



Home Office

Home Office Statistical Bulletin



Crime in England and Wales: Quarterly Update to June 2011

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Crime in England and Wales:

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This Quarterly Update presents the most recent crime statistics from two different sources: the British Crime Survey (BCS) and police recorded crime. Neither source provides a total count of crime and each has its strengths and weaknesses. However, by presenting findings from the two series together we aim to present a fuller picture of crime in England and Wales. For further information about the statistical sources refer to the [User Guide to Home Office Crime Statistics](#) (Home Office, 2011). The Update focuses on the latest figures and short-term trends; discussion of longer-term trends can be found in 'Crime in England and Wales 2010/11' ([Chaplin et al.](#), 2011).

The BCS results are based on interviews conducted in the year ending June 2011. Recorded crime figures relate to crimes recorded by the police in the year ending June 2011.

MAIN POINTS

- Based on British Crime Survey (BCS) interviews in the year to June 2011, there was no statistically significant change in the estimated number of crimes compared with the year ending June 2010. However, the number of crimes recorded by the police fell by four per cent in the year ending June 2011 compared with a year earlier.
- In the year ending June 2011, there were decreases in all the main police recorded crime offence groups except robbery and other theft offences (which increased by 3% and 5% respectively). There was a two per cent rise in the most serious sexual crimes recorded by the police compared with the previous year.
- Levels of overall BCS household crime and BCS personal crimes showed no statistically significant change compared with the previous year. However, BCS household acquisitive crime increased by seven per cent. This increase was largely attributable to a 13 per cent rise in other household theft.
- Police recorded domestic burglaries fell by three per cent while the apparent ten per cent rise in BCS estimates was not statistically significant. There was no change in the level of other burglaries recorded by the police.
- Levels of BCS violent crime showed no statistically significant change compared with the previous year while violence against the person offences recorded by the police fell by eight per cent.
- Both series showed marked falls in vandalism offences, with BCS vandalism down nine per cent compared with the previous year and police recorded criminal damage down 12 per cent.
- There was a 16 per cent fall in firearm offences recorded by the police compared with the previous 12 months.
- BCS interviews showed that 54 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, up from 52 per cent in the previous year.

This statistical bulletin is a National Statistics output produced to the highest professional standards and free from political interference. It has been produced by staff working in the Home Office Statistics Unit in accordance with the Home Office's Statement of Compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics which covers our policy on revisions and other matters. The governance arrangements in the Home Office for statistics were strengthened on 1 April 2008 to place the statistical teams under the direct line management of a Chief Statistician, who reports to the National Statistician with respect to all professional statistical matters. Future responsibility for the compilation and publication of these statistics will transfer to the Office for National Statistics in April 2012.

LEVELS OF CRIME

This Quarterly Update presents the most recent crime statistics for England and Wales from two different sources: the British Crime Survey (BCS) and police recorded crime. Neither source provides a total count of crime and each has its strengths and weaknesses. The Update focuses on the latest figures and short-term trends; discussion of longer-term trends can be found in 'Crime in England and Wales 2010/11' ([Chaplin et al.](#), 2011). It should be noted that in this Quarterly Update, nine months of the data reported on overlap with the data contained in the annual bulletin; this Quarterly Update covers data for the 12 months from July 2010 to June 2011 while the annual volume reported on data for April 2010 to March 2011. The Update does not cover the period of the riots and disturbances in some areas in August 2011.

Based on BCS interviews in the year to June 2011, the estimate of the number of incidents of BCS crime was not statistically significantly different compared with the year ending June 2010 – the apparent two per cent rise was not statistically significant¹ (Figure 1 and Table 1). However, the overall level of notifiable² crime recorded by the police in the year ending June 2011 decreased by four per cent compared with the previous year (Figure 2 and Table 2).

BCS interviews for the year to June 2011 showed no statistically significant change in the levels of violence compared with the year to June 2010 (the apparent 3% increase was not statistically significant). Neither were the apparent changes in the two sub-categories of BCS violence (violence with and without injury) statistically significant. The level of violence against the person³ recorded by the police showed an eight per cent fall compared with the previous year which reflects reductions in both main sub-categories of violence; police recorded violence with injury decreased by nine per cent and police recorded violence without injury fell by six per cent.

Police recorded robbery figures showed a three per cent rise from 74,887 to 76,786 offences in the year ending June 2011 compared with the previous year. The number of robberies involving knives also showed a rise of seven per cent in the year ending June 2011, 14,980 offences compared with 13,994 offences recorded in the previous 12 months (excludes West Midlands Police⁴). More details are presented in Annex A.

There was a two per cent rise in the most serious sexual crimes⁵ recorded by the police compared with the previous year, up from 44,415 to 45,498. This continues the pattern of increases in reporting and recording of such crimes seen since 2009, although the rate of increase appears to be slowing. It is known that a high proportion of sexual offences are not reported to the police and increases in recorded figures may represent improved reporting rates rather than increasing victimisation. For these reasons caution should be used when looking at trends in these crimes (for more information see [Chaplin et al.](#), 2011). Other sexual offences⁶ were down by 14 per cent, from 10,682 to 9,227, resulting in a small decline in the overall category of sexual offences (down by 1%).

¹ See Section 8 of the [User Guide to Home Office Crime Statistics](#) for more information on statistical significance.

² Notifiable offences include all offences that could possibly be tried by a jury (these include some less serious offences, such as minor theft that would not usually be dealt with in this way) plus a few additional closely related offences, such as assault without injury.

³ Police recorded violence against the person does not include sexual offences or robbery.

⁴ Recording practice in West Midlands Police changed during the comparison period. See Annex A for further details.

⁵ Includes rape, sexual assault, sexual activity with children/vulnerable people. See Appendix 2 of the [User Guide](#) for full listing.

⁶ Includes voyeurism, exposure, prostitution-related offences and other consensual acts. See Appendix 2 of the [User Guide](#) for full listing.

Provisional figures⁷ for firearm offences recorded by the police continue to show they account for 0.2 per cent of all recorded crime. There was a 16 per cent fall in firearm offences from 7,959 to 6,689 in the year to June 2011, compared with the previous year.

The apparent ten per cent increase in levels of domestic burglaries estimated from the BCS was not statistically significant. This follows the 14 per cent increase reported in the year to March 2011. As noted above, these latest figures include a considerable overlap with the figures reported in the annual crime statistics publication (see [Chaplin et al.](#), 2011) in that interviews conducted between July 2010 and March 2011 contribute to estimates for both periods. The latest figures suggest it is still too early to be confident there has been a real change in the medium-term trend for BCS burglary which has been relatively stable since 2004/05. Police recorded crime figures showed a fall of three per cent in domestic burglaries compared with the previous year; other burglaries recorded by the police showed no change from the previous year.

There was no statistically significant change in the level of vehicle-related theft compared with the previous year according to BCS interviews for the year to June 2011. There was an eight per cent fall in police recorded offences against vehicles⁸ in the year ending June 2011 compared with the previous year.

Both sources provide some evidence of increases in lower-level theft offences, such as pick-pocketing and theft of unattended property. The police recorded crime category of other theft showed a five per cent increase in the year ending June 2011 compared with a year earlier. BCS interviews showed a 13 per cent increase in other household theft from the previous year following a period of general stability since 2004/05. There is some overlap between the police recorded crime category of other theft and BCS other household theft. However, there are important differences in the coverage of the categories: police recorded crime figures for other theft include offences such as theft from the person, shoplifting, bicycle theft, and theft of unattended property (including both offences against individuals and against organisations)⁹. By definition, the category of BCS other household theft is restricted to the household population and comprises items stolen from outside the victim's home, for example from the garden. It also includes burglaries of non-connected buildings, such as sheds, and thefts in the victim's dwelling by someone entitled to be there, for example a workman.

The apparent seven per cent increase in BCS theft from the person (i.e. pick-pocketing and snatch theft) was not statistically significant. There was a five per cent increase in the number of such offences recorded by the police. The apparent increase in BCS other theft of personal property (4%) was also not statistically significant.

There was a two per cent rise in police recorded offences of bicycle theft. There was no difference in the number of incidents of BCS bicycle theft.

The two series are consistent in showing falls in criminal damage/vandalism in the year to June 2011. Police recorded criminal damage showed a marked decrease of 12 per cent and the BCS estimates of vandalism showed a fall of nine per cent.

Drug offences recorded by the police fell by one per cent in the year ending June 2011 compared with the previous year. These recorded crime statistics are heavily influenced by policing priorities, and may reflect changes in the policing of drug crime more than real changes in its incidence. The BCS is used to monitor trends in drug use and figures are published annually (for more information see [Smith and Flatley](#), 2011).

⁷ These firearm offences cover those where a firearm has been fired, used as a blunt instrument against a person or used as a threat. These figures exclude offences involving air weapons.

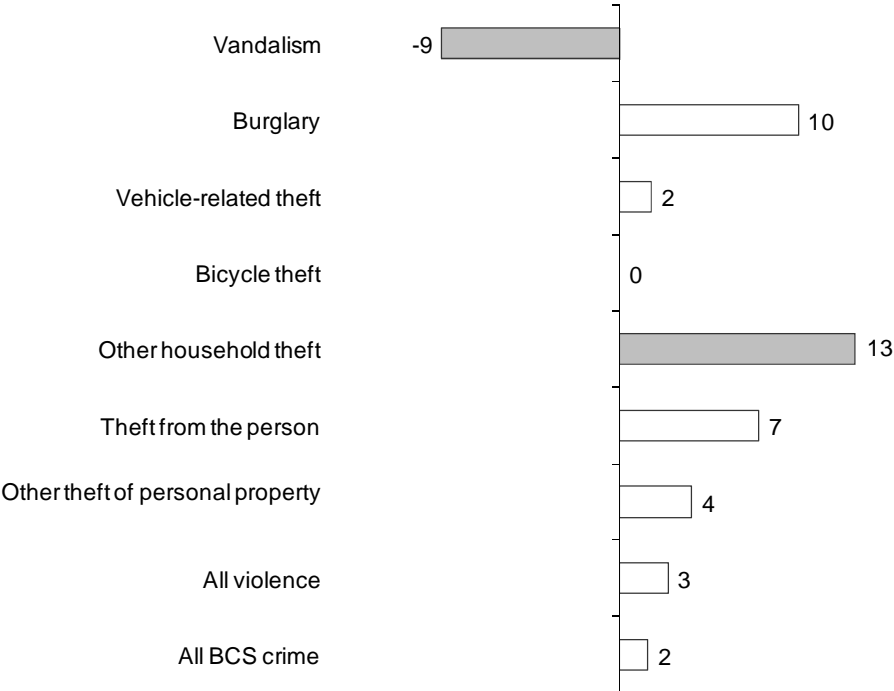
⁸ Theft of and from a vehicle, aggravated vehicle taking and interfering with a motor vehicle.

⁹ See Appendix 2 of the [User Guide](#) for full listing.

Fraud and forgery offences recorded by the police showed a five per cent fall in the year ending June 2011, compared with a year earlier. Fraud offences are known to be substantially under-reported to the police and are not covered in the main BCS crime count. However, supplementary questions from the BCS, together with figures supplied by the financial industry, are now used in the annual crime statistics publication to provide a more comprehensive picture as to the scale and trend of fraudulent transactions (for more information see [Chaplin *et al.*, 2011](#)). New questions on other aspects of fraud have been developed and were added to the British Crime Survey from April 2011.¹⁰

¹⁰ First results from these questions will be available in 2012.

Figure 1 Percentage change in BCS crime based on interviews in the year to June 2011 compared with the previous year



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 the User Guide to Home Office Crime Statistics (Home Office, 2011) for more information on statistical significance.

Figure 2 Percentage change in numbers of recorded crimes in the year to June 2011 compared with the previous year

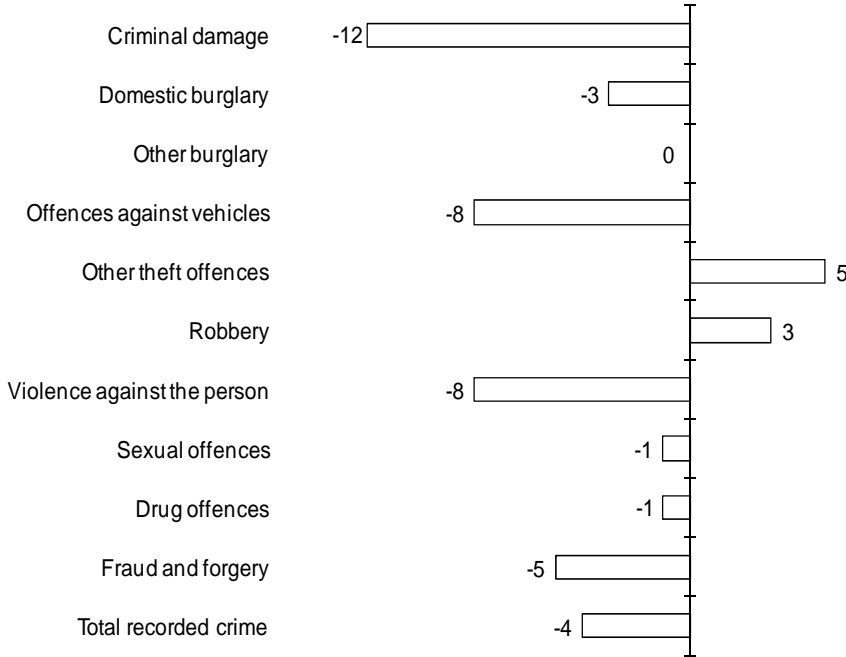


Table 1 Number of crimes and risk of being a victim based on BCS interviews in the year to June 2011 compared with the previous year

England and Wales, BCS				
	Interviews from July 2009 to June 2010	Interviews from July 2010 to June 2011	% change between years	Statistically significant change ¹
<i>Number of incidents (000s) and percentage change²</i>				
Vandalism	2,345	2,123	-9	**
Burglary	678	743	10	
Vehicle-related theft	1,207	1,227	2	
Bicycle theft	498	500	0	
Other household theft	1,167	1,314	13	**
Household acquisitive crime	3,550	3,785	7	**
ALL HOUSEHOLD CRIME	5,895	5,908	0	
<i>Unweighted base - household crime</i>	<i>45,109</i>	<i>47,401</i>		
Theft from the person	535	575	7	
Other theft of personal property	1,036	1,076	4	
All violence	2,100	2,154	3	
<i>with injury</i>	<i>1,055</i>	<i>1,156</i>	<i>10</i>	
<i>without injury</i>	<i>1,045</i>	<i>998</i>	<i>-4</i>	
Personal acquisitive crime	1,898	1,892	0	
ALL PERSONAL CRIME	3,670	3,805	4	
<i>Unweighted base - personal crime</i>	<i>45,060</i>	<i>47,427</i>		
ALL BCS CRIME	9,566	9,713	2	
<i>Percentage risk of being a victim once or more and percentage point change³</i>				
Vandalism	6.6	6.1	-0.5	**
Burglary	2.3	2.5	0.2	
Vehicle-related theft ⁴	5.6	5.5	-0.1	
Bicycle theft ⁵	4.1	4.0	-0.1	
Other household theft	3.9	4.3	0.4	**
Household acquisitive crime	11.3	11.8	0.5	**
ALL HOUSEHOLD CRIME	16.4	16.5	0.1	
<i>Unweighted base - household crime</i>	<i>45,109</i>	<i>47,401</i>		
Theft from the person	1.1	1.2	0.1	
Other theft of personal property	2.0	2.1	0.1	
All violence	3.0	3.1	0.1	
<i>with injury</i>	<i>1.6</i>	<i>1.7</i>	<i>0.2</i>	
<i>without injury</i>	<i>1.6</i>	<i>1.5</i>	<i>-0.1</i>	
Personal acquisitive crime	3.5	3.6	0.1	
ALL PERSONAL CRIME	5.7	6.0	0.3	
<i>Unweighted base - personal crime</i>	<i>45,060</i>	<i>47,427</i>		
ALL BCS CRIME	21.5	21.8	0.3	

1. 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 is used). See Section 8 of the User Guide for more information on statistical significance.

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

3. 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.

4. 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.

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

6. For more information about the crime types included in this table, see Section 5 of the User Guide.

Table 2 Recorded crimes¹ in the year to June 2011 compared with the previous year

Numbers and percentage changes	England and Wales, recorded crime		
	12 months to June 2010	12 months to June 2011	% change between years
Offence group			
Violence against the person offences	862,638	796,913	-8
<i>Violence against the person - with injury²</i>	392,531	356,348	-9
<i>Violence against the person - without injury³</i>	470,107	440,565	-6
Sexual offences	55,097	54,725	-1
<i>Most serious sexual crime</i>	44,415	45,498	2
<i>Other sexual offences</i>	10,682	9,227	-14
Robbery offences	74,887	76,786	3
<i>Robbery of business property</i>	8,076	7,388	-9
<i>Robbery of personal property</i>	66,811	69,398	4
Burglary offences	528,457	518,954	-2
<i>Burglary in a dwelling</i>	263,606	255,165	-3
<i>Burglary in a building other than a dwelling</i>	264,851	263,789	0
Offences against vehicles	479,148	440,878	-8
<i>Theft or unauthorised taking of a motor vehicle</i>	113,583	102,999	-9
<i>Theft from a vehicle</i>	330,561	308,896	-7
<i>Interfering with a motor vehicle</i>	35,004	28,983	-17
Other theft offences ⁴	1,041,742	1,090,752	5
<i>of which:</i>			
<i>Theft from the person</i>	91,433	95,868	5
<i>Theft or unauthorised taking of a pedal cycle</i>	108,828	111,398	2
Fraud and forgery offences	151,616	144,032	-5
Criminal damage offences	768,446	677,318	-12
TOTAL PROPERTY CRIME	2,969,409	2,871,934	-3
Drug offences	235,280	231,778	-1
Other miscellaneous offences	70,441	64,581	-8
TOTAL RECORDED CRIME - ALL OFFENCES	4,267,752	4,096,717	-4
<i>of which: Firearm offences⁵</i>	7,959	6,689	-16

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

2. 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.

3. 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).

4. Other theft includes a range of offences, including shoplifting and abstraction of electricity. The two sub-headings given here are provided for comparison purposes as they correspond to BCS categories.

5. Firearm offences are provisional. Excludes offences involving the use of air weapons and offences recorded by the 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 2011, the proportion of people with a high level of perceived anti-social behaviour in their local area remained at 14 per cent. Of the seven indicators that make up the composite measure, three showed a decrease since the previous year: abandoned or burnt-out cars, teenagers hanging around and vandalism or graffiti. The other indicators for problems with noisy neighbours or loud parties, people being drunk or rowdy in public places, people using or dealing drugs and rubbish or litter lying around showed no statistically significant change (Table 3).

Table 3 Anti-social behaviour indicators

Percentages	England and Wales, BCS		
	Interviews from July 2009 to June 2010	Interviews from July 2010 to June 2011	Statistically significant change ¹
	<i>Percentage</i>		
High level of perceived anti-social behaviour²	14	14	
	<i>Percentage saying very/fairly big problem in their area</i>		
Abandoned or burnt-out cars	5	4	**
Noisy neighbours or loud parties	11	11	
People being drunk or rowdy in public places	24	24	
People using or dealing drugs	26	26	
Teenagers hanging around on the streets	27	25	**
Rubbish or litter lying around	28	28	
Vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage to property	22	21	**
<i>Unweighted base³</i>	<i>42,594</i>	<i>39,219</i>	

1 Statistically significant change at the 5% level is indicated by a double asterisk. For more information on statistical significance, see Section 8 of the User Guide.

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

3. Unweighted base refers to high level of perceived anti-social behaviour. Bases for each individual strand will be similar. From April 2011, the number of respondents asked questions about their perceptions of ASB has been reduced from a full sample to a half sample.

Based on the BCS interviews during the 12 months to June 2011, the proportion of adults with a high level of worry about burglary, car crime and violent crime showed no statistically significant change when compared with the previous 12 months (Table 4).

Table 4 Worry about crime

Percentages	England and Wales, BCS		
	Interviews from July 2009 to June 2010	Interviews from July 2010 to June 2011	Statistically significant change ¹
	<i>Percentage with high level of worry about²:</i>		
Burglary	10	11	
Car crime	10	10	
Violent crime	13	13	
<i>Unweighted base³</i>	<i>11,282</i>	<i>11,792</i>	

1. Statistically significant change at the 5% level is indicated by a double asterisk. For more information on statistical significance, see Section 8 of the User Guide.

2. For more information about the worry about crime measures in this table, see Section 6 of the User Guide.

3. Unweighted base refers 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 only on those residing in households owning, or with regular use of, a vehicle.

BCS interviews in the year to June 2011 showed that 54 per cent of people agreed that the police and local council were dealing with the anti-social behaviour and crime issues that matter in their area, an increase from 52 per cent in the 12 months to June 2010 (Table 5).

The proportion of people who thought that the police in their local area did a good or excellent job showed an increase in the 12 months to June 2011 compared with the same period in the previous year (from 57% to 60%) (Table 5). This continues an upward trend since this question was introduced to the survey in 2005/06 (when 50% of people thought the local police did a good or excellent job). For more information on perceptions of police see [Scribbins et al. \(2010\)](#).

Based on interviews in the year to June 2011, 43 per cent of people were confident that the Criminal Justice System (CJS) as a whole was effective, an increase from 41 per cent in the year to June 2010. BCS interviews also showed that 62 per cent of people thought that the CJS as a whole was fair, up from 60 per cent in the previous year (Table 5).

Table 5 Confidence in the police and CJS

Percentages	England and Wales, BCS		
	Interviews from July 2009 to June 2010	Interviews from July 2010 to June 2011	Statistically significant change ¹
	<i>Percentage agreeing²</i>		
Police and local council are dealing with the anti-social behaviour and crime issues that matter in the local area	52	54	**
<i>Unweighted base</i>	43,841	46,050	
Police in the local area doing a good or excellent job	57	60	**
Police are dealing with the things that matter to people in the community	56	59	**
<i>Unweighted base³</i>	44,126	46,292	
	<i>Percentage confident⁴</i>		
The CJS as a whole is effective	41	43	**
The CJS as a whole is fair	60	62	**
<i>Unweighted base⁵</i>	43,542	39,843	

1. Statistically significant change at the 5% level is indicated by a double asterisk. For more information on statistical significance, see Section 8 of the User Guide.

2. Percentage saying they 'strongly agree' or 'tend to agree'.

3. Unweighted base refers to police doing a good or excellent job. Base for the other measure will be similar.

4. Percentage saying they are 'very confident' or 'fairly confident'.

5. Unweighted base refers to effectiveness of the CJS. Base for the other measure will be similar. From April 2011, the number of respondents asked questions relating to their perceptions of the CJS has been reduced from a full sample to a half sample.

NOTES

The latest British Crime Survey (BCS) figures presented in the bulletin are based on interviews with adults aged 16 or over resident in households in England and Wales conducted between July 2010 and June 2011 (BCS year ending June 2011) and incidents experienced by survey respondents in the 12 months prior to their interview. BCS results for the year ending June 2011 are compared with the results from the interviews in the year ending June 2010.

The BCS fieldwork was carried out by TNS-BMRB. In the year ending March 2011, the BCS had a nationally representative sample of 46,754 adults with a response rate of 76 per cent.¹¹ The survey is weighted to adjust for possible non-response bias and to ensure the sample reflects the profile of the general population. Being based on a sample survey, BCS estimates are subject to a margin of error. Unless stated otherwise, all changes in BCS estimates described in the main text are statistically significant. For more information on statistical significance and confidence intervals for BCS data, see Section 8 of the [User Guide to Home Office Crime Statistics](#) (Home Office, 2011).

The BCS now also covers crimes against children aged 10 to 15 but these are not included in this bulletin. Experimental statistics on the victimisation of children are shown separately for 2009/10 and 2010/11 in the relevant chapters of 'Crime in England and Wales 2010/11' (see [Chaplin et al.](#), 2011).

Recorded crime figures relate to crimes recorded by the police in England and Wales in the 12 months to June 2011. Unlike the BCS, they do not include crimes that have not been reported to the police or those that the police decide not to record, but they do cover crimes against those aged under 16, organisations such as businesses, and crimes 'against the state' i.e. with no immediate victim, for example, possession of drugs.

Police recorded crime figures have been subject to a data reconciliation process with individual forces but remain provisional as forces can revise figures during the financial year. The annual National Statistics on police recorded crime at police force level are published as part of the annual bulletin in July each year after a fuller reconciliation and quality assurance process has been completed by the Home Office Statistics Unit in liaison with individual police forces.

Additional data

This bulletin shows national figures for the 12 months to June 2011. Also available are:

- National recorded crime data for individual quarters.
- Figures at police force area level. These statistics cover a range of recorded crime offence groups and BCS findings on confidence in the police.
- Recorded crime figures on a rolling 12-month basis going back to 2002/03 at police force and local authority area level.

All of the above can be accessed at: <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/science-research-statistics/research-statistics/crime-research/hosb0611/>

Police forces also make their own provisional crime data available at street level on a monthly basis via a central portal (www.police.uk). These are not National Statistics and final quality assured figures appearing in National Statistics outputs may differ from these provisional figures.

¹¹ Based on BCS interviews achieved during the year ending March 2011. The response rate for the year ending June 2011 cannot be calculated as finalised response figures are not available.

Changes to crime statistics

In January 2011, the Home Secretary announced a Review of Crime Statistics to be undertaken by the National Statistician, Jil Matheson. On 6 June 2011, the National Statistician published her Review, a copy of which is available at:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/national-statistician/ns-reports--reviews-and-guidance/national-statistician-s-reviews/national-statistician-s-review-of-crime-statistics.html>

One of the eight recommendations was that responsibility for the publication of the crime statistics should move to an independent body, the Office for National Statistics (ONS). The ONS will also assume responsibility for the management of the British Crime Survey.

The Government accepted the recommendations of the National Statistician in a Written Ministerial Statement available at:

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/about-us/parliamentary-business/written-ministerial-statement/response-review-crime-stats-wms/?view=Standard&pubID=926470>

The transfer of responsibilities to ONS will take effect from 1 April 2012. Announcements regarding the future publication of the crime statistics will be made in due course.

British Crime Survey: change of name

The name of the survey will be changed from 1 April 2012 to better reflect the survey's geographical coverage (England and Wales, rather than Britain). A final decision will be made in the new year, but current proposals include, but are not limited to: the England and Wales Crime Survey, the National Crime Survey for England and Wales and the National Crime Survey. We welcome the views of users.

Consultations

Ceasing data collection at Basic Command Unit level

The Coalition Agreement proposed to cut police bureaucracy and as part of this there has been a review of requirements for police forces to submit data to the Home Office. This has already resulted in reductions to the coverage, detail and frequency of a number of data collections not affecting National Statistics outputs. It has also been proposed that from April 2012 police forces should no longer be required to submit monthly totals of recorded crimes and detections at Basic Command Unit (BCU) level. In the past, BCU level recorded crime and detections figures have been released annually alongside the July crime statistics publication. Recorded crime data will continue to be published at Police Force and Community Safety Partnership (CSP) level on a quarterly basis, and detections data will continue to be published at Force level on an annual basis.

BCUs reflect the organisational structure of a force, with each BCU covering a particular geographic area. As they reflect management structures, BCU boundaries can change frequently, which can reduce the statistical utility of data collected at this level. A number of smaller forces have discontinued the BCU model altogether, operating in effect as single BCU forces. CSPs provide a more stable basis for statistical analysis at a similar geographic granularity and also have the advantage of aligning to local authority boundaries for which other data sets are generally available.

Please send any comments on these proposals to crimestats@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk by 12 January 2012.

Consultations (continued)

Proposed changes to recorded crime classifications and presentation of recorded crime statistics

When the Home Secretary commissioned the National Statistician to undertake an independent review of crime statistics for England and Wales in December 2010, the terms of reference asked her to consider “whether or not the categories of notifiable offences for police recorded crime reported in the national statistics can be sensibly rationalised without reducing public trust or damaging transparency”. The National Statistician found that there may be some scope to reduce the number of crime categories used for the reporting and collection of police recorded crime, and to consider how some offences currently excluded from notifiable crime might be reflected in published crime statistics. The National Statistician also stated that any change must be managed and introduced in a controlled and transparent way. She recommended that the issue should be considered by the new independent Advisory Committee on crime statistics that her Report also recommended be established. To inform the Committee’s consideration of these proposals, which will have an impact on the collection and presentation of crime statistics, producers and users are invited to comment on the proposals outlined in the consultation paper available at:

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/science-research/about-home-office-science/consultations/>

Please send any comments on these proposals to crimestats@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk by 12 January 2012. Early responses will be able to be considered as part of the Advisory Committee’s initial deliberations on these proposals.

Changes to BCS sample design from April 2012

The Government’s Comprehensive Spending Review, which reported in October 2010, led to a reduction in Home Office budgets and resulted in a reduction in available expenditure for the BCS from April 2012 onwards. Given the main component of BCS costs is interviewer fees and expenses, a reduction in the actual sample size is required. The Home Office is proposing a reduction in the annual sample size of the BCS from a nationally representative achieved sample of 46,000 adults (aged 16 or over) to 35,000 adults. This will reduce the number of achieved interviews with children (aged 10 to 15 years) from 4,000 to 3,100 per year. A new sample design is proposed that will preserve the ability to produce estimates with reasonable levels of precision at police force area level based on a minimum sample of 650 interviews with adults per year.

This proposal follows methodological work which considers the feasibility of boosting police force area sample sizes by re-contacting BCS respondents using different modes of data collection. A report outlining this work is available at:

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/science-research/research-statistics/crime/crime-statistics/bcs-methodology/>

Users are invited to consider the proposals outlined in the consultation paper available at:

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/science-research/about-home-office-science/consultations/>

Please send any comments on these proposals to crimestats@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk by 12 January 2012.

Annex A: Violent and sexual offences involving the use of knives and other sharp instruments

In the 12 months to June 2011, the police recorded 32,614 offences involving a knife or sharp instrument.¹² Due to a change in recording practice in 2010/11, for consistency over time the knife and sharp instrument offences data reported in the remainder of this section exclude West Midlands Police unless otherwise stated.¹³

Overall, there has been a two per cent decrease in knife offences compared with the 12 months to June 2010. This is largely due to falls in the number of grievous bodily harm (GBH) and actual bodily harm (ABH) offences involving the use of a knife or sharp instrument, which fell by nine per cent between June 2010 and June 2011 (from 13,871 to 12,577). Threat to kill offences involving the use of a knife or sharp instrument also fell, by 14 per cent (from 1,515 to 1,303). In contrast, robbery offences involving the use of a knife or sharp instrument increased by seven per cent over the same period (from 13,994 to 14,980). This is a greater proportional increase than for all robbery offences recorded by the police (up 3%).

The relatively low number of homicides, attempted murders, rapes and sexual assaults that involve the use of a knife or sharp instrument means that care should be taken when comparing these figures over time.

- Provisional data show that there were 205 knife or sharp instrument homicides in the 12 months to June 2011, compared with 206 the previous year.
- There were 209 knife or sharp instrument attempted murders in the 12 months to June 2011 compared with 229 in the 12 months to June 2010.

The proportion of selected violent offences involving a knife or sharp instrument in the 12 months to June 2011 (7%) was one percentage point higher than in the 12 months to June 2010 (6%).

¹² The offences covered in this collection are attempted murder, threats to kill, actual bodily harm, grievous bodily harm, robbery, rape and sexual assaults. Homicide figures are taken from the Homicide Index.

¹³ West Midlands Police included unbroken bottle and glass offences in their returns until April 2010 but now exclude these offences in line with other forces. As such, their data are not comparable across this period. See Section 5.1 of the [User Guide](#).

Table A1 Number and proportion of selected violent and sexual offences involving knives or sharp instruments¹ recorded by the police in the 12 months to June 2011, compared with the previous 12 months

Selected offence type	England and Wales, ² Recorded crime				
	Number of selected offences involving a knife or sharp instrument		% change June 2010 to June 2011	Proportion of selected offences involving a knife or sharp instrument	
	Year ending June 2010	Year ending June 2011		Year ending June 2010	Year ending June 2011
<i>Excluding West Midlands^{3,4}</i>					
Attempted murder	229	209	-9	48	46
Threats to kill	1,515	1,303	-14	16	15
Actual bodily harm & grievous bodily harm ⁵	13,871	12,577	-9	4	4
Robbery	13,994	14,980	7	21	22
Rape	235	245	4	2	2
Sexual assault ⁶	78	100	28	0	0
Total selected offences	29,922	29,414	-2	6	7
Homicide ⁷	206	205	0	45	48
Total selected offences including homicide	30,128	29,619	-2	6	7
<i>Including West Midlands^{3,4}</i>					
Attempted murder	247	237	-	46	46
Threats to kill	1,571	1,343	-	16	15
Actual bodily harm & grievous bodily harm ⁵	15,311	13,585	-	4	4
Robbery	15,543	16,860	-	21	22
Rape	250	259	-	2	2
Sexual assault ⁶	83	103	-	0	0
Total selected offences	33,005	32,387	-	6	7
Homicide ⁷	217	227	-	45	49
Total selected offences including homicide	33,222	32,614	-	6	7

1. Police recorded knife and sharp instrument offences data are submitted via an additional special collection. Proportions of offences involving the use of a knife or sharp instrument presented in this table are calculated based on figures submitted in this special collection. Other offences exist that are not shown in this table that may include the use of a knife or sharp instrument.

2. Includes British Transport Police.

3. Three police forces include unbroken bottle and glass offences in their returns, which are outside the scope of this special collection. As such, data for these forces are not directly comparable to data for other forces. The three forces are: Surrey, Sussex and British Transport Police.

4. Data are shown excluding West Midlands as West Midlands included unbroken bottle and glass offences in their returns until April 2010 but now exclude these offences in line with other forces (see Section 5 of the User Guide). As such, their 2010/11 data are not comparable with their data for earlier years.

5. Includes wounding or carrying out an act endangering life.

6. Sexual assault includes indecent assault on a male/female and sexual assault on a male/female (all ages).

7. Includes provisional figures for April 2010 to March 2011. For April 2008 to March 2010, offences are those currently recorded by the police as at 28 September 2010 and are subject to revision as cases are dealt with by the police and by the courts, or as further information becomes available.

References

Chaplin, R., Flatley, J. and Smith, K. (Eds) (2011), *Crime in England and Wales 2010/11*. Home Office Statistical Bulletin 10/11 London: Home Office.

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<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/science-research-statistics/research-statistics/crime-research/hosb1211/?view=Standard&pubID=930399>

Further information

Copies of other Home Office publications are available from the Home Office Science Internet pages: <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/science-research/research-statistics/>

This includes the User Guide to Home Office Crime Statistics, a useful reference guide with explanatory notes regarding the issues and classifications which are key to the production and presentation of the crime statistics:

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/science-research-statistics/research-statistics/crime-research/user-guide-crime-statistics/>

The dates of forthcoming publications are pre-announced and can be found via the UK National Statistics Publication Hub: <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/hub/index.html>

For further information about the British Crime Survey and police recorded crime statistics, please email crimestats@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk or write to:

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