



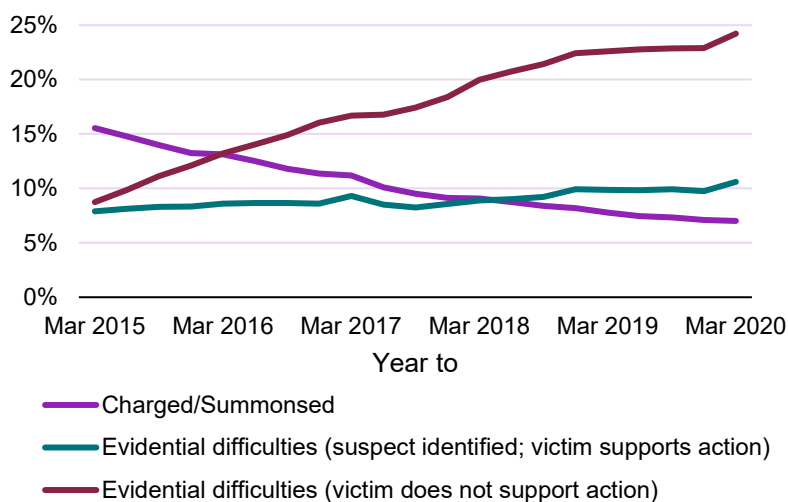
Crime outcomes in England and Wales 2019 to 2020

This bulletin reports on case outcomes that police forces have assigned to notifiable offences recorded by the police in England and Wales between 1st April 2019 and 31st March 2020.

Key results

Compared with the previous year, the **proportion of crimes resulting in a charge/summons fell by one percentage point, from 8% to 7%** (equivalent to an annual reduction of 33,460 charged outcomes). This continues a downward trend seen since the **year ending March 2015 when 16% of crimes were resolved with a charge/summons**. Conversely, the **proportion of offences that were closed as a result of “evidential difficulties” increased from 33% to 35%**, compared to the previous year. These trends are likely to reflect improved crime recording processes by the police and a more complex crime caseload.

Proportion of crimes resulting in charged/summons or evidential difficulties outcome, year end March 2015 – March 2020, England and Wales.



The **median number of days for an outcome to be assigned to rape offences was 98 days** in year to March 2020 which **fell by 28 days compared to the previous year**. This was driven by a fall in the median days for rape offences mainly for evidential difficulty outcomes. There was an increase in the median days for rapes that resulted in a charge/summons.

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Executive Summary

OVERVIEW

This bulletin is based on the full police recorded crime outcomes framework introduced in April 2014. Under this framework, every notifiable crime recorded by the police will be assigned a case outcome including those still under investigation. The data presented in this report provide a snapshot, at the time of analysis, of the current case status of offences recorded during 2019/20. The outcomes of some cases, especially those recorded towards the end of the financial year, may be subsequently revised following further investigations.

Data covers all those offences recorded in England and Wales by the territorial police forces (except Greater Manchester Police who have been unable to provide data from July 2019 to March 2020) and the British Transport Police.

KEY FINDINGS

- Police forces closed almost half (43%) of offences with no suspect identified, a similar proportion to last year. This proportion varied by crime type with around 76% of theft offences closed in this way compared with 8% of rape offences and 2% of drugs offences.
- Compared with the previous year, the proportion of crimes resulting in a charge/summons fell by one percentage point, from 8% to 7% (equivalent to an annual reduction of 33,460 charged outcomes). This continues a downward trend seen since the introduction of the Outcomes framework in year ending March 2015 when 16% of crimes were resolved with a charge/summons.
- Conversely, the proportion of offences that were closed as a result of “evidential difficulties” increased from 33% to 35% from March 2019 to March 2020. This is a continuation of quarterly increases in the rate of this outcome, from 17% in the year ending March 2015. These trends are likely to reflect improved crime recording processes by the police and a more complex crime caseload.

How long it took for offences recorded in the year ending March 2020 to get a police outcome:

As in previous years, the length of time it took police forces to assign an outcome to a crime varied by both offence type and the type of outcome.

- Overall, an (median) average of 10 days was taken from the date the crime was recorded to assign the outcome. This was an increase of 1 day compared with the previous year. The median of days for an outcome to be assigned has increased for the last 3 years, up from 6 days in March 2018. There are likely to be a range of factors behind the rise including increasing volume of offences and complexity of caseloads being dealt with by the police.
- Consistent with previous years, sexual offences took the longest time to assign an outcome (median of 66 days). However, this was a large fall of 11 days compared with the previous year (median of 77 days). This was driven by a fall in median days to outcome of rape offences, and specifically to a reduction in the time for such cases to be closed with an “evidential difficulties”

outcome. This may reflect the growth in the importance of digital evidence, especially on mobile phones, related disclosure issues and victims' concerns about surrendering electronic devices as part of the investigation.

- Theft offences and criminal damage and arson continued to take the fewest number of days to be assigned an outcome (median of 4 days), a small increase from the previous year, reflecting the high proportion of such offences which were closed without a suspect being identified.
- 'Possession of Weapons' (median of 25 days) and 'Drug Offences' (median of 26 days) have seen the largest increases in median days to an outcome, up from 18 and 21 respectively in the previous year. Anecdotal evidence from forces suggests this may reflect delays in obtaining approval from the Crown Prosecution Service to charge such offences as well as backlogs in forensic testing.
- The median number of days for a charged/summons outcome has increased by 10 days in year ending March 2020 from March 2019 to 33 days. This has increased across all offence groups but has been highest for sexual offences (which has increased by 38 days to 233), followed by Violence against the person (up by 14 days to 34 days) and robbery (also up by 14 days to 69 days).
- The median length of time for investigations to be closed with no suspect identified for all offences was 3 days, slightly higher than previous years.

1 Introduction

OVERVIEW

This bulletin reports on case outcomes that police forces have assigned to notifiable offences recorded by the police in England and Wales. It covers the all territorial police forces, except Greater Manchester Police who have not been able to provide data to the Home Office for the full year, and the British Transport Police.

In April 2013, the Home Office introduced the new crime outcomes framework, replacing a more narrowly focused one based on ‘detections’. This new framework provides greater transparency on how **all** notifiable crimes recorded by the police are dealt with. The previous ‘detections’ framework gave only a partial picture of the work police do to investigate and resolve such crimes. A narrow focus on “detections” was previously linked to police performance targets. This was thought to have risked driving perverse crime recording decisions¹. It may also have undermined the victim-focused approach set out in the National Crime Recording Standard².

As well as this annual publication, the Home Office also publishes quarterly outcomes tables without commentary. These are published here www.gov.uk/government/collections/crime-outcomes-in-england-and-wales-statistics.

For more detailed background on the outcomes framework and how it was developed, see Annex A6: Crime Outcomes Data Quality.

THE FULL OUTCOMES FRAMEWORK

Since its introduction in April 2014, the framework has developed to cover a broader range of outcome types for police forces to use. Detailed descriptions of each outcome type can be found in the technical annex.

The data presented in this report provide a snapshot, at the time of analysis, of the current case status of offences recorded during 2019/20. The outcomes of some cases, especially those recorded towards the end of the financial year, may be subsequently revised following further investigations.

While all crimes will eventually have an outcome, this may take considerable time for some offences. At any given point, police forces will be undertaking crime investigations to which they will not yet have assigned a final outcome. Police forces will therefore submit revised data to the Home Office as investigations are completed and data previously published will be revised in subsequent releases.

OUTCOME GROUPINGS IN THIS BULLETIN

Some of the tables and charts in this bulletin show grouped outcomes to simplify presentation. For transparency, Open Data tables are also published that show the full range of police outcomes. These are accessible from: www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-recorded-crime-open-data-tables.

¹ [Analysis of variation in crime trends; ONS](#)

² [Crime-recording: Making the victim count; HMIC](#)

For statistical purposes, all recorded crimes are assigned one outcome type please refer to General Rules Section H of the [Home Office Counting Rules](#) (HOCR) for information on recording outcomes.

Table 1.1 shows the grouping of outcomes used in this report. These take account of user feedback following a consultation in 2014.

TABLE 1.1: GROUPING THE OUTCOMES FRAMEWORK FROM APRIL 2013 ONWARDS (OUTCOMES 1-22)

Outcome Group	Outcome type(s)
Charged/Summoned	1
Taken into consideration	4
Out-of-court (formal)	2, 3, 6
Out-of-court (informal)	7, 8
Prosecution prevented or not in the public interest	5, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 17
Evidential difficulties (suspect identified; victim supports action)	15
Evidential difficulties (victim does not support action)	14, 16
Investigation complete – no suspect identified	18
Action undertaken by another body/agency (from April 2015)	20
Further investigation to support formal action not in the public interest (police decision) (from January 2016)	21
Diversionary, educational or intervention activity, resulting from the crime report, has been undertaken and it is not in the public interest to take any further action (voluntary from April 2019)	22

Note: outcome 19 not shown as this applies to fraud offences recorded by the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau only which are reported on separately (see section 4).

See technical annex A6.5 for detailed descriptions of each outcome type.

SUPPLEMENTARY DATA TABLES

The chapters in this bulletin discuss key topics of interest in the outcomes data. Data presented in these chapters as both charts and tables are available online via bulletin tables published on the Home Office website.

In addition to the tables found in a main bulletin, a number of supplementary tables are available here which provide additional data on the topics discussed, plus data on areas not covered. Data on [transferred and cancelled records](#), and [“old-style” outcomes](#) are also published.

OUTCOMES FOR OFFENCES RECORDED IN QUARTER (NEW STYLE)

This is the principle method used to present data in this bulletin; it looks at outcomes for offences recorded in the same period in which the offence was recorded, rather than just a measure of total outcomes recorded in a period. It allows individual crimes to be traced from when they were recorded to when they were given the outcome. However, as crime types typically take longer to investigate than others the final outcome may not be available at the time of the first release of data for a given time period.

OUTCOMES RECORDED IN QUARTER (OLD STYLE)

This measure relates to outcomes recorded in a particular year regardless of when the associated crime was recorded, that is it will include outcomes for cases recorded in a previous year and exclude cases from the current year that do not yet have a final outcome recorded. Rates can be calculated as the number of outcomes recorded in the year as a proportion of crimes recorded in the same year. This is how rates were presented before it was possible to link individual crimes with their outcomes.

This approach provides a fuller measure of police activity in relation to crime in a given year. However, comparing the number of outcomes with the number of recorded offences in this way should be done with caution since rates could appear to change from one year simply because of a changing balance between crimes and outcomes recorded over time. For example, some crime types could show a rate of over 100 per cent against a particular outcome, which is sometimes the case for relatively low volume crimes.

DATA AVAILABILITY

Due to a recording issue, Greater Manchester Police have been unable to provide the Home Office with crime and outcome data since July 2019. Therefore, all results in this bulletin exclude GMP.

2 Outcomes assigned to offences (excluding Fraud and Computer Misuse Act offences) recorded in the year ending 31st March 2020

Key results

- The number of recorded crimes resolved via a **charge/summons fell by 33,460** (from 384,323 to 350,863). This represented **7% of crimes recorded in the same period, down from 8% the previous year** and continuing the downward trend since the year ending March 2015 (when the comparable figure was 16%).
- The most **common reason for a case being closed was due to no suspect being identified**, in 43% of crimes recorded over the past year.
- The **proportion of investigations closed where the victim did not support further action rose from 23% the previous year to 24%**.
- The **proportion of offences not assigned an outcome at the year-end fell from 8% last year to 7% this year**, a volume decrease of 17,817.

This chapter covers how the police have dealt with crimes recorded in the year ending March 2020. It should be noted that not all offences recorded have yet been assigned an outcome. A complete picture of how crimes have been resolved by the police will become available in updated tables which are published on a quarterly basis. This results in the proportions of offences in outcome groups changing. For example, the proportion of offences receiving an outcome of charged/summonsed was 8% when first published in July 2019 but the latest update shows this has increased to 9%. However, to allow like for like comparisons in this bulletin we report on trend data as first published.

Since April 2011 the recording of fraud and computer misuse act (CMA) offences has been centralised via Action Fraud (the UK's national fraud and cyber-crime reporting centre) and managed by the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau (NFIB) at the City of London Police. The analysis presented in Chapters 2 and 3 is restricted to those offences initially recorded by the territorial forces and BTP and therefore exclude fraud and CMA offences. From the data supplied to the Home Office by the NFIB, it is not currently possible to link individual outcomes to offences at record level. Therefore, the outcomes shown in Chapter 4 are presented on an "old style" basis and not directly comparable with other offences.

When comparing crime outcomes data over time it is important to consider the broader context and changing crime caseloads. In 2014, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) published a critical report on crime recording which revealed significant under-recording of crimes that had been reported by victims to the police. This has been followed by a programme of rolling inspections of forces to examine compliance with the Home Office's National Crime Recording Standards. This has led to improved compliance and increased caseloads as more crimes are (correctly) recorded than in previous years. The HMICFRS has estimated in their recent 'State of Policing' report that, compared with their findings

from their 2014 inspection, better compliance with recording standards meant police forces recorded around 570,000 more crimes during 2019³.

In addition to improvements in recording, the Office for National Statistics⁴ have commented that some of the increases in recorded crime are likely to reflect genuine changes in society. These include more criminality and a greater willingness of some victims to come forward to report crimes to the police than has happened in the past.

As a result, since 2013/14 the volume of the crime caseload being dealt with by the police has grown. In addition, the crime mix has also changed with rising numbers of more complex offences like sexual abuse, child abuse and domestic abuse. The increasing volume of digital evidence (which may require more intensive work to investigate) across a wide spectrum of offences from harassment to sexual offences is also thought to have added to the investigative demands on the police. At the same time, it has been reported that forces have sought to suppress demand⁵ and this may be reflected in forces adopting local policies to prioritise the use of investigative resources. These factors are likely to have an impact on the distribution of outcomes over time and across forces.

VARIATION IN HOW CASES WERE CLOSED BY OUTCOME TYPE

Table 2.1 summarises outcomes given to all crimes recorded in the year to March 2020 at the time that data was finalised for analysis (June 2020). It also shows how this compares with outcomes given to crimes recorded in the previous year. For comparability, we present outcomes for the year to March 2019 as they appeared when first published in July 2019⁵. Some of the key points (see figure 2.1 and table 2.2) were as follows:

- As in previous years, the most common reason for a case being closed was no suspect having been identified. However, while there was a small rise in the volume of such outcomes (up 39,989) the proportion of all cases closed in this way fell from 44% in March 2019 to 43% in March 2020.
- The number and proportion of charge/summons fell from 384,323 (or 8%) to 350,863 (and 7%; a drop of 33,460). This continued a downward trend since the year ending March 2015, when the comparable proportion was 16%.
- The fall in charge/summons was more than offset by increases in cases closed due to evidential difficulties. For those where the victim supported action and a suspect was identified this increased from 10% to 11%.
- For cases closed due to evidential difficulties where the victim did not support further action, the proportion increased from 23% to 24%. This was driven by an increase where a suspect was identified, with an increase from 18% to 19%, whereas offences where the suspect was not identified remained the same at 5%.

³ [Annual state of policing 2019](#)

⁴ [Annual state of policing 2018](#)

⁵ [Crime in England and Wales: year ending December 2019](#)

- The proportion of cases at the year-end that had not yet received an outcome fell from 8% to 7% compared with the previous year. This was a volume decrease of 17,817.

Table 2.1: Outcomes assigned to offences recorded in the year ending March 2019 and March 2020, by outcome type and group, England and Wales

Outcome number	Outcome type/group	England and Wales, Recorded crime and outcomes			
		Volume of offences recorded in period: ²		Proportion of offences recorded in period: ²	
		Year to March 2019 (as first published in July 2019) ^{3,4}	Year to March 2020 ⁴	Year to March 2019 (as first published in July 2019) ^{3,4}	Year to March 2020 ⁴
1	Charged/Summoned	384,323	350,863	7.9%	7.0%
4	Taken into consideration⁵	5,031	3,747	0.1%	0.1%
	Out-of-court (formal)	71,188	65,207	1.5%	1.3%
2	Caution - youths ⁴	8,115	6,940	0.2%	0.1%
3	Caution - adults ⁴	52,610	47,555	1.1%	1.0%
6	Penalty Notices for Disorder	10,463	10,712	0.2%	0.2%
	Out-of-court (informal)	114,888	119,990	2.4%	2.4%
7	Cannabis/Khat warning	19,244	16,521	0.4%	0.3%
8	Community resolution	95,644	103,469	2.0%	2.1%
	Prosecution prevented or not in the public interest	71,958	74,399	1.5%	1.5%
5	Offender died	988	1,057	0.0%	0.0%
9	Not in public interest (CPS)	1,596	1,749	0.0%	0.0%
10	Not in public interest (Police)	33,600	31,187	0.7%	0.6%
11	Prosecution prevented – suspect under age	6,999	6,975	0.1%	0.1%
12	Prosecution prevented – suspect too ill	12,100	12,676	0.2%	0.3%
13	Prosecution prevented – victim/key witness dead/too ill	7,286	10,012	0.2%	0.2%
17	Prosecution time limit expired	9,389	10,743	0.2%	0.2%
15	Evidential difficulties (suspect identified; victim supports action)	490,395	530,431	10.1%	10.6%
	Evidential difficulties (victim does not support action)	1,093,402	1,212,039	22.6%	24.2%
14	Evidential difficulties: suspect not identified; victim does not support further action	233,254	237,947	4.8%	4.8%
16	Evidential difficulties: suspect identified; victim does not support further action	860,148	974,092	17.8%	19.5%
18	Investigation complete - no suspect identified	2,115,734	2,155,723	43.7%	43.1%
20	Action undertaken by another body/agency	54,325	59,441	1.1%	1.2%
21	Further investigation to support formal action not in the public interest⁶	60,470	61,871	1.2%	1.2%
22	Diversionary, educational or intervention activity, resulting from the crime report, has been undertaken and it is not in the public interest to take any further action⁷	N/A	4,088	N/A	0.1%
Total offences assigned an outcome (type 1-18, 20-22)		4,461,714	4,637,799	92.1%	92.7%
Offences not yet assigned an outcome		383,575	365,758	7.9%	7.3%
Total offences¹		4,845,289	5,003,557	100.0%	100.0%

Notes

- Year to March 2019 and year to March 2020 exclude fraud offences. Fraud offences are now recorded by the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau (NFIB) rather than police forces. Outcome 19 not shown as this applies only to fraud offences recorded by the NFIB.
- Proportions show the percentage of crimes recorded in the year receiving each outcome.
- Proportions as at the time data were provided to the Home Office.
- Excludes data from Greater Manchester Police
- Offences asked to be taken in to consideration by a court (TICs).
- Outcome 21 was introduced from January 2016 on a voluntary basis and became mandatory from April 2016.
- Outcome 22 was introduced on a voluntary basis from April 2019.

HOW OUTCOMES VARIED BY OFFENCE GROUP

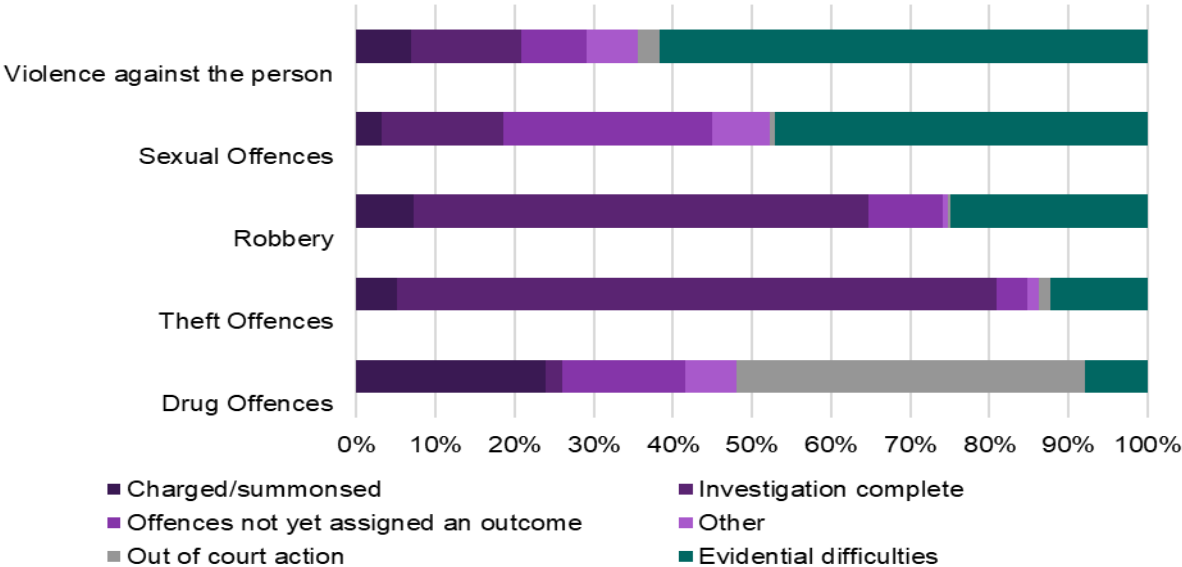
As in previous years, how crimes were resolved varied considerably by the type of crime and is likely to reflect a range of factors including the nature of the offence, differing police priorities and the varying challenges in gathering evidence. For example, it will generally be far more difficult to identify a suspect for a criminal damage offence that was not witnessed or caught on CCTV, than for a drug possession offence where the police apprehended the offender at the time the crime came to their attention. Similarly, an offence where substantial forensic evidence exists will be easier to proceed to charge with than one where such evidence does not.

The willingness of victims or witnesses to engage with the police can also vary by type of offence. Related to this is the length of time that an offence requires to investigate. Both can impact on the distribution of outcomes. For example, a fairly large proportion of sexual offences recorded during 2019/20 had not yet been assigned an outcome (26%) when the latest analysis was undertaken. This and the relatively high proportion of such cases closed with evidential difficulties reflect challenges associated with investigating such crimes, such as related to evidence and/or support of the victim.

The variation in outcomes across offence groups is highlighted by the differences in the four offences illustrated in Figure 2.1 (a fuller breakdown of can be found in Table 2.2).

While 68% of drug offences resulted in either a charge/summons or an out of court disposal, the other three offences illustrated in Figure 2.1 had much lower rates of such outcomes. For example, robbery had a much higher proportion of offences resulting in no suspect being identified (58%). This is to be expected given the nature of the offence as victims of robbery may not be able to provide much information about offenders and there may not be as good evidence available to identify a suspect, for example because of absence of CCTV or other witness evidence. Offences involving violence against the person or sexual offences continued to be much more likely to have an outcome of evidential difficulties recorded compared with others such as drug or theft offences.

Figure 2.1: Outcome proportions by outcome group and offence group, for year ending March 2020, England and Wales



Source: Home Office Data Hub (HODH) and voluntary spreadsheet return

Drug offences

- Around 68% of drug offences received either a charge/summons (24%) or an out-of-court disposal (44%) outcomes, such as cautions and Community Resolutions. These disposals are typically used for dealing with less serious offences, but the suspect must admit guilt for the out-of-court outcome to be applied.
- Compared with other offence groups, a smaller proportion of offences were closed due to no suspect being identified (2%) given the nature of the offence.
- Within the overall category of drug offences there was a difference between how possession of cannabis and other drugs were resolved⁶. Cannabis possession had a lower charge/summons rate (17%) than other drug offences (40%). This reflects that possessions of small amounts of cannabis will often be dealt with by out of court action. This is shown by the 60% of Cannabis offences assigned such outcomes, compared with offences involving other drugs where 26% received out of court actions.
- For drugs possession offences, the overall charge rate and out-of-court outcome rate were both driven by outcomes for possession of cannabis (110,085 offences in 2019/20) which was much more prevalent than other drug offences (32,340 offences in 2019/20).
- It should also be noted that police forces have differing approaches to using out-of court outcomes. For example, Lancashire, Leicestershire, Metropolitan Police and Staffordshire do not use cannabis/ khat warnings for possession of cannabis offences, instead preferring the use of Community Resolutions.

⁶ [Published open data tables show the current picture for March 2020 data](#)

Sexual offences were:

- Most likely to have not yet been assigned an outcome (26%) reflecting the greater complexity and the extended time required to investigate such offences compared with most other crime types (see chapter 3).
- This also contributed to the apparently low proportion of sexual offences with a charge/summons (3.2%). The charge/summons has fallen compared to previous year, it stood at 3.5% ending March 2019 and 5.2% in year ending March 2018. Other contributory factors included a higher than average proportion of cases assigned to one of the evidential difficulties categories. For example, two in five rape offences (41%) were closed because the victim did not support further police action against a suspect.
- Conversely, given the nature of the crime, sexual offences had much lower level of suspects not identified (15% compared with an average of 43% for all offences).

Violence against the person is a broad offence group covering a wide spectrum of offending from homicide and serious violent crime through to lower harm and less serious common assault. It also includes offences involving emotional abuse, rather than physical abuse, such as harassment and stalking.

- Generally, Violence against the person offences were most likely to result in victims not supporting police action (45%). This contributed to the overall low charge/summons rate for violence offences (7%).
- Outcomes varied within this offence group by the type of offence, e.g. the charge/summons rate for assault with injury offences was four percentage points lower than that for assault without injury (9% and 5% respectively). Most of this difference was accounted for by victims of assault without injury not supporting police action. More serious offences received a higher charged/summonsed rate with for example, 53.6% of homicide offences received a charge/summonsed outcome. Homicide offences also frequently involve longer investigations, 40% have not yet received an outcome.

Table 2.2: Outcomes assigned to offences recorded in the year ending March 2020, by outcome group and offence group, England and Wales

England and Wales, Recorded crime and outcomes

Offence group	Charged/ summonsed	Taken into consideration (TICs) ²	Out-of- court (formal) ³	Out-of- court (informal) ⁴	Prosecution prevented or not in the public interest ⁵	Evidential difficulties (suspect identified; victim supports action)	Evidential difficulties (victim does not support action) ⁶	Investigation complete - no suspect identified	Action undertaken by another body/ agency	Further investigation to support formal action not in the public interest ⁷	Diversions, educational or intervention activity, resulting from the crime report, has been undertaken and it is not in the public interest to take any further action ⁸	Offences not yet assigned an outcome
												Outcome rate (%) ⁹
Violence against the person	6.9%	0.0%	1.2%	1.5%	2.3%	16.7%	45.1%	13.9%	2.6%	1.3%	0.1%	8.4%
Sexual offences	3.2%	0.0%	0.3%	0.2%	2.4%	14.5%	32.6%	15.3%	3.2%	1.7%	0.0%	26.4%
<i>of which: Rape</i>	1.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.3%	13.8%	41.0%	7.7%	1.1%	0.3%	0.0%	33.4%
Robbery	7.2%	0.0%	0.1%	0.2%	0.3%	7.2%	17.7%	57.6%	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%	9.4%
Theft offences	5.2%	0.2%	0.4%	1.0%	0.5%	4.8%	7.5%	75.6%	0.1%	0.7%	0.0%	4.0%
Criminal damage and arson	4.7%	0.0%	1.2%	1.8%	0.9%	6.4%	16.0%	63.2%	0.3%	0.6%	0.1%	4.8%
Drug offences	23.9%	0.0%	11.8%	32.3%	2.7%	7.2%	0.7%	2.2%	0.3%	2.7%	0.8%	15.4%
Possession of weapons offences	35.3%	0.0%	5.2%	3.0%	3.4%	17.3%	8.3%	9.5%	0.9%	3.5%	0.2%	13.6%
Public order offences	8.4%	0.0%	1.4%	1.6%	2.3%	15.3%	32.9%	28.7%	0.5%	2.0%	0.1%	6.8%
Misc. crimes against society	12.5%	0.1%	1.0%	1.8%	2.3%	15.9%	22.7%	15.7%	3.5%	7.1%	0.1%	17.3%
Total year to March 2020¹	7.0%	0.1%	1.3%	2.4%	1.5%	10.6%	24.2%	43.1%	1.2%	1.2%	0.1%	7.3%

Notes:

1. Year to March 2020 data exclude fraud offences. Fraud offences are now recorded by the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau (NFIB) rather than police forces.
2. Offences asked to be taken into consideration by a court (TICs).
3. Includes caution - adults; caution - youths; Penalty Notices for Disorder.
4. Includes cannabis/khat warnings and community resolutions.
5. Includes not in the public interest (CPS); Not in public interest (Police); Offender Died; Prosecution prevented (suspect under age; suspect too ill; victim/key witness dead/too ill); Prosecution time limit expire
6. Includes evidential difficulties where the suspect was/was not identified, and the victim does not support further action.
7. Outcome 21 (Further investigation to support formal action not in the public interest) was introduced from January 2016 on a voluntary basis and became mandatory from April 2016.
8. Outcome 22 was introduced on a voluntary basis from April 2019.
9. Proportions show the percentage of crimes recorded in the year receiving each outcome.
10. Excludes data from Greater Manchester Police

LONGER TERM TRENDS IN HOW CRIMES RESOLVED

Since the introduction of the crime outcomes framework there has been a downward trend in the proportion of offences with a charge/summons applied within the same year that the crime was recorded (falling from 16% to 7%).

There has also been a growing proportion of cases recorded where victims did not support police action (from 9% to 24%). These two trends are likely to have been influenced by the changing caseload and crime mix being dealt with by the police. On-going work to improve crime recording by police forces has both increased the volume forces are dealing with and changed the crime mix to include more complex cases, such as sexual offences and domestic abuse, which can be more challenging to resolve. At the same time, police forces have increasingly been prioritising their investigative resource.

A more detailed time series of outcomes since the new framework was introduced for the year end March 2014.

Key questions – why are charge rates falling despite increases in police recorded crime?

The charge/summons rate for offences recorded in the year to March 2020 currently stands at 7%, compared with 8% when corresponding data for year end March 2019 was first published. Additionally, the volume of charges declined, from 384,323 to 350,863 offences (a 9% fall). This reduction occurred at the same time as the volume of crimes recorded by the police has risen (from 4.9 million to 5.0 million). Along with a growing caseload, there is evidence to suggest that a higher proportion of crimes being recorded are in offence types which are the most challenging to investigate. For example, the proportion of total offences made up of violence against a person increased from 17% in year ending March 2013 to 34% for year ending March 2020.

3 The time gap between offences being recorded and outcomes being assigned

Key results

- In the **year ending March 2020**, it took a **median of 10 days to assign an outcome** to an offence, up 1 day from year ending March 2019 (9 days).
- For most offences the **median number of days for outcomes to be assigned was similar to the previous year except for rape (98 days) which fell by 28 days** in the year to March 2020 from the previous year. This was driven by a **fall in the median days for rape offences given evidential difficulty outcomes and there was an increase in the median days for rapes that resulted in a charge/summons**. Both trends are likely to be related to changes in the police handling of digital evidence.
- The **median number of days for a charged/summons outcome** has **increased by 10 days** in year ending March 2020 from March 2019 to **33 days**. The increase in median days to a charge outcome is seen in each offence type.

This section explores the variation in the time that has elapsed from the initial recording of crime to the point at which an outcome has been finalised. This is based on the dates entered on a police force's crime record management system (RMS).

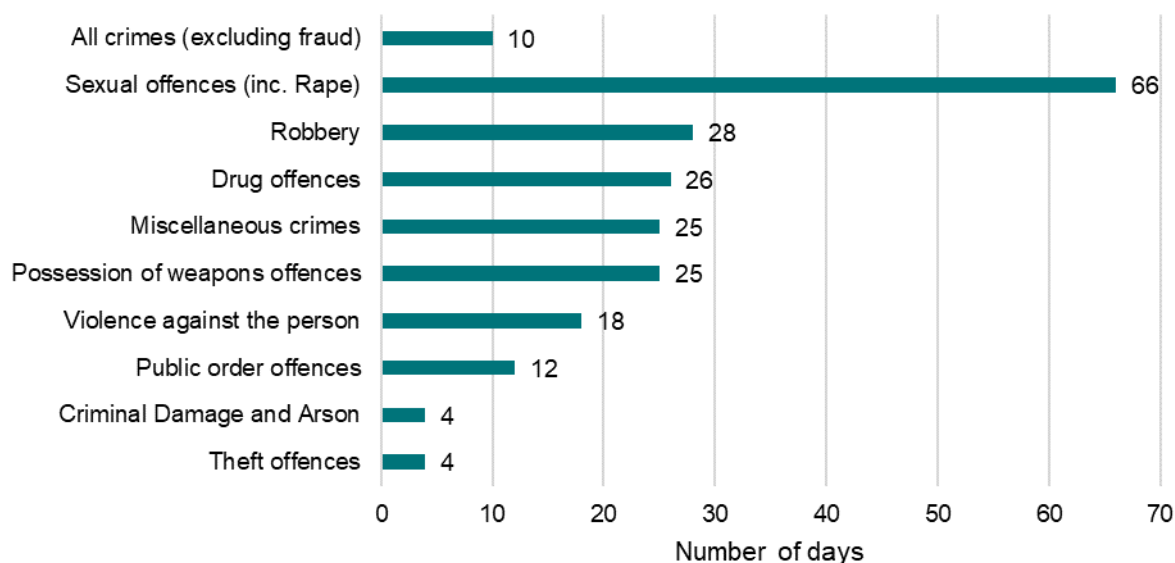
The data presented in this chapter cover all outcomes recorded in the year ending March 2020 regardless of when the offence was initially recorded to give a more complete picture. Time, in days, is presented by median average as this measure is less susceptible to being skewed by a small number of unusually high or low values. It should be noted that this measure will not always reflect the actual time taken to deal with an individual case since, for example, there may be a delay between an offender being charged and the force crime RMS being updated.

TIMELINESS BY OFFENCE AND OUTCOME TYPE

In the year ending March 2020, it took a median of 10 days to assign an outcome to an offence. Nearly half (43%) of all outcomes were assigned within five days of recording the offence about two-thirds (67%) within 30 days. The number of cases taking over 100 days to assign an outcome has risen from 11% in year ending March 2019 to 13% in year ending March 2020. In the previous year 46% of all outcomes were assigned within five days of recording the offence.

Analysis of all crime types masks significant variation which is visible through more insightful analysis that breaks down by offence and outcome type.

Figure 3.1: The time taken (median days) for outcomes to be assigned for offences broken down by offence groups, Year ending March 2020, England and Wales



Source: Home Office Data Hub

Table 3.1 shows the median length of time to assign an outcome by offence type for the last five years. The number of median days to assign an outcome has been increasing from March 2018 (6 days), to 9 days in March 2019 and 10 days in March 2020.

This upward trend is likely to reflect a range of factors which will vary by offence type. Some offence groups, such as theft offences, have a low median number of days to an outcome which may reflect decisions about prioritisation of investigative resources. In contrast, cases judged to be higher priority, such as sexual offences, take longer generally and will have a high number of median days until an outcome is assigned.

However, the median number of days for outcomes to be assigned for rape offences has fallen by 28 days in the year to March 2020 from the previous year (126 to 98 days). Rape offences are a subset of sexual offences and thus have driven the fall in median days for sexual offences to be assigned an outcome too. The latest fall follows two previous years in which there had, albeit smaller, reductions in the median days to assign an outcome to rape offences.

It is possible these trends may reflect the growth in the importance of digital evidence, especially on mobile phones, related disclosure issues and victims' concerns about surrendering electronic devices as part of the investigation. The higher proportion of cases in which victims have withdrawn from the process may explain why cases were being closed more quickly in recent years.

The median days to assign an outcome for 'Drug offences' has increased to 26 days in year ending March 2020 from 21 days in the previous year. At the same time the number of drug offences has also risen by 18% to 175,145 offences. This increase is the largest yearly increase since recorded drug offences reached a peak in 2008/09. The number of offences recorded had fallen from 2008/09 to 2017/18 but have begun to increase in the past two

years and is likely linked to increased police stop and search activity⁷. The increase in the volume of such offences may have contributed to the rise in time for outcomes to be assigned as some forces have reported a backlog of forensic examinations including analysis of items such as mobile phones to ascertain evidence of drug dealing. This is likely to have also contributed to the increase in median days.

Table 3.1: The difference in the average (median) length of time taken to assign an outcome between the year ending March 2016 and the year ending March 2020, by offence type

England and Wales, Recorded crime and outcomes						
	Median number of days for an outcome to be assigned ^{1,2}					Difference between y.e March 2019 and y.e March 2020
	Y.e. March 2016	Y.e. March 2017	Y.e. March 2018	Y.e. March 2019	Y.e. March 2020	
Violence against the person	17	17	15	18	18	0
Sexual offences	80	79	73	77	66	-11
of which: Rape	138	144	129	126	98	-28
Robbery	34	31	23	24	28	4
Theft offences	7	4	2	2	4	2
Criminal Damage and Arson	4	3	2	3	4	1
Drug offences	10	13	14	21	26	5
Possession of weapons offences	9	13	13	18	25	7
Public order offences	16	13	8	12	12	0
Miscellaneous crimes	20	20	19	24	25	1
All crimes (excluding fraud)	11	8	6	9	10	1

1. Median Days for Y.E March 2016 to Y.E March 2019 are as first published.
2. Only includes data for forces who send offence-level data to the Home Office Data Hub.

Table 3.1 also shows:

- Overall, theft and criminal damage and arson offences took the least time to assign an outcome; a median of 4 days. However, both are increases from the previous year. Criminal damage and arson outcome times reflected the nature of these types of offence, whereby police identify offenders immediately, or evidence to locate a suspect is unavailable (e.g. no CCTV).
- The median days to assign an outcome for 'Possession of weapons offences' has also increased to 25 days for the year ending March 2020 from 9 days (year ending March 2016). This rise could be a result of an increase in number of offences, over the same period the number of 'Possession of weapons offences' has increased by 69% (to 43,596 offences). Some forces have cited that backlogs in forensic submission such as when the weapon has been seized along with illegal drugs have increased in recent years.

⁷ [Police powers and procedures, England and Wales, year ending 31 March 2019; Home Office](#)

Figure 3.2: The difference in the average (median) length of time taken to assign an outcome between the year ending March 2016 and the year ending March 2020, by outcome group.

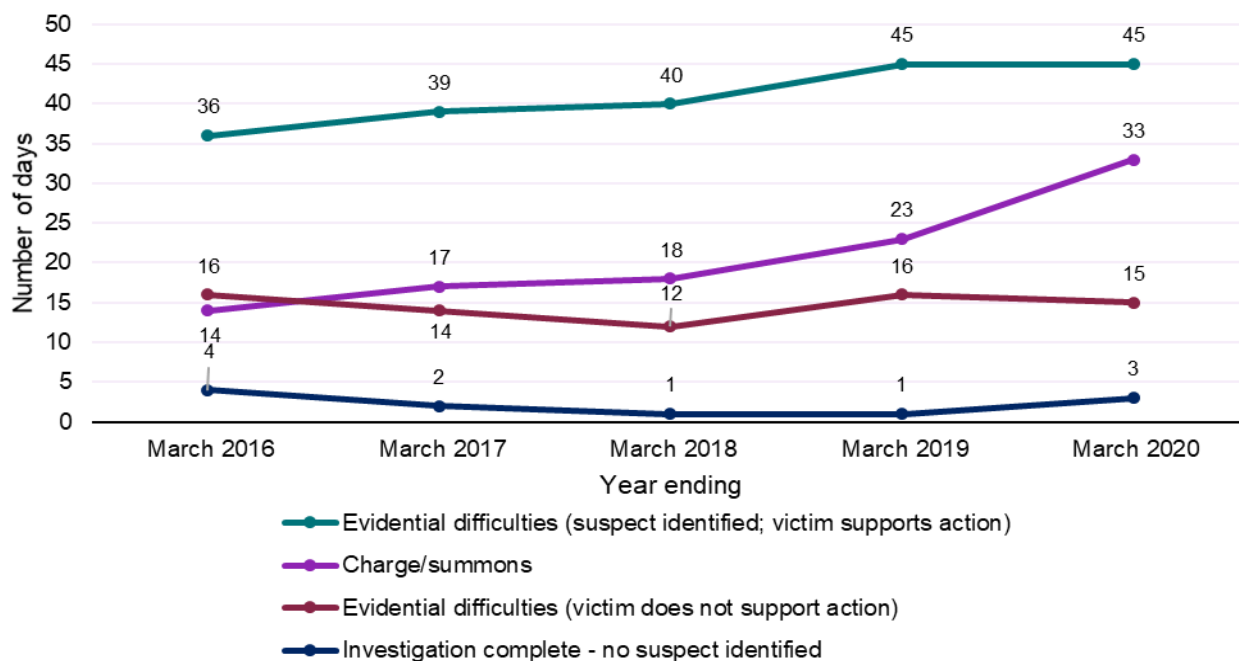


Figure 3.2 shows the average length of time to assign outcomes by type of outcome and how this has changed over the past five years:

- The time taken to charge someone has gradually been increasing from 14 days in the year ending March 2016 to 33 days in the year ending March 2020. The increase between 2019 to 2020 in median number of days to a charged outcome is the largest yearly increase over the previous five years (an increase of 10 days).
- The median number of days for a charge outcome went up for each offence group from March 2019 to March 2020, including a 38 day increase for sexual offences and a 14 day increase for violent offences.
- The number of days to assign outcome ‘evidential difficulties (victim does supports action)’, has gone up from 36 days in the year ending March 2016 to 45 days in the year ending March 2020, indicating that more cases are proving to be more complex to investigate.
- The time taken for investigations to be closed with no suspect identified had decreased from 4 days in the year ending March 2016 to just 1 day in the year ending March 2019 but rose to 3 days in the year ending March 2020. This may be due to more demands on forces leading to a longer time to close offences.

As in previous years, sexual offences took much longer to have outcomes assigned than other offence types, reflecting the fact they are generally more challenging to investigate. The median was 66 days, with 40 per cent taking over 100 days.

For rape offences, the median average for an outcome to be assigned was 98 days, with 49 per cent taking over 100 days. The length of time reflects the sensitive nature and complexity of investigating such offences.

A detailed breakdown of the amount of time for all sexual offences to receive an outcome by the type of outcome applied is presented in Figure 3.3. This shows that:

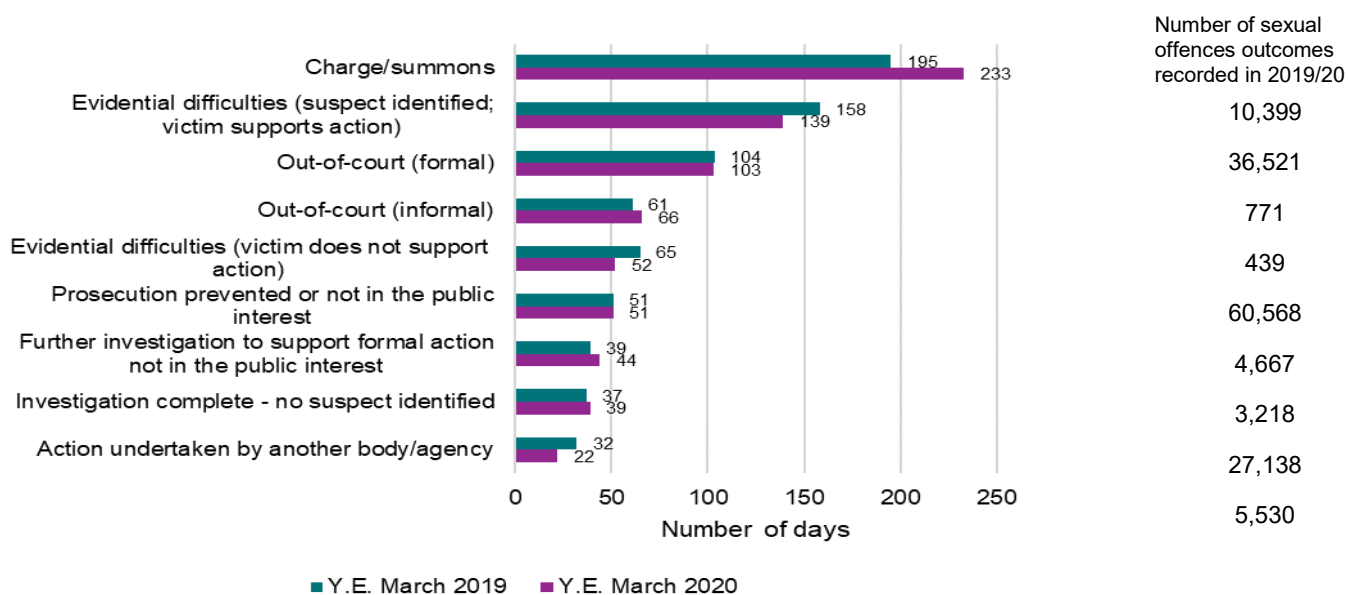
- Despite the median number of days for an outcome to be assigned having fallen by 11 days, this masks variation between different outcomes.
- Charges and summons for sexual offences took the longest amount of time to be assigned, at a median of 233 days up from 195 days the previous year. While 69% of sexual offences resulting in a charge closed after 100 days of investigating, a small proportion (15%) took under 30 days.
- In contrast, the median number of days for cases closed due to evidential difficulties where victim supported action has decreased to 139 days from 158 days the previous year. Similarly, for evidential difficulties where the victim did not support action, the median days to outcome fell from 65 days in year ending March 2019 to 52 days in year ending March 2020.

Key question – why has the overall time taken for outcomes to be assigned to crimes changed?

There are likely to be a range of factors behind the changes in time taken for outcomes to be assigned which will vary by crime type. The increase in the time taken to charge/summons is likely to reflect increasing volumes and complexity of caseloads being dealt with by the police. The additional demands being faced by the police may also explain the reduced time to close cases with no suspect identified as police prioritise their investigative resources.

With regard to drugs, an increase could be due to more long-term investigations around county lines operations, which are inherently more challenging to investigate and prove. These investigations may also include modern slavery and accompanying sexual offences which will impact on timeliness of recording outcomes against those crimes on top of increasing the resource needed to investigate.

Figure 3.3 The time taken (median days) for sexual offences to receive an outcome, broken down by the type of outcome, for year ending March 2019 and 2020, England and Wales



Source: Home Office Data Hub

LENGTH OF TIME TAKEN TO ASSIGN OUTCOME BY OUTCOME TYPES

Nearly half (43%) of all outcomes were assigned within five days of recording the offence, and about two-thirds (67%) within 30 days. The number of cases taking over 100 days to assign an outcome has increased to 13% from 11%. Table 3.2 below shows how this varied by offence group.

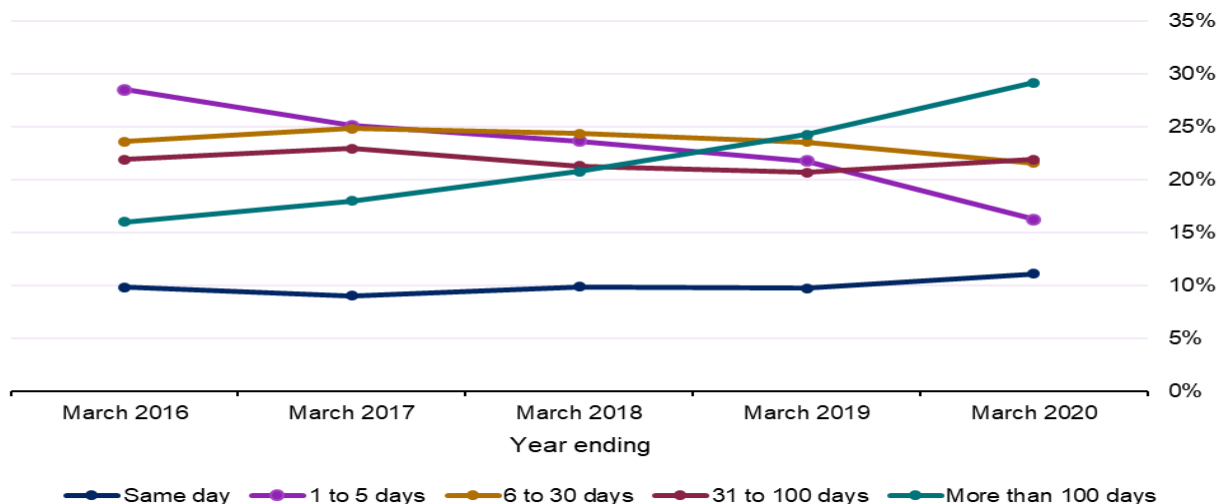
Table 3.2 Timeliness: The length of time between offences and outcomes being recorded for outcomes recorded in the year ending March 2020, by offence type, England and Wales

	England and Wales, Recorded crime				
	Same day	1 to 5 days	6 to 30 days	31 to 100 days	More than 100 days
Violence against the person	12%	20%	29%	24%	16%
Sexual offences	6%	9%	19%	27%	40%
Of which: Rape	3%	6%	15%	27%	49%
Robbery	6%	23%	23%	26%	23%
Theft offences	27%	28%	22%	14%	8%
Criminal damage and arson	30%	24%	22%	15%	9%
Drug offences	10%	18%	23%	20%	28%
Possession of weapons offences	11%	18%	24%	24%	23%
Public order offences	14%	24%	27%	22%	13%
Miscellaneous crimes	13%	17%	23%	21%	26%
All offence types	19%	23%	25%	19%	13%

Source: Home Office Data Hub

Over the last five years the number of offences taking over 100 days to charge has increased, see Figure 3.4. For the year ending March 2020, 29% of all offences with an outcome of charge/summons took over 100 days to close, compared with 16% for the year ending March 2016, a 13-percentage point increase.

Figure 3.4: The length of time between offences and outcomes being recorded for charge/summons in the year ending March 2016 to March 2020, England and Wales



Source: Home Office Data Hub

Drug offences took longer to close than many other crime types, with just over a quarter of offences closed after 100 days. This has increased from 23% for the year ending March 2019. Of those drug offences which resulted in a charge, 36% took over 100 days to close in the year ending March 2020. This has also increased from 31% for the year ending March 2019, suggesting that cases are taking longer to resolve which may be due to backlogs in forensic testing. There are also more complex cases as associated with “County Lines” and modern slavery investigations as highlighted by recent report by The Children’s Society⁸.

Possession of weapons also took longer to close with 23% taking over 100 days, a rise of 5 percentage points compared with the previous year. Just over a third of all possession of weapons offences (35%) were closed with a charge/summons, similar to the previous year. Some forces have cited administrative issues and delays in digital forensics causing a backlog in cases. Furthermore, these cases require CPS approval to charge which has been reported has the potential to lead to delays.

In contrast for the year ending March 2020, nearly one out of every three theft and criminal damage and arson offences were closed on the same day (see table 3.2). This was similar to the previous year where 32% and 33% closed on the same day respectively.

⁸ [The Children’s Society](#)

4 Experimental statistics: Outcomes assigned to Fraud and Computer Misuse Act offences

Key results

- **The total number of Fraud offences assigned an outcome fell by 9%** (down from 51,119 to 46,561) in the year ending March 2020 while the total number of **CMA offences assigned an outcome increased by 62%** (up from 2,504 to 4,056).
- These trends were in part due to changes in the volume of such crimes referred to forces for investigation by the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau. The number of **Fraud offences disseminated to forces decreased by 37%** and, while relatively low in volume, the number of **CMA offences referred to forces increased by 72%**.
- A **21% fall** (down from 6,051 to 4,802 **was seen in the number of disseminated Fraud cases** that resulted in a 'charge/summons' (equivalent to 22% of all disseminated cases and around 1% of all recorded Fraud offences). There was a small volume increase in CMA disseminated cases that resulted in a 'charge summons' (up from 72 to 103). This was equivalent to 3% of all disseminated cases and 0.4% of all recorded CMA offences.
- The number of Fraud offences received an outcome of 'charge/summons' was **equivalent to 22% of the volume of offences disseminated to forces** for further investigation, and equivalent to 3% of the volume of CMA offences disseminated to forces that resulted in a 'charge/summons'.

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In April 2011, Action Fraud (the UK's national fraud and cybercrime reporting centre) began gradually taking over the recording of fraud offences from individual police forces in England and Wales. This transition completed in March 2013. The implementation of Action Fraud as a single national fraud reporting centre has led to an increase in the number of fraud offences recorded, as it provides an easier way for individuals and businesses to report such offences (via an online reporting tool and a dedicated call centre) and centralises expertise in these cases. The transfer to Action Fraud was rolled out at different times in different forces. The year ending March 2014 was therefore the first full year where all fraud offences previously reported to the police were recorded centrally.

Action Fraud reports are reviewed by the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau (NFIB), based at the City of London Police, who are responsible for allocating offences to forces for them to investigate (these are known as a 'dissemination package'). Each dissemination package can be made up of any number of offences, from one to hundreds. This depends on the size of the suspected fraud network, as many similar crimes may be linked together if investigators believe one suspect or set of suspects is responsible. An offence can be included in more than one dissemination, if it links to multiple crime networks. However, each offence only receives one final outcome.

The police recorded crime series published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS), also incorporates offences reported to the NFIB by two fraud prevention industry bodies: Cifas and UK Finance.

The dataset provided by the NFIB continues to be subject to development and quality assurance and so these statistics should still be treated as experimental. The outcomes presented in this chapter differ to other crime types as they are based on the old-style outcomes, i.e. the number of outcomes recorded within a year regardless of when the offence occurred.

In October 2018, Action Fraud launched a new fraud and cyber-crime reporting serving that hoped to provide information on outcomes against fraud offences recorded in the year. However, due to various technical and administrative issues with the new system, providing this kind of information has not yet been possible.

For further information on NFIB outcomes recording process please see Technical Annex Section.

4.2 FRAUD AND COMPUTER MISUSE DISSEMINATIONS AND OUTCOMES IN THE YEAR ENDING MARCH 2020 – HEADLINE FINDINGS

The findings from the disseminations and outcomes data for the year ending March 2020 are presented below. In this year's publication, Fraud and Computer Misuse Act (CMA) offences have been presented separately (previously these were combined). This gives greater clarity to the outcomes for these offences which, while often related, differ in their nature and investigation.

Table 4.1 shows the number of unique Fraud and CMA offences sent to police forces for investigation. By way of context, these are presented alongside the total number of Fraud and CMA offences recorded in the years ending March 2019 and March 2020.

While there was a larger volume of Fraud offences reported to NFIB compared with the previous year, only a small proportion of them were disseminated to police forces for further investigation (3% in the latest year compared with 5% in the year ending March 2019). In contrast, there were a much smaller volume of CMA offences reported to the NFIB but a relatively larger proportion disseminated to forces for investigation (13% compared with 9% in the previous year).

In volume terms, there was a 37% fall in the volume of Fraud offences disseminated to forces in the latest year. This contrasts with the number of CMA offences that were disseminated to forces for investigation in the latest year (up by 72%).

Table 4.1: Number of Fraud and CMA offences and disseminations, year ending March 2019 and year ending March 2020 (Experimental Statistics)

	Year ending Mar '19			Year ending Mar' 20			% change between Mar '19 and Mar '20		
	Fraud	CMA	Total	Fraud	CMA	Total	Fraud	CMA	Total
Total number of offences:	672,099	21,322	693,421	748,326	26,215	774,541	11%	23%	12%
<i>Number recorded by Action Fraud</i>	289,764	21,322	311,086	312,040	26,215	338,255	8%	23%	9%
<i>Number recorded by Cifas⁵</i>	313,175	N/A	313,175	334,297	N/A	334,297	7%	N/A	7%
<i>Number recorded by UK Finance^{3,5}</i>	69,160	N/A	69,160	101,989	N/A	101,989	47%	N/A	47%
Total number of unique offences within disseminations^{4,6}	34,163	1,937	38,519	21,514	3,334	29,634	-37%	72%	-23%

1. Caution should be taken when comparing data for fraud offences and disseminations. Data presented are for offences and disseminations recorded within the year. Offences which are disseminated will not necessarily be disseminated in the year the offences were recorded.

2. These data are Experimental Statistics, which mean that caution should be taken when interpreting the figures.

3. For the year ending March 2020, a portion of the records supplied to the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau by UK Finance have not been successfully ingested by the NFIB systems due to validation errors. The NFIB is working with UK Finance to ensure that all records are successfully processed

4. Some offences can be included in more than one dissemination or can be disseminated to a force in multiple months. This number reflects the total number of unique offences, and offences which are part of two or more dissemination packages are only counted once.

5. Cifas and UK Finance do not report CMA fraud types.

6. The number of Fraud and CMA offences within disseminations do not add up to the published total due to that fact that the same case number for an offence can be assigned to different fraud types. The total is a count of the unique fraud offences within the disseminations to avoid double counting.

4.3 OUTCOMES RECORDED AGAINST FRAUD AND COMPUTER MISUSE OFFENCES BY OUTCOME TYPE

Table 4.2 shows the number of outcomes recorded by the police against fraud and CMA offences in the year ending March 2020, by outcome type. These are presented alongside the total number of Fraud and CMA offences disseminated to the police and the total number of recorded Fraud and CMA offences for the latest and the previous year. The figures presented here differ from the method used in Chapter 2 for all other recorded crime since it is not currently possible to link individual crime records to their outcomes for Fraud and CMA offences.

It is important to note that the number of outcomes will not necessarily correspond to the number of disseminations in a given year since investigations can extend beyond the year in which they were initially sent to forces for investigation before they are complete. A large number of offences disseminated to the police in the year ending March 2020 remain under investigation

Table 4.2: Number of Fraud and CMA outcomes recorded in the year ending March 2019 and the year ending March 2020 by outcome type (Experimental Statistics)²

Outcome number	Outcome type/group ⁵	Year ending March 2019 ⁷			Year ending March 2020			Year to March 2019 and Year to March 2020 comparison		
		Fraud	CMA	Total ^{3,6}	Fraud	CMA	Total ^{3,6}	% change Fraud	% change CMA	% change Total
1	Charged/Summonsed	6,051	72	6,123	4,802	103	4,905	-21%	43%	-20%
4	Taken Into Consideration ¹	166	-	166	126	1	127	-24%	N/A	-23%
	Out-of-court (formal)	703	23	726	541	45	586	-23%	*	-19%
2	Caution - youths	39	-	39	56	13	69	44%	N/A	77%
3	Caution - adults	662	23	685	483	32	515	-27%	*	-25%
6	Penalty Notices for Disorder	2	-	2	2	-	2	*	-	*
	Out-of-court (informal)	518	16	534	438	32	470	-15%	*	-12%
7	Cannibis/Khat warning ⁴	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
8	Community resolution	518	16	534	438	32	470	-15%	*	-12%
	Prosecution prevented or not in the public interest	824	32	856	993	19	1,012	21%	*	18%
5	Offender died	31	-	31	22	-	22	*	-	*
9	Not in public interest (CPS)	164	2	166	205	1	206	25%	*	24%
10	Not in public interest (Police)	514	26	540	629	18	647	22%	*	20%
11	Prosecution prevented - suspect under age	4	2	6	3	-	3	*	*	*
12	Prosecution prevented - suspect too ill	12	-	12	16	-	16	*	-	*
13	Prosecution prevented - victim/key witness dead/too ill	89	-	89	112	-	112	*	-	26%
17	Prosecution time limit expired	10	2	12	6	-	6	*	N/A	*
15	Evidential difficulties (suspect identified; victim supports action)	12,154	369	12,523	11,302	396	11,698	-7%	7%	-7%
	Evidential difficulties (victim does not support action)	5,912	395	6,307	6,448	862	7,310	9%	118%	16%
14	Evidential difficulties: suspect not identified; victim does not support further action	1,619	156	1,775	1,674	386	2,060	3%	147%	16%
16	Evidential difficulties: suspect identified; victim does not support further action	4,293	239	4,532	4,774	476	5,250	11%	99%	16%
18	Investigation complete - no suspect identified	17,397	1,339	18,736	18,266	2,468	20,734	5%	84%	11%
20	Action undertaken by another body/agency	2,009	101	2,110	1,791	71	1,862	-11%	-30%	-12%
21	Further investigation to support formal action not in the public interest	5,385	157	5,542	1,854	59	1,913	-66%	-62%	-65%
	Total number of outcomes	51,119	2,504	53,623	46,561	4,056	50,617	-9%	62%	-6%
	Total number of unique offences within dissemination	34,163	1,937	38,519	21,514	3,334	29,634	-37%	72%	-23%
	Total recorded offences	672,099	21,322	693,421	748,326	26,215	774,541	11%	23%	12%

1. Offences asked to be taken in to consideration by a court (TICs).

2. These data are Experimental Statistics, which mean that caution should be taken when interpreting the figures.

3. Offences recorded by Action Fraud, Cifas and UK Finance with outcomes recorded by NFIB in the year ending March 2019 or the year ending March 2020.

4. Outcome 7 does not apply to fraud offences.

5. The Home Office does not currently collect data on outcome 19 from the NFIB.

6. As not all forces were able to provide a breakdown on fraud type, the sum of Fraud and Computer Misuse numbers may not add up to the total

7. Following updates from forces, figures for March 2019 have been revised from last year's publication.

* an asterisk indicates that percentage changes have been suppressed for cases under 50

Table 4.2 shows:

- Compared with other crime types (reported in Chapter 2), a relatively low proportion of recorded Fraud and CMA offences were subject to investigative outcomes since such a small percentage of cases were disseminated to police forces for investigation.
- Between the year ending March 2019 and March 2020, there was a 12% increase in total Fraud and CMA offences recorded. However, over the same period, the total number of disseminations fell, by 23% and the total number of outcomes assigned also decreased, by 6%
- Between the year ending March 2019 and March 2020, a 37% decrease was seen in the number of Fraud offences disseminated to police (down by 12,649), compared with a 72% increase in CMA disseminations (up by 1,397). This was reflected in the number of outcomes, with Fraud outcomes falling by 9% (down by 4,558), compared with a 62% increase in CMA outcomes (up by 1,552). However, it should be noted that CMA volume increases were relatively small.
- The number of disseminated Fraud offences that resulted in a 'charge/summons' fell by 21% (from 6,051 to 4,802). To put this in context, the number of 'charge/summons' was equivalent to 22% of the volume of offences disseminated to forces for further investigation and around 1% of all recorded Fraud offences.
- In the same period, the number of CMA offences that received a 'charge/summons' increased by 43% (from 72 to 103 outcomes). This was equivalent to 3% of all CMA offences disseminated to forces for investigation and less than half of one percent (0.4%) of all recorded CMA offences.
- The overall reduction in Fraud cases referred to forces for investigation was reflected in a decrease in the number of such offences being assigned an outcome of 'Further investigation to support formal action not in the public interest', falling 66% (or a fall of 3,531 offences). This may in part be due to tighter screening of cases forwarded to forces for investigation.
- For both Fraud and CMA offences there was an increase in the proportion of cases closed with an outcome of 'Investigation complete: no suspect identified' (up 5% for Fraud and 84% for CMA, albeit the volume change for CMA was small (from 1,330 to 2,468). This outcome type accounted for 39% of all Fraud and 61% of all CMA outcomes.

4.4 DISSEMINATIONS AND OUTCOMES BY POLICE FORCE AREA

Tables 4.3.1 and 4.3.2 show Fraud and CMA disseminations and outcomes data for the years ending March 2019 and March 2020 by Police Force Area (PFA). The data are also available in the accompanying data tables 'Outcomes bulletin table', broken down by both PFA and outcome type.

As previously mentioned, it is important to note that the number of outcomes will not necessarily correspond to the number of disseminations in a given year. Caution should be taken when comparing number of outcomes to disseminated offences as investigations can take months or longer to complete or the offence could have occurred in a previous year.

Table 4.3.1: Fraud and Computer Misuse Act (CMA) offences disseminated to forces, by Police Force Area, years ending March 2019 and March 2020 (Experimental Statistics)¹

Police Force	Number of disseminated offences ²						% Change Total
	Year ending March 2019			Year ending March 2020			
	Fraud	CMA	Total ^{3,4}	Fraud	CMA	Total ^{3,4}	
Avon and Somerset	418	37	472	311	60	392	-17%
Bedfordshire	413	31	461	216	57	296	-36%
Cambridgeshire	298	18	335	162	35	202	-40%
Cheshire	311	32	363	203	73	284	-22%
City of London	352	17	383	459	35	560	46%
Cleveland	179	15	206	219	26	248	20%
Cumbria	79	15	105	83	46	129	23%
Derbyshire	295	28	346	152	43	208	-40%
Devon and Cornwall	270	49	361	435	104	550	52%
Dorset	202	17	257	195	78	280	9%
Durham	103	9	122	40	20	62	-49%
Essex	889	52	1,019	744	130	1,226	20%
Gloucestershire	121	16	139	65	31	107	-23%
Greater Manchester	2,591	93	2,997	1,267	157	1,635	-45%
Hampshire	417	43	509	282	121	416	-18%
Hertfordshire	610	44	671	288	60	351	-48%
Humberside	246	25	286	226	108	353	23%
Kent	868	98	1,041	505	145	672	-35%
Lancashire	462	39	517	358	79	469	-9%
Leicestershire	670	33	718	336	44	1,463	104%
Lincolnshire	246	15	272	244	30	276	1%
Merseyside	857	23	943	282	70	382	-59%
Metropolitan	14,624	454	15,983	8,243	504	11,064	-31%
Norfolk	159	27	212	136	28	168	-21%
North Yorkshire	117	18	139	107	23	132	-5%
Northamptonshire	587	33	682	349	86	453	-34%
Northumbria	247	34	297	153	49	217	-27%
Nottinghamshire	369	67	488	372	58	439	-10%
South Yorkshire	301	27	353	354	58	431	22%
Staffordshire	470	36	520	164	57	231	-56%
Suffolk	379	11	428	159	32	205	-52%
Surrey	329	20	391	385	76	477	22%
Sussex	503	42	605	414	123	564	-7%
Thames Valley	842	71	975	592	122	748	-23%
Warwickshire	273	16	295	113	33	154	-48%
West Mercia	245	35	300	258	47	314	5%
West Midlands	2,221	117	2,418	1,662	183	2,115	-13%
West Yorkshire	1,021	87	1,199	813	97	982	-18%
Wiltshire	137	23	170	147	77	239	41%
England	33,633	1,863	37,868	21,038	3,180	28,975	-23%
Dyfed-Powys	35	9	44	52	10	62	41%
Gwent	69	7	80	109	18	148	85%
North Wales	176	25	232	145	74	238	3%
South Wales	254	33	300	179	56	238	-21%
Wales	534	74	656	484	158	683	4%
England and Wales^{3,4}	34,157	1,937	38,513	21,509	3,334	29,629	-23%
British Transport Police	6	-	6	5	-	5	-17%
Grand Total^{3,4}	34,163	1,937	38,519	21,514	3,334	29,634	-23%

1. These data are Experimental Statistics, which mean that caution should be taken when interpreting the figures.
2. The number of outcomes will not necessarily correspond to the number of disseminations in a given year since investigations can take months or longer to complete.
3. The overall total does not equal the total for all forces. Some offences can be included in more than one dissemination or can be disseminated to a force in multiple months. This number reflects the total number of unique offences, and offences which are part of two or more dissemination packages are only counted once. Each offence, no matter how many times it is disseminated, is assigned only one outcome.
4. As not all forces were able to provide a breakdown on fraud type, the sum of Fraud and Computer Misuse numbers may not add up to the total

Table 4.3.2: Recorded Fraud and Computer Misuse Act (CMA) offences outcomes, by Police Force Area, ending March 2019 and March 2020 (Experimental Statistics)¹

Police Force	Year ending March 2019			Year ending March 2020			% Change Total
	Fraud	CMA	Total ^{3,4}	Fraud	CMA	Total ^{3,4}	
Avon and Somerset	957	50	1,007	636	125	761	-24%
Bedfordshire	425	24	449	610	56	666	48%
Cambridgeshire	554	25	579	1,125	80	1,205	108%
Cheshire	780	46	826	252	202	454	-45%
City of London ⁵	586	11	597	1,368	25	1,393	133%
Cleveland	230	18	248	163	28	191	-23%
Cumbria	692	35	727	676	63	739	2%
Derbyshire	1,241	65	1,306	881	49	930	-29%
Devon and Cornwall	1,160	76	1,236	1,166	146	1,312	6%
Dorset	726	9	735	1,172	64	1,236	68%
Durham	199	5	204	244	7	251	23%
Essex	1,047	55	1,102	1,445	143	1,588	44%
Gloucestershire	172	10	182	193	47	240	32%
Greater Manchester ⁶	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hampshire	1,136	83	1,219	1,185	203	1,388	14%
Hertfordshire	1,211	61	1,272	1,311	168	1,479	16%
Humberside	312	14	326	403	23	426	31%
Kent	2,006	112	2,118	1,291	92	1,383	-35%
Lancashire	426	13	439	598	57	655	49%
Leicestershire	524	52	576	532	86	618	7%
Lincolnshire	900	51	951	1,236	60	1,296	36%
Merseyside	1,157	64	1,221	1,014	82	1,096	-10%
Metropolitan	12,092	467	12,559	4,709	310	5,019	-60%
Norfolk	785	32	817	660	78	738	-10%
North Yorkshire	92	5	97	47	12	59	-39%
Northamptonshire	843	44	887	1,172	127	1,299	46%
Northumbria	904	41	945	350	63	413	-56%
Nottinghamshire	2,821	123	2,944	2,776	168	2,944	0%
South Yorkshire	1,012	67	1,079	1,343	175	1,518	41%
Staffordshire	1,551	62	1,613	932	38	970	-40%
Suffolk	630	33	663	501	48	549	-17%
Surrey	2,797	107	2,904	2,191	80	2,271	-22%
Sussex	1,414	46	1,460	3,387	131	3,518	141%
Thames Valley	1,099	46	1,145	1,261	71	1,332	16%
Warwickshire	552	17	569	529	29	558	-2%
West Mercia	1,011	34	1,045	1,303	82	1,385	33%
West Midlands	2,056	110	2,166	2,434	359	2,793	29%
West Yorkshire	900	62	962	1,036	81	1,117	16%
Wiltshire	677	53	730	538	37	575	-21%
England Total	47,677	2,228	49,905	42,670	3,695	46,365	-7%
Dyfed-Powys	436	13	449	511	32	543	21%
Gwent	340	23	363	433	19	452	25%
North Wales	1,389	128	1,517	1,178	111	1,289	-15%
South Wales	1,200	110	1,310	1,676	196	1,872	43%
Wales Total	3,365	274	3,639	3,798	358	4,156	14%
England and Wales Total³	51,042	2,502	53,544	46,468	4,053	50,521	-6%
British Transport Police	77	2	79	93	3	96	22%
Grand Total³	51,119	2,504	53,623	46,561	4,056	50,617	-6%

1. These data are Experimental Statistics, which mean that caution should be taken when interpreting the figures.
2. The number of outcomes will not necessarily correspond to the number of disseminations in a given year since investigations can take months or longer to complete.
3. As not all forces were able to provide a breakdown on fraud type, the sum of Fraud and Computer Misuse numbers may not add up to the total.
4. Following updates from forces, figures for March 2019 have been revised from last year's publication.
5. Insurance Fraud Enforcement Department and National Lead Force included.
6. Following the implementation of a new IT system in July 2019, Greater Manchester Police have been unable to supply data for the period July to March 2020. Figures for Greater Manchester are not included in the National totals for the years ending March 2019 and 2020.
7. The increase in CMA outcomes can in part be explained by the steady increase in awareness campaigns relating to social media account compromises and large mass extortion. The increase can also be explained by a general increase in cybercrime.

Key question – why is there a fall in the volume of fraud offences sent to police forces for investigation?

The NFIB advise that a number of factors have influenced the fall in fraud disseminations. There was a reduction of capacity within the NFIB to review cases for possible referral to forces for investigation. This predominantly occurred following the introduction of the new Action Fraud reporting IT system in October 2018. This led to NFIB adopting a more conservative approach to referring cases and placed an increased concentration on cases thought to be related to organised crime

The NFIB have also developed a more qualitative method of identifying cases for referral using the intelligence and resources available. At the same time, additional resource was allocated to developing ways to protect victims through the offer of advice and referral of victims to tailored support and disruption of enablers. This will include cases where there was no realistic prospect of completing a successful investigation and such activity will not be reflected in the statistics reported here.

5 Further information

REFERENCES

The Home Office (2017), “Crime outcomes in England and Wales 2016/17”, and subsequent quarterly data tables. Available at:
www.gov.uk/government/collections/crime-outcomes-in-england-and-wales-statistics

Office for National Statistics (2018), “Crime in England and Wales: Year ending March 2018”. Available at:
www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice

Office for National Statistics (2017), “[User Guide to Crime Statistics for England and Wales](#)”.

UK Statistics Authority (2014) “[Assessment Report 268](#)”.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Before April 2013, official statistics about how the police deal with crimes focused narrowly on ‘detections’ (the number of cases resolved with a formal or informal criminal justice outcome). In April 2013, the Home Office introduced the new outcomes framework and changed the presentation of its crime outcomes statistics.

From April 2014 onwards, police forces have supplied data to the Home Office on a broader set of outcomes including those that do not result in a formal or informal criminal justice outcome. The year to March 2014 bulletin⁹, published in July 2014, showed the first provisional statistics from the new outcomes framework. We have since developed the statistics with input from police forces and users.

We continue to ensure that these police recorded crime outcomes statistics are:

- meeting identified user needs, including providing new analysis and greater transparency;
- well explained and readily accessible;
- produced according to sound methods; and
- managed impartially and objectively in the public interest.

The statistics in this bulletin are designated as Official Statistics as in January 2014, the UK Statistics Authority found that police recorded crime statistics did not meet the required standard for designation as National Statistics. The [full assessment report](#) against the Code of Practice for Official Statistics can be found on the UK Statistics Authority.

In July 2014, the Home Office Chief Statistician and the UK Statistics Authority Head of Assessment agreed to badge the year to March 2014 Crime Outcomes bulletin as Official Statistics, rather than National Statistics. This reflects the move to the new outcomes framework, and also the possibility that outcomes data are affected by similar issues to

⁹ www.gov.uk/government/statistics/crime-outcomes-in-england-and-wales-2013-to-2014

those that led to the de-designation of police recorded crime statistics.

Full details are available here:

www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/reports---correspondence/correspondence/letter-from-david-blunt-to-ed-humpherson---090714.pdf

www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/reports---correspondence/correspondence/letter-from-ed-humpherson-to-david-blunt---150714.pdf

It is our intention that the statistics will be assessed with a view to them gaining National Statistics status in due course.

PREVIOUS RELEASES

Previous editions of this bulletin included a chapter analysing outcomes for domestic abuse related offences. This has not been produced for this edition as it is our intention for it to be included in the cross-government compendium on Domestic Abuse due to be released by the Office for National Statistics in November 2019.

Previous editions of “Crime Outcomes in England and Wales” bulletins, are available from:
www.gov.uk/government/collections/crime-outcomes-in-england-and-wales-statistics

Copies of other Home Office publications (including crime statistics releases prior to April 2012) are available from:
www.gov.uk/government/organisations/home-office/series/crime-statistics#publications

Copies of crime statistics publications from April 2012 are available from the Office for National Statistics website:
www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice

This includes the *User Guide to Crime Statistics*, a useful reference guide with explanatory notes regarding the issues and classifications that are key to the production and presentation of the crime statistics.

CONTACT DETAILS

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This statistical bulletin is produced to the highest professional standards and is free from political interference. It has been produced by statisticians working in the Home Office Crime and Policing Statistics Programme 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 Chief Statistician, as Head of Profession, reports to the National Statistician with respect to all professional statistical matters and oversees all Home Office National and Official Statistics products with respect to the Code, being responsible for their timing, content and methodology.

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