



Published 16<sup>th</sup> November 2017

## Criminal Justice Statistics quarterly, England and Wales, July 2016 to June 2017 (provisional)

### Main points

<b>1.69 million individuals dealt with by the CJS</b>	↓	The total number of individuals formally dealt with by the criminal justice system is at a record low level (period 1970 to the year to June 2017), at 1.69 million in the latest year.
<b>1.43 million defendants were prosecuted</b>	↓	The number prosecuted at magistrates' courts has fallen by 5% since the previous year. This was driven by a fall in both indictable and summary non-motoring prosecutions.
<b>The conviction ratio was 86%</b>	↑	The overall conviction ratio increased in the latest year to 86%, the highest in over a decade.
<b>For indictable offences, the custody rate was 31% and ACSL was 19.5 months</b>	↑	The custody rate for indictable offences has been increasing since June 2010, from 24% to 31%. Average custodial sentence length (ACSL) for indictable offences has increased from 15.3 months to 19.5 months since June 2007.
<b>Adult offenders are now more likely to receive some form of custody</b>		Adult offenders convicted for indictable offences are now more likely to receive some form of custody (52%), irrespective of their criminal history. 41% of adult offenders received some form of custody when convicted 10 years ago.

This publication gives criminal justice statistics for the latest 12 month period. These are presented alongside the same rolling 12 month periods for the previous 10 years, giving longer-term trends across comparable periods.

Trends should be interpreted with caution as the data presented are provisional and subject to change for the 2017 Criminal Justice Statistics annual bulletin, which is scheduled for publication in May 2018. For full and detailed commentary, please refer to the annual publication. For technical detail to the accompanying guide to criminal justice statistics.

An interactive Sankey diagram for offending histories can be found at:

[moj-analytical-services.github.io/criminal\\_history\\_sankey/index.html](http://moj-analytical-services.github.io/criminal_history_sankey/index.html)

**We are changing how our quarterly bulletins look, and would welcome any feedback to [commentary.champions@justice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:commentary.champions@justice.gsi.gov.uk)**

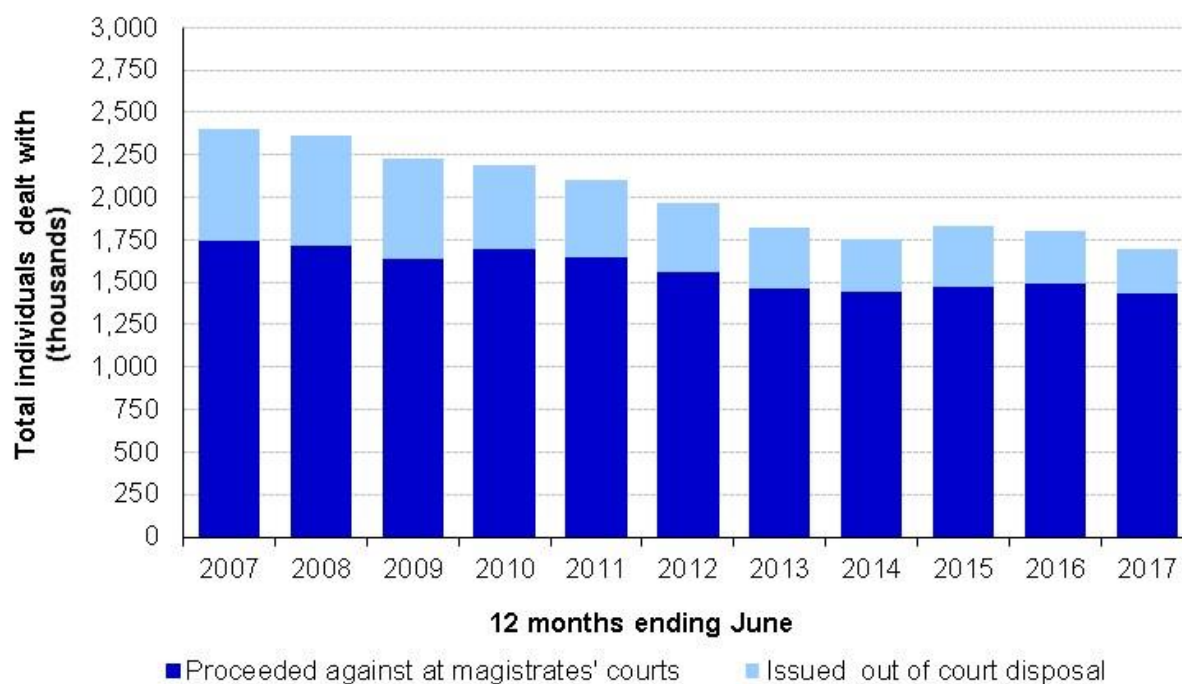
For other feedback related to the content of this publication, please let us know at [CJS\\_Statistics@justice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:CJS_Statistics@justice.gsi.gov.uk)

# 1. Overview of the Criminal Justice System

## 1.69 million individuals were dealt with by the CJS in the latest year

The total number of individuals<sup>1</sup> formally dealt with by the criminal justice system (CJS)<sup>2</sup> in England and Wales has been declining since 2007 to a record low, with 1.69 million individuals dealt with in the year ending June 2017 (see Figure 1).

**Figure 1: Individuals dealt with formally by the CJS<sup>3</sup>, 12 months ending June 2007 to June 2017 (Source: Table Q1.1 and historical data)**



The number of individuals formally dealt with by the CJS fell by 7% in the latest year. The number of individuals prosecuted at all courts fell by around 5%, which is broadly in line with the latest crime outcomes statistics published by the Home Office. These show that the number of police-recorded crimes where a suspect was charged by the police or summonsed fell by 6% in the latest year. This is despite a 13% increase in overall police-recorded crime (to 5.2 million offences), believed to be associated with improved recording among police forces and victims' greater willingness to report crimes. The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW), which includes crimes that do not come to the attention of the police, estimated 5.8 million incidents of crime<sup>4</sup> in the latest year, a reduction of 9% compared with the previous year. It also estimated there were 3.3 million fraud and 1.6 million computer misuse offences experienced by victims in the latest year.

<sup>1</sup> A single individual (includes people and companies) can be counted more than once in a given year if they are dealt with by the CJS on more than one separate occasion. Includes individuals prosecuted, given a caution, Penalty Notice for Disorder (PND) or cannabis/khat warning and community resolutions.

<sup>2</sup> The number of individuals formally dealt with by the CJS is the sum of all defendants prosecuted at magistrates' court plus all individuals issued an out of court disposal (including community resolutions).

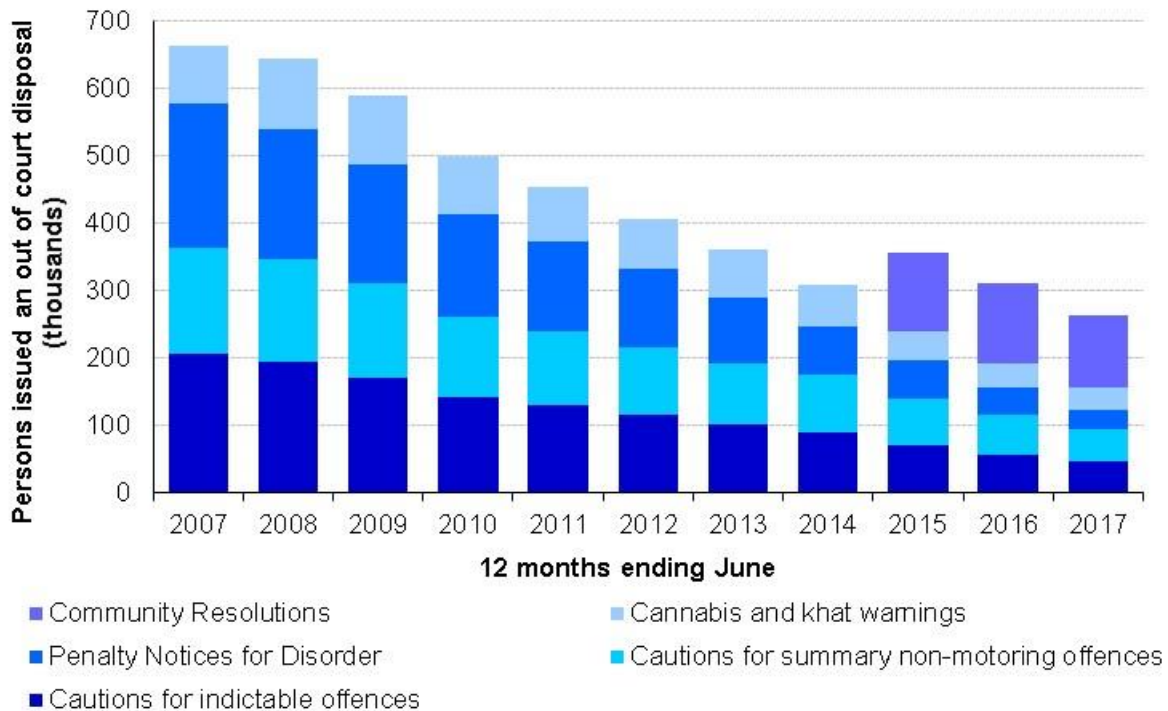
<sup>3</sup> Adding three years of community resolutions data causes the apparent increase in OOCs from the year ending June 2015, but the downward trend continued for each type of OOC throughout the period.

<sup>4</sup> This is the published figure for the overall change in police recorded crime. It may not align with the change shown in our overview tables, where we exclude fraud (for which method of collection changed between 2011 and 2013) for consistent comparisons over our time series. See the annual version of this publication for further discussion of the trend in police recorded crime.

## 2. Out of Court Disposals

The use of out of court disposals (OOCs) decreased by 47,500 (15%) in the year ending June 2017, with 263,200 individuals issued an OOC. This decreasing trend can be seen across all OOC types and continues the steady decline in the use of OOCs over the last ten years (excluding Community Resolutions<sup>5</sup>, see Figure 2). The decrease in the number of OOCs followed a number of policy changes relating to police practice and OOC availability<sup>6</sup>.

**Figure 2: Out of court disposals issued, by disposal, 12 months ending June 2007 to 12 months ending June 2017 (Source: Tables Q.1.1, Q2.1 & Q2.2 and historic data)**



The number of Penalty Notices for Disorder (PNDs) administered was 30,400, falling 27% from the previous year. The most common offences that resulted in a PND were 'drunk and disorderly', theft (under £100), possession of cannabis, and causing harassment, alarm or distress, and together these accounted for 91% of all PNDs.

The total number of cautions administered was 93,400, falling 19% from the previous year. Drug offences, theft and violence against the person were the most common indictable offences<sup>7</sup> for which an offender received a caution (accounting for 79% of all cautions for indictable offences). The overall cautioning rate<sup>8</sup> (among those cautioned or convicted excluding summary motoring offences) fell in the latest year from 13% to 12%.

The number of Community Resolutions administered was 107,100, decreasing 9% since the previous year.

<sup>5</sup> Separately identifiable data on community resolutions were first collected from police forces under the full crime outcomes framework introduced from April 2014. These have been incorporated where comparable years of data are available.

<sup>6</sup> See the annual version of this publication for further detail.

<sup>7</sup> The majority of information presented in this publication is on the principal offence and principal sentence. Where prosecutions involve more than one offence, the principal offence is reported. See the technical guide for more information.

<sup>8</sup> The cautioning rate is the proportion of offenders who were either cautioned or convicted (excluding convictions for motoring offences) that were given a caution.

### 3. Court prosecutions and convictions

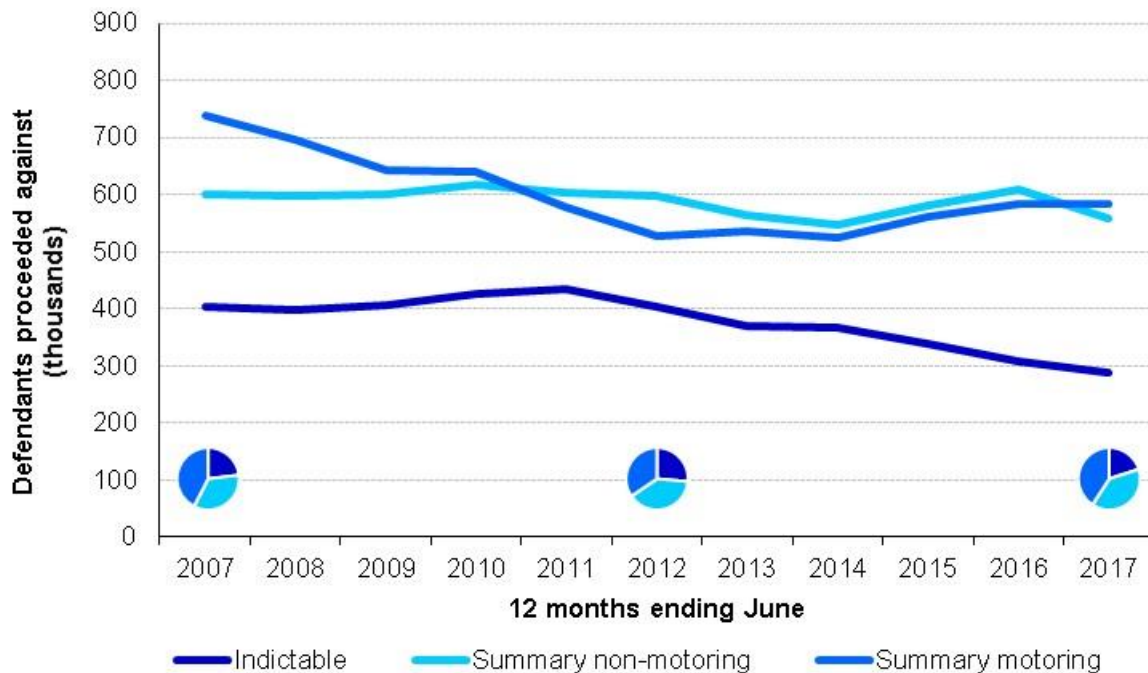
#### Overall, the number of defendants prosecuted fell to 1.43 million

In the 12 months ending June 2017, 1.43 million defendants were prosecuted at magistrates' courts, down from 1.50 million in the previous year. This was an overall fall of 5%, driven by falls in indictable and summary non-motoring offences (see Figure 3).

#### The conviction ratio increased to 86%

Although the total number of offenders convicted fell, the overall conviction ratio<sup>9</sup> increased from 84% to 86% in the latest year the highest in the decade. This fluctuated between 80% and 84% during the previous decade. The conviction ratio for indictable offences remains broadly stable compared with the previous year (83%).

**Figure 3: Defendants prosecuted at magistrates' courts, 12 months ending June 2007 to June 2017, by type of offence (Source: Table Q3.2)**



The decline in prosecutions since the year ending June 2016 is primarily driven by a decline in defendants prosecuted for summary non-motoring and indictable offences. While summary motoring offences have remained broadly stable in prosecutions, summary non-motoring and indictable offences have decreased by 8% and 6% respectively.

There was also a decline in the number of convictions (falling 3% in the year ending June 2017). Similarly to prosecutions, this was also driven by convictions for summary non-motoring offences and indictable offences, which decreased 5% and 7% respectively in the latest year.

<sup>9</sup> Conviction ratio is calculated as the number of offenders convicted as a proportion of the number prosecuted in a given year.

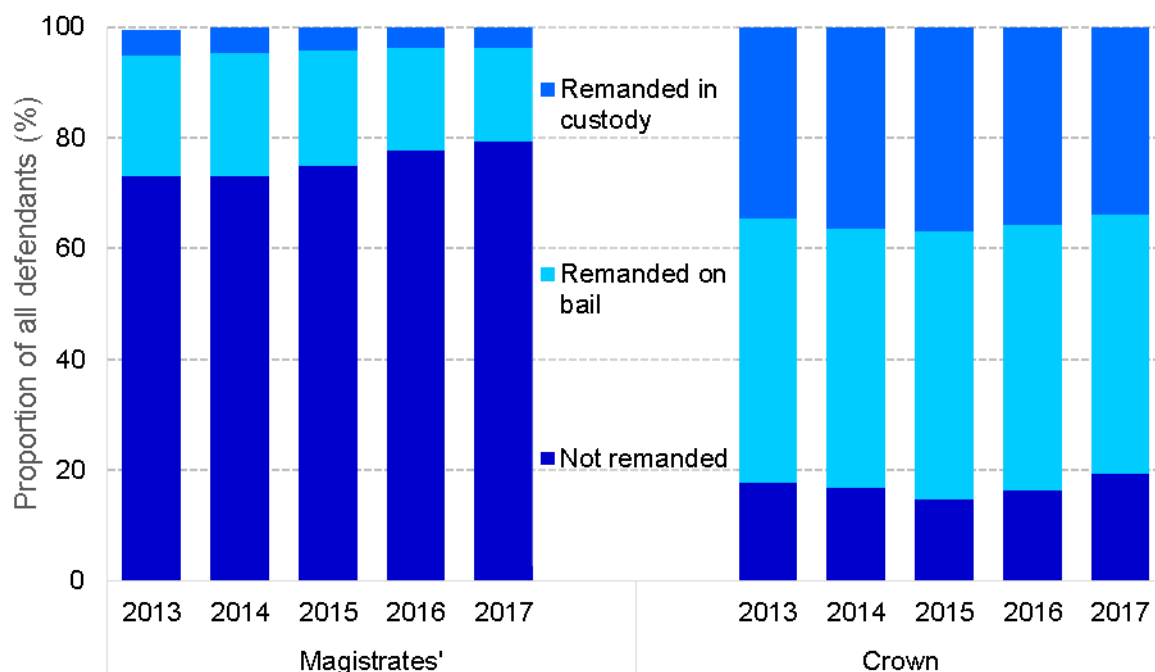
## 4. Remands

In the year ending June 2017 there were 1.50 million defendants directed to appear at magistrates' courts (including those who failed to appear). The proportion of these defendants who were summonsed increased from 67% to 68% in the latest year. The proportion that had been arrested and held in custody by the police remained stable at 10% and the proportion arrested and bailed by police decreased from 23% to 22% in the latest year, a slowly decreasing trend since June 2013.

In the latest year, bail was granted to 17% of defendants prosecuted at magistrates' courts, falling from 18% in the previous year. The proportion of defendants remanded in custody remained stable at 4%, while 79% had their case concluded at magistrates' courts without being remanded, a slowly increasing trend since June 2013.

In the Crown Court there was an increase in the proportion of defendants not remanded (from 16% to 19%) in the most recent year. In contrast there were falls in both the proportion of defendants remanded in custody (from 36% to 34%) and the proportion remanded on bail (from 48% to 47%).

**Figure 4: Defendants' remand status in magistrates' courts and the Crown Court, 12 months ending June 2013 to 12 months ending June 2017 (Source: Table Q4.2 & Q4.3)**



Defendants are more likely to be remanded in custody for more serious, indictable offences than summary offences – as a result, the proportion of defendants remanded in custody at the Crown Court is higher than at magistrates' courts.

Of those defendants remanded in custody at the Crown Court in the year ending June 2017, 72% were sentenced to immediate custody. This compares with half of all defendants who were not remanded in custody at the Crown Court and were given an immediate custodial sentence. 16% of defendants remanded in custody by magistrates' courts were sentenced there to immediate custody; and a further 58% of defendants remanded in custody in magistrates' courts were committed for trial or sentencing at the Crown Court.

## 5. Sentencing

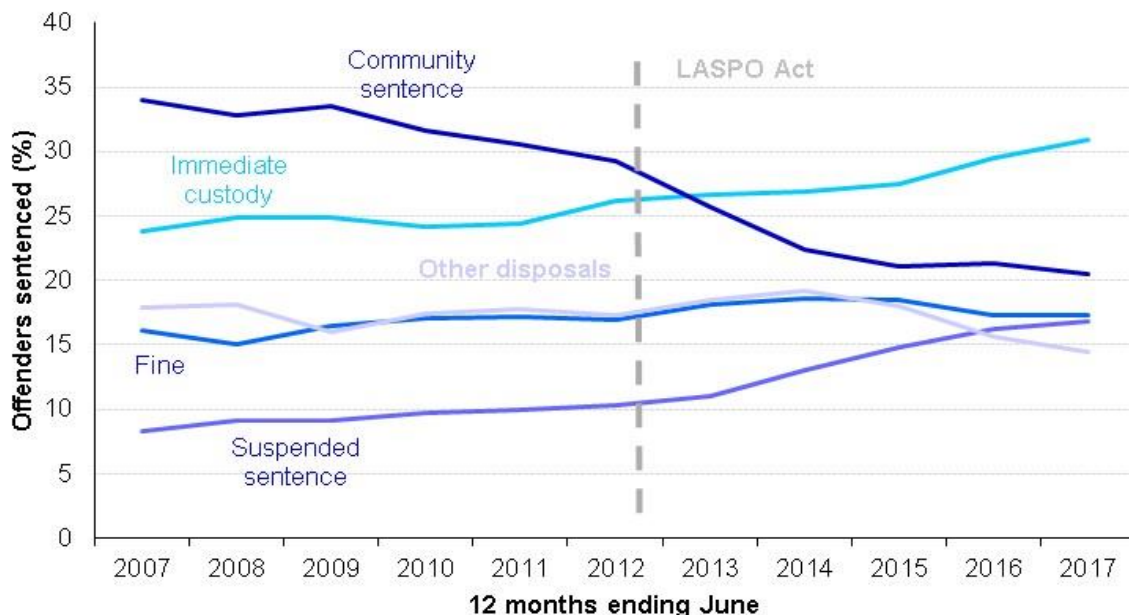
### Custody rate rose to 31% and ACSL increased to 19.5 months for indictable offences

The overall custody rate has remained stable in the latest year at 7% while the custody rate for indictable offences has been increasing since the year ending June 2010, from 24% to 31%.

The average custodial sentence length (ACSL) has increased since the year ending June 2007, both overall (from 12.4 to 16.5 months) and for indictable offences (from 15.3 to 19.5 months). This is in part because more people have been sentenced to custody for sexual offences, which have the highest ACSL, but also reflects an increase in ACSL for nearly all indictable offence groups. For sexual offences, the total number of people sentenced to custody in the year ending June 2017 was 4,300, up from 2,800 in the year ending June 2007, while the ACSL for sexual offences increased by 17 months over the same period, though it has reduced slightly in the latest year.

The most common sentence given overall in the year ending June 2017 was a fine (74% of offenders), a steady increase from the year ending June 2011 (65% of offenders). For indictable offences, a greater proportion of offenders (31%) received immediate custody than any other type of sentence (Figure 5), a rise from the previous year (29%) and since the year ending June 2007 (24%). The next most common sentence for indictable offences was a community sentence. In the latest year 20% of offenders received a community sentence, a decrease from 34% in the year ending June 2007. Over the same period the proportion of offenders receiving a suspended sentence has increased from 8% to 17% of offenders.

**Figure 5: Trends in sentencing outcomes for indictable offences at all courts, 12 months ending June 2007 to 12 months ending June 2017 (Source: Table Q5.3)**



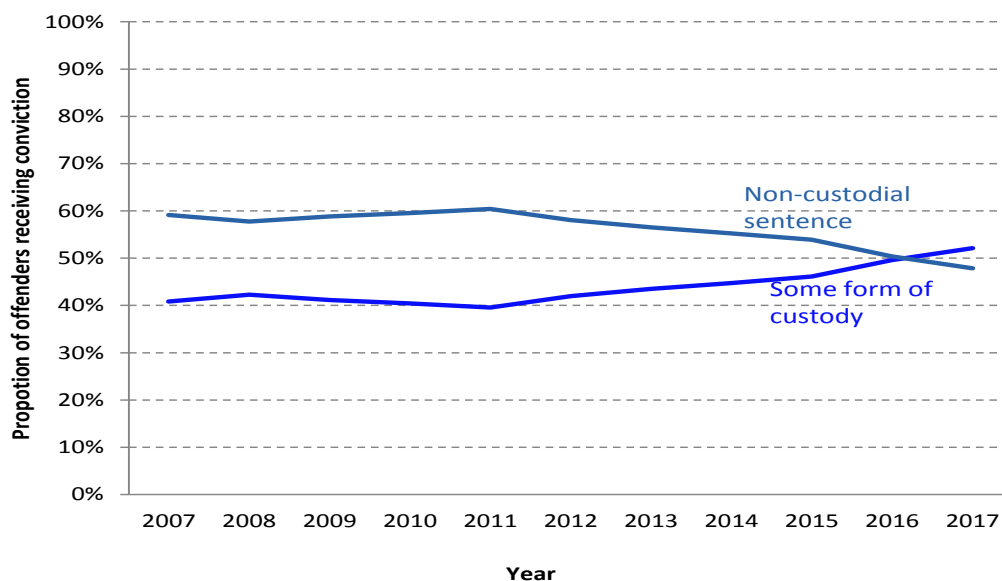
The number of offenders sentenced at all courts fell by 34,500 (3%) since the year ending June 2016. Similarly to prosecutions and convictions, this is driven by a decline in indictable and summary non-motoring offences, which have seen a decline of 7% and 5% respectively.

## 6. Offending Histories

### Adult offenders convicted for indictable offences are now more likely to receive some form of custody, irrespective of their criminal history

Adult offenders convicted for indictable offences are now more likely to receive some form of custody (52%), i.e. immediate custody or a suspended sentence, than they are to receive a non-custodial sentence, irrespective of their criminal history. 41% of adult offenders received some form of custody when convicted of an indictable offence 10 years ago.

**Figure 6: Adult offenders convicted for indictable offences, by outcome, 12 months ending June 2007 to 12 months ending June 2017 (Source: Table Q6.1)**



### Proportion of adults with long criminal records continues to rise

For those with long criminal careers, i.e. 15 or more previous cautions or conviction, 59% were sentenced to some form of custody. Use of suspended sentences for this group increased by 2% over the last 12 months. Around 86,000 adult offenders convicted of an indictable offence had 15 or more previous convictions or cautions; these offenders had an average of 34 previous sanctions. 39% of adults convicted of an indictable offence had a long criminal record compared with 30% 10 years ago.

There were around 124,000 persistent offenders (offenders with 8 or more convictions or cautions) in the 12 months ending June 2017 who have been responsible for around 2.8 million crimes throughout their criminal careers. Of these, 39% were given their first official sanction for a theft offence.

The number of first time entrants (FTEs) peaked in 2007 and has fallen since then, the decline has been much sharper for juveniles. The number of juvenile FTEs is now around a tenth of that seen at the peak. This has in part been driven by the decline in the use of cautions as highlighted in chapter 2.

## Further information

The data presented in this publication are provisional. Final data for each calendar year is published in May each year in our Criminal Justice Statistics annual bulletin, following further data cleaning and the incorporation of additional cases not available in our original extracts of administrative data.

## Accompanying files

As well as this bulletin, the following products are published as part of this release:

- A technical guide providing further information on how the data is collected and processed, as well as information on the revisions policy and legislation relevant to sentencing trends and background on the functioning of the criminal justice system.
- A set of overview tables, covering each section of this bulletin.
- A set of offending histories tables, including a data tool.
- An analytical paper on prolific offenders.



## National Statistics status

National Statistics status means that official statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value.

All official statistics should comply with all aspects of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They are awarded National Statistics status following an assessment by the Authority's regulatory arm. The Authority considers whether the statistics meet the highest standards of Code compliance, including the value they add to public decisions and debate.

It is the Ministry of Justice's responsibility to maintain compliance with the standards expected for National Statistics. If we become concerned about whether these statistics are still meeting the appropriate standards, we will discuss any concerns with the Authority promptly. National Statistics status can be removed at any point when the highest standards are not maintained, and reinstated when standards are restored.

## Contact

Press enquiries should be directed to the Ministry of Justice press office:

Tel: 020 3334 3536

Email: [newsdesk@justice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:newsdesk@justice.gsi.gov.uk)

Other enquiries about these statistics should be directed to the Justice Statistics Analytical Services division of the Ministry of Justice:

Damon Wingfield, Responsible Statistician and Head of Criminal Justice Statistics

Ministry of Justice, 7th Floor, 102 Petty France, London, SW1H 9AJ

Email: [CJS\\_Statistics@justice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:CJS_Statistics@justice.gsi.gov.uk)

**Next update: 15 February 2018**

**URL:** [www.gov.uk/government/statistics/criminal-justice-statistics-quarterly-june-2017](http://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/criminal-justice-statistics-quarterly-june-2017)

© Crown copyright

Produced by the Ministry of Justice

Alternative formats are available on request from [statistics.enquiries@justice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:statistics.enquiries@justice.gsi.gov.uk)