publications including police recorded crime, please e-mail [crimestats.rds@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:crimestats.rds@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk) or write to Home Office Statistics, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, Peel Building, 2 Marsham Street, London, SW1P 4DF.

For further information about the British Crime Survey or about any publications relating to the British Crime Survey please e-mail: [bcinfo.rds@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:bcinfo.rds@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk) or write to Crime Surveys Programme, Home Office Statistics, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, Peel Building, 2 Marsham Street, London, SW1P 4DF.

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