Ministry of JUSTICE

Statistics on deaths reported to coroners England and Wales, 2009

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Statistics bulletin

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Executive summary

This bulletin presents statistics of coroners' work during the calendar year 2009, including deaths reported, post-mortems, and inquests (including those for treasure and treasure trove). These figures are used to monitor coroners' workload, throughput of cases, and percentages of post-mortems and inquests.

Main points

- Some 229,900 deaths were reported to coroners in 2009, a fall of 4,900 (2.1 per cent) from the 2008 figure. *(Tables 1,2, and 3)*

- The proportion of all registered deaths reported to coroners remained at an estimated[1] 46 per cent in 2009, the same as in 2008. This percentage has been relatively consistent over for the last few years. *(Table 2)*

- The percentage of cases involving post-mortem examinations, as a proportion of all deaths reported to coroners, fell slightly from just above 46 per cent in 2008 to just below in 2009, continuing the existing downward trend. *(Table 3)*

- Inquests were opened on 31,000 deaths, representing over 13 per cent of all deaths reported to coroners, a little higher than the percentage in 2008. *(Table 3)*

- As in recent years, the most common verdicts returned at inquests were death by accident or misadventure (in 29 per cent of cases), and deaths from natural causes (28 per cent). *(Tables 4 and 6)*

- Verdicts of suicide rose by one per cent in 2009 compared to the previous year; there were also rises in the number of verdicts of death by accident or misadventure, from natural causes, from industrial diseases, and open verdicts. There was also a large rise in the number of non-specific verdicts, a category which includes narrative verdicts which are a factual record of how and in what circumstances the death occurred; often used where the cause of death does not easily fit any of the standard verdicts. *(Table 6)*

- The estimated[2] average time taken to process an inquest in 2009 (defined as being from the time the death was reported until the conclusion of the inquest, where the death occurred in England and Wales) was 26 weeks, the same as in 2008. *(Table 7)*

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[1] Statistics on the number of registered deaths in England and Wales are published by the Office for National Statistics. However, the total number of registered deaths in 2009 is not yet available and has been estimated for the purposes of this table; see Explanatory Notes for more information.

[2] A direct average of the time taken to process an inquest cannot be calculated from the data collected; an estimate has been made instead. Please see Explanatory Notes for more information.

Introduction and important note on counting methodology

This bulletin presents statistics of deaths reported to coroners in England and Wales in 2009 in accordance with section 28 of the Coroners Act 1988. Information is provided on deaths reported to coroners, post-mortem examinations and inquests held, and verdicts returned at inquests.

Since 1995, coroners have been asked to report on those deaths notified to them which resulted in no further action being taken by them (known as “NFA cases”), that is, there was no inquest, no post-mortem, and no certificate was issued by them for registration purposes.

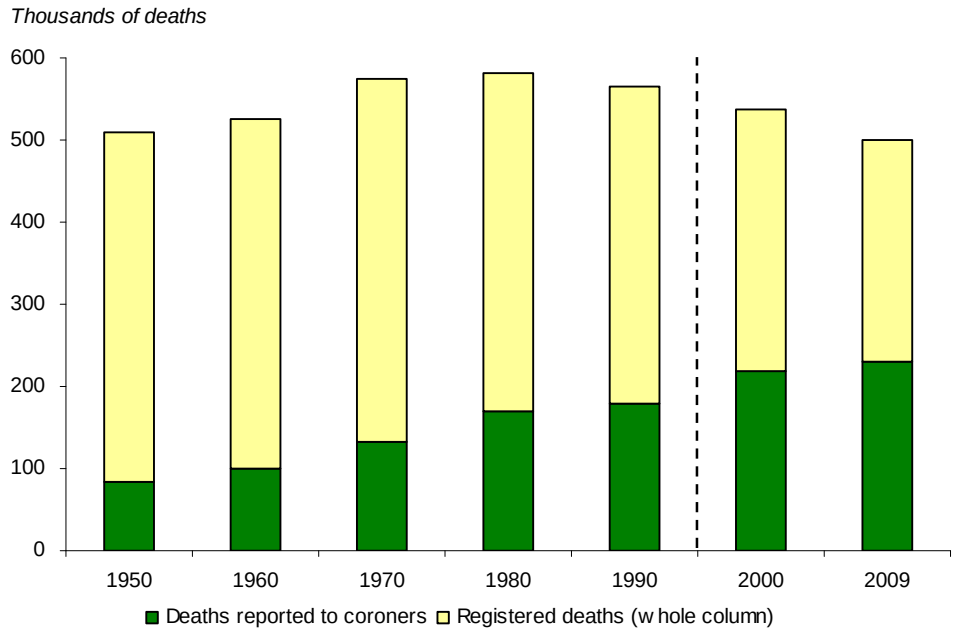
Prior to 1995, however, NFA cases were not reported in the annual statistics. It should be noted therefore that in Tables 2 and 3, which show figures over a number of years, figures for the total number of deaths reported to coroners since 1995 are not directly comparable to those for earlier years, as they have been counted on a different basis.

Because of differences between coroners as to how these NFA cases were reported in their figures, since 2005 all coroners have been asked to include these cases within the figures for all deaths reported that required neither an inquest nor a post-mortem, with separate figures for NFA cases only if the sex of the deceased was not known. A consistent time series for deaths reported excluding NFA cases is therefore not available.

Deaths reported (Tables 1, 2 and 3, Figures 1 and 2)

The number of deaths reported to coroners in 2009 fell by 4,900 (2.1 per cent) from the previous year, from 234,800 in 2008 to 229,900 during 2009, the lowest annual total since 2004. The proportion of registered deaths in the calendar year 2009 that were reported to coroners in 2009 remained at an estimated 46 per cent, the same level as in 2008. This percentage has been relatively consistent for the last few years.

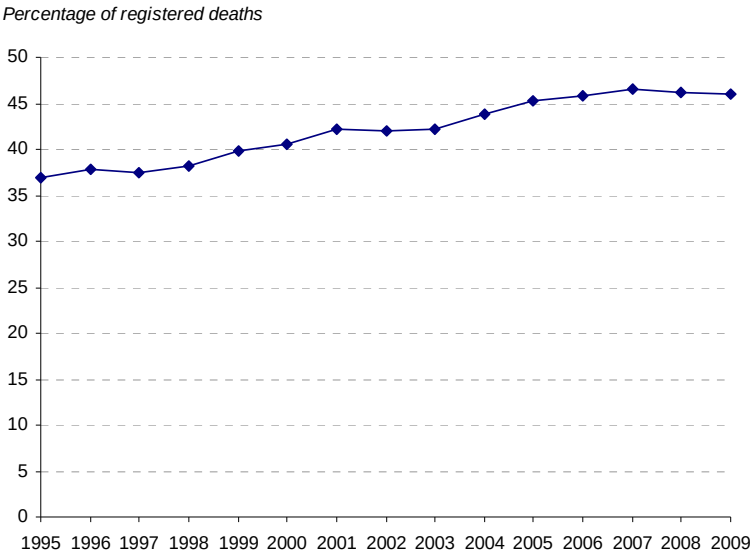
Figure 1: Registered deaths, and deaths reported to coroners, England and Wales, 1950-2009



NOTE: The figures for deaths reported to coroners in the columns to the right of the vertical dashed line include NFA cases, while those to the left exclude NFA cases (see above).

Until the last few years, the long-term trend in the number and proportion of deaths reported, was upwards. Since the Shipman murders came to light about a decade ago, there has been more concern about proper process. In the longer term, this rise is probably also due in part to the growing use, over at least the last twenty years, of deputising services by general practitioners, leading to a greater number of referrals to coroners.

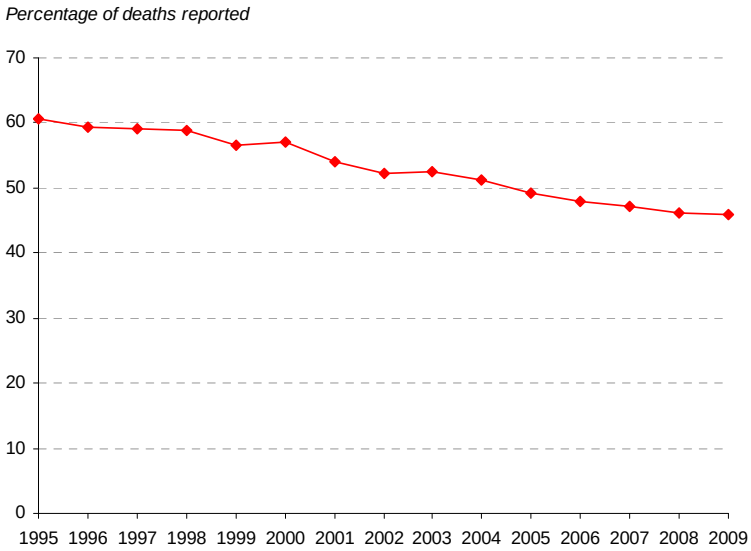
Figure 2: Deaths reported to coroners as a percentage of registered deaths, England and Wales, 1995-2009



Post-mortem examinations held and inquests opened (Tables 1, 2, and 3, Figures 3a and 3b)

Post-mortem examinations were ordered by coroners in 46 per cent of all cases reported to them in 2009, a very slight fall compared to 2008 and continues the existing downward trend.

Figure 3a: Post-mortems as a percentage of deaths reported to coroners, England and Wales, 1995-2009



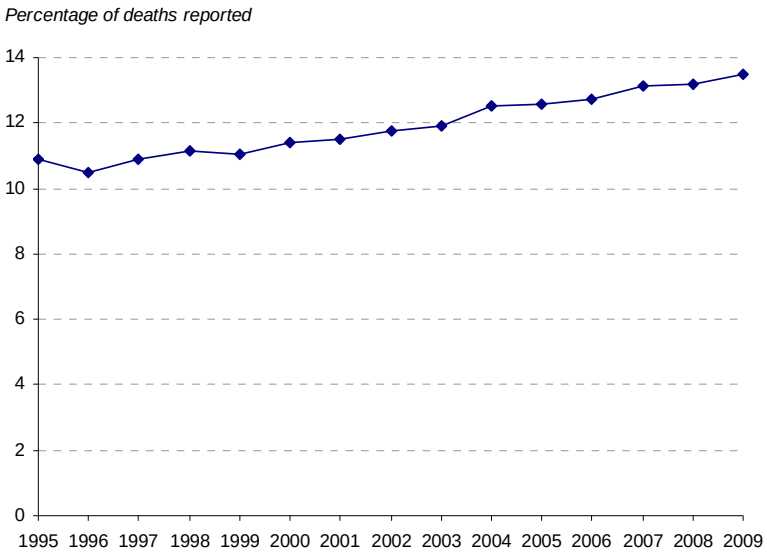
NOTE: this graph shows the proportion of all deaths referred to coroners where a post-mortem examination took place, whether there was an inquest or not.

The actual number of deaths reported to coroners in 2009 where a post-mortem was held was 105,400, some 3,000 fewer than in the year before, reflecting in part the overall decrease in reported deaths.

Inquests were opened on 31,000 deaths reported to coroners in 2009, just 22 fewer than in 2008. Inquest cases represented more than 13 per cent of

all the deaths reported to coroners in 2009, a slightly higher proportion of the total than in the previous year.

Figure 3b: Inquests as a percentage of deaths reported to coroners, England and Wales, 1995-2009



Post-mortems in inquest cases (Table 3)

When an inquest is held a post-mortem examination has usually been conducted, and in 2009 post-mortems were conducted in 91 per cent of such cases. This is a slightly lower proportion than in the previous year, and continues a shallow declining trend over the past decade or so. Prior to the late 1990s, the holding of an inquest without a post-mortem examination was comparatively rare, accounting for around 2 per cent or less of inquest cases every year. In 2009 there were nearly 2,800 inquests without a post-mortem, nearly six times the number so reported ten years ago.

Post-mortems in non-inquest cases (Table 3)

In the majority of cases referred to coroners there is no inquest. In 2009, there were some 77,100 non-inquest cases where a post-mortem was held, and the percentage of non-inquest cases that required a post-mortem fell to just below 39 per cent. This proportion has fallen steadily in recent years; in 1995 it was 56 per cent of all non-inquest cases.

Cases requiring neither an inquest nor a post-mortem (Table 3)

There were also 122,000 cases reported to coroners where there was neither an inquest nor a post-mortem. This particular category of case has generally been increasing in number in recent years. In addition, those cases where there was neither an inquest nor a post-mortem examination have increased, as a proportion of all coroners' cases, from around 40 per cent or just above in the late 1990s, to 53 per cent in 2009.

Inquest verdicts returned (Tables 4, 5 and 6, Figures 4, 5 and 6)

Verdicts were returned at some 29,800 inquests in 2009, nearly 800 more than in 2008. As in previous years the most common verdicts in 2009 were death by accident or misadventure (8,700, 29 per cent of all verdicts) and deaths from natural causes (8,300, 28 per cent). Unclassified verdicts, which category includes narrative verdicts, represented 13 per cent of the total, and verdicts of suicide comprised 11 per cent in 2009.

There were increases in the numbers of verdicts in many categories over the past year, including:

- A 14 per cent rise in non-specific or unclassified verdicts, up 460 to nearly 3,800;
- a 10 per cent rise in the number of deaths by natural causes (up 725 to 8,300)
- a 6 per cent rise in the number of verdicts of death from industrial disease, up 150 to 2,600.

The rise in unclassified verdicts is at least in part due to the increasing use of what are known as 'narrative verdicts' by some coroners (see the paragraph on trends, below). A narrative verdict is where, instead of a conventional verdict, at the end of the inquest the coroner records a factual record of how and in what circumstances the death occurred. Recent case law may be responsible for the increased number of narrative verdicts in recent years, including the House of Lords Middleton[3] judgement which encouraged their use.

The number of verdicts of death from accident or misadventure returned in 2009 fell from 9,200 to 8,700, a drop of 6 per cent. There was also a fall of 50 (8 per cent) in verdicts relating to drug-related death.

Trends (Table 5 and Figure 4)

Verdicts of death from natural causes are tending to rise steadily, and there is also a steady and steeper rise in the number of unclassified, including narrative, verdicts. There is a long-term downward trend in the numbers of verdicts of suicide, though there are fluctuations within that trend, including a rise in the number of such verdicts in 2008 compared to 2007.

As a *proportion* of verdicts delivered by coroners during a calendar year, there are five main trends, two rising, and three falling:

- Verdicts of natural causes have risen from 12 per cent in 1994 to around 28 per cent in 2009.

[3] R v H.M. Coroner for Western Somersetshire and another *ex parte* Middleton (2004)

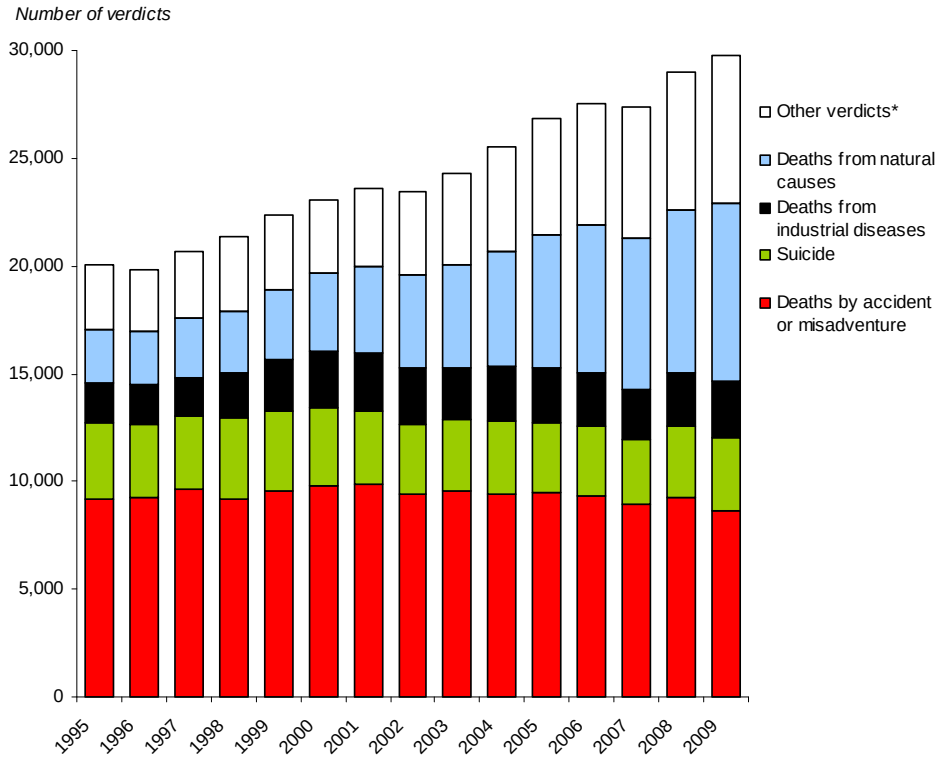
- Non-specific verdicts (which include narrative verdicts, as explained above) formed fewer than one per cent of the total until 2001, but accounted for more than one in every eight verdicts in 2009.

- Verdicts of deaths by accident or misadventure have been declining, from 47 per cent of verdicts returned in 1994 to 29 per cent in 2009.

- Suicide verdicts have been declining slowly over the same period, from 18 per cent in 1994 to around 11 per cent in 2009.

- Open verdicts have been falling in percentage terms in the last few years, from around 11 per cent in the mid-1990s to less than 8 per cent in 2009.

Figure 4: Verdicts returned at inquests, England and Wales, 1995-2009



*Includes open verdicts, and non-specific verdicts, etc. (see Table 6)

Gender differences (Table 4, Figures 5 and 6)

The pattern of verdicts differs between males and females. Male deaths accounted for about 69 per cent of all verdicts returned in 2009; but they also included

- 92 per cent of verdicts of death from industrial disease;

- 78 per cent of verdicts of suicide, and

- 84 per cent of verdicts of death from dependence on, or non-dependent abuse of, drugs.

For females, the most common verdicts were

- death by accident or misadventure (36 per cent of all female verdicts)

- death from natural causes (36 per cent).

These proportions were all similar to those in recent years. Females also accounted for a relatively high percentage of unclassified or narrative verdicts (39 per cent).

Figure 5: Verdicts returned at inquests by sex, England and Wales, 2009

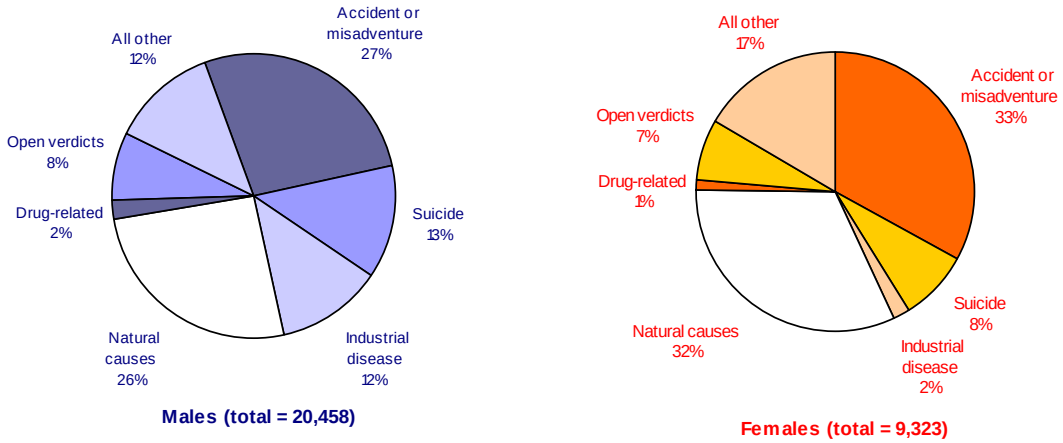
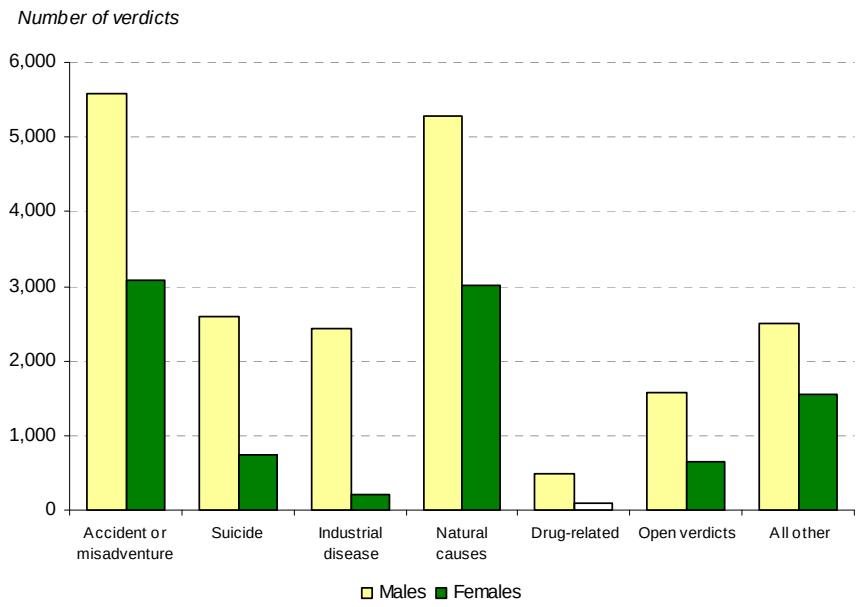


Figure 6: Number of verdicts returned at inquests, by sex, England and Wales, 2009



Age of deceased in inquests where a verdict was returned (Table 5)

From 2008, coroners were asked to provide information (in summary form) on the ages of persons whose deaths proceeded to inquest and a verdict was returned during the year. Nearly 44 per cent of completed inquests in 2009 were on persons who were 65 years of age or more at death. Less than 10 per cent of inquests concluded were into deaths of persons aged under 25. There were only ten cases in 2009 where the age of the deceased was either not known or could not be readily provided.

Inquests with juries, and adjourned inquests (Table 7)

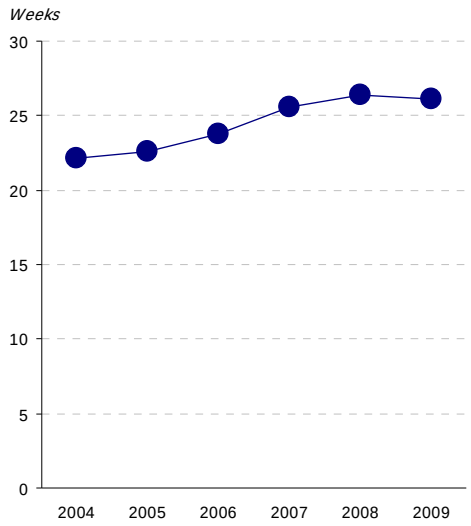
Nearly all inquests concluded in 2009, as in other years, were held without juries. The number of inquests held with juries in 2009 was 470 (representing under 2 per cent of all inquests), a modest fall of about 20 compared to 2008. Both the number and proportion of inquests held with juries have shown a downward trend in recent years; the proportion of inquests held with juries has fallen from 3.6 per cent of inquests concluded in 1999 to just under 2 per cent in 2009..

Around 920 inquests were adjourned by the coroner under Section 16 of the Coroners Act 1988 because criminal proceedings took place, and subsequently not resumed. This is comparable with the level generally prevailing in recent years.

Time taken to process an inquest (Table 7)

The estimated average time taken to process an inquest in 2009 (defined as being from the time the death was reported until the conclusion of the inquest) was 26 weeks to the nearest whole week, the same as in 2007 and 2008.

Figure 6a: Estimated average time taken to process an inquest, 2004-2009



This period has slightly increased since the present system of estimating this average was introduced in 2004, when it was 22 weeks. Only deaths occurring within England and Wales are included in this estimation.

Treasure and Treasure Trove (Table 8 and Figure 7)

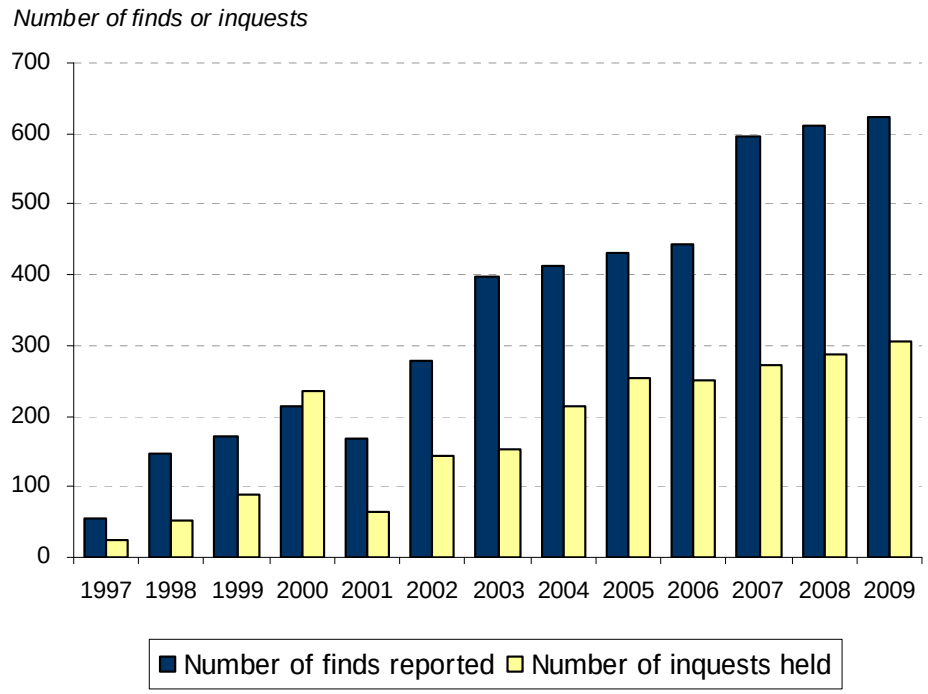
On 24 September 1997, the Treasure Act 1996 came into force and replaced the common law of Treasure Trove in England and Wales. The 1996 Act introduced new requirements for reporting and dealing with finds. Not all finds need be the subject of an inquest.

In 2009, 624 finds were reported and 307 inquests were concluded, from which a verdict declaring a find to be Treasure was returned in 289 cases. There were also three inquests held into Treasure Trove in 2009, relating to finds made before the current Act came into force. It is likely that a few such inquests will continue to be held for some time.

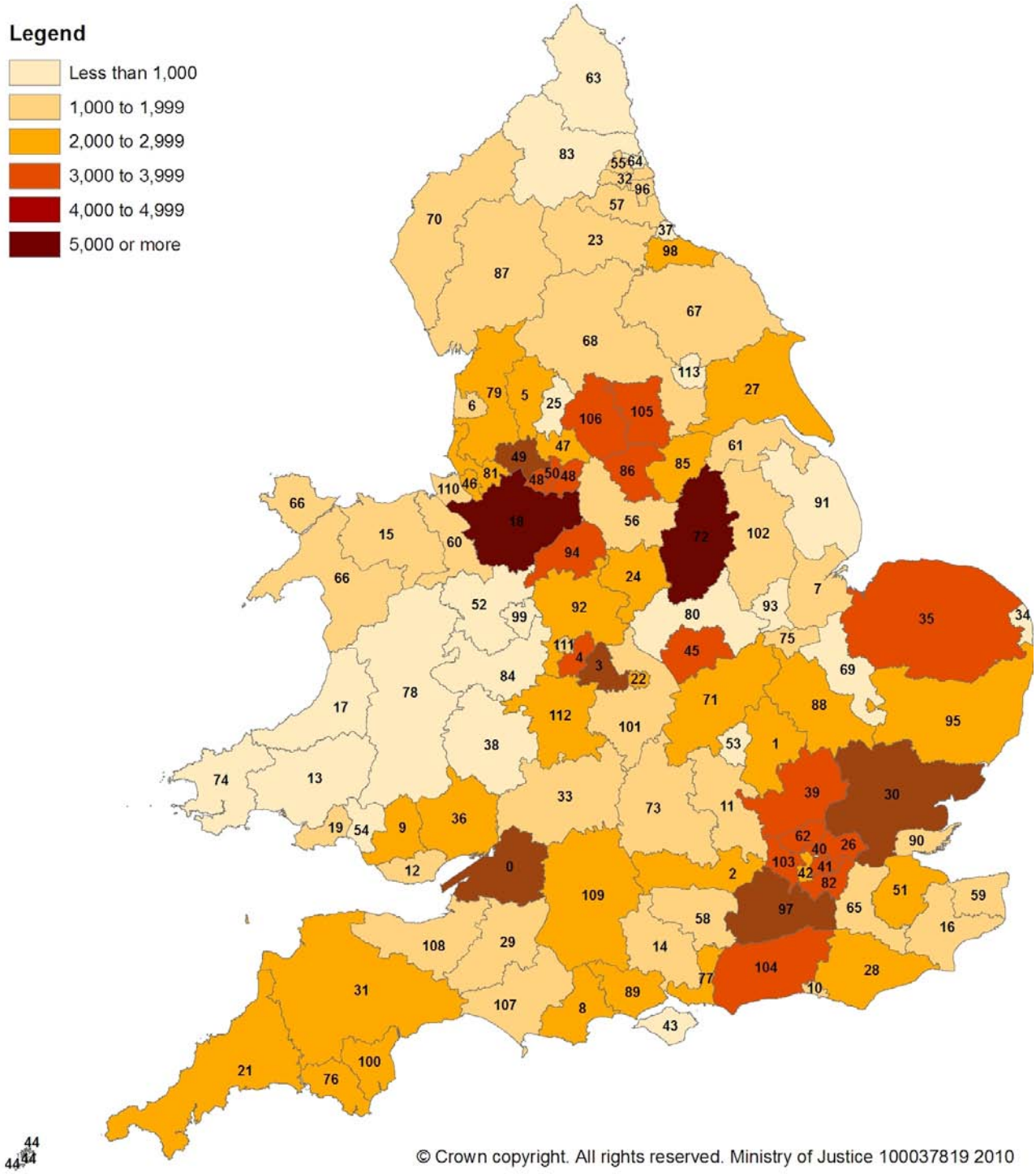
The number of finds reported has been steadily increasing in recent years; this is probably because of the increasing popularity of treasure-hunting as a hobby. The dip in reported finds in 2001 is almost certainly due to the foot-and-mouth outbreak, which severely restricted access to land during the spring of that year.

An annual report on the operation of the Treasure Act 1996 is published by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport.

Figure 7: Finds reported to coroners and inquests held under the Treasure Act, 1997-2009



Map of coroner jurisdictions in England and Wales, shaded according to the total number of deaths reported to each coroner in 2009 (see overleaf for key to jurisdictions)



Map of coroner jurisdictions in England and Wales – key to jurisdictions

0 – Avon
1 – Bedfordshire and Luton
2 – Berkshire
3 – Birmingham and Solihull
4 – Black Country
5 – Blackburn, Hyndburn and Ribble Valley
6 – Blackpool/Fylde
7 – Boston and Spalding
8 – Bournemouth, Poole and Eastern Dorset
9 – Bridgend and Glamorgan Valleys
10 – Brighton and Hove
11 – Buckinghamshire
12 – Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan
13 – Carmarthenshire
14 – Central Hampshire
15 – Central North Wales
16 – Central and South East Kent
17 – Ceredigion
18 – Cheshire
19 – City and County of Swansea
[20 – City of London – not visible]
21 – Cornwall
22 – Coventry
23 – Darlington and South Durham
24 – Derby and South Derbyshire
25 – East Lancashire
26 – East London
27 – East Riding and Hull
28 – East Sussex
29 – Eastern Somerset
30 – Essex and Thurrock
31 – Exeter and Greater Devon
32 – Gateshead and South Tyneside
33 – Gloucestershire
34 – Great Yarmouth
35 – Greater Norfolk
36 – Gwent
37 – Hartlepool
38 – Herefordshire
39 – Hertfordshire
40 – Inner North London
41 – Inner South London
42 – Inner West London
43 – Isle of Wight
44 – Isles of Scilly
45 – Leicester city and South Leicestershire
46 – Liverpool
47 – Manchester North
48 – Manchester South
49 – Manchester West
50 – Manchester city
51 – Mid Kent and Medway
52 – Mid and North Shropshire
53 – Milton Keynes
54 – Neath and Port Talbot
55 – Newcastle upon Tyne
56 – North Derbyshire
57 – North Durham
58 – North East Hampshire
59 – North East Kent
60 – North East Wales
61 – North Lincolnshire and Grimsby
62 – North London
63 – North Northumberland
64 – North Tyneside
65 – North West Kent
66 – North West Wales
67 – North Yorkshire Eastern District
68 – North Yorkshire Western District
69 – North and East Cambridgeshire
70 – North and West Cumbria
71 – Northamptonshire
72 – Nottinghamshire
73 – Oxfordshire
74 – Pembrokeshire
75 – Peterborough
76 – Plymouth and South West Devon
77 – Portsmouth and South East Hampshire
78 – Powys
79 – Preston and West Lancashire
80 – Rutland and North Leicestershire
81 – Sefton, Knowsley and St Helens
82 – South London
83 – South Northumberland
84 – South Shropshire
85 – South Yorkshire Eastern District
86 – South Yorkshire Western District
87 – South and East Cumbria
88 – South and West Cambridgeshire
89 – Southampton and New Forest
90 – Southend-on-Sea
91 – Spilsby and Louth
92 – Staffordshire South
93 – Stamford
94 – Stoke-on-Trent and North Staffordshire
95 – Suffolk
96 – Sunderland
97 – Surrey
98 – Teesside
99 – Telford and Wrekin
100 – Torbay and South Devon
101 – Warwickshire
102 – West Lincolnshire
103 – West London
104 – West Sussex
105 – West Yorkshire Eastern District
106 – West Yorkshire Western District
107 – Western Dorset
108 – Western Somerset
109 – Wiltshire and Swindon
110 – Wirral
111 – Wolverhampton
112 – Worcestershire
113 – York city

Tables

Table 1: Deaths reported to coroners, 2009

England and Wales — Number of reported deaths

	Males	Females	Total
Total deaths reported to coroners, 2009 (1)(2)	**122,956**	**105,853**	**229,883**
Inquests			
Deaths reported where an inquest was opened	21,167	9,810	30,977
Deaths reported where no inquest occurred (1)(2)	101,789	96,043	198,906
Post-mortem examinations			
Deaths reported where a post-mortem took place	63,283	42,071	105,354
Deaths reported without a post-mortem (1)(2)	59,673	63,782	124,529

(1) This row includes deaths referred to the coroner where no certificate of any kind was issued ("no further action" cases).
(2) The **total** column includes "no further action" cases which could not be categorized into males and females.

Table 2: Registered deaths, deaths reported to coroners, and inquests opened, 1950-2009

England and Wales — Thousands and percentages

Year	Registered deaths (thousands)	Deaths reported to coroners		Inquests opened	
		Number (thousands) (1)	As a percentage of registered deaths	Number (thousands)	As a percentage of deaths reported to coroners (1)
1950	510.3	83.6	16.4%	25.8	30.9%
1960	526.3	101.1	19.2%	26.3	26.0%
1970	575.2	133.4	23.2%	24.9	18.7%
1980	581.4	170.2	29.3%	23.1	13.6%
1990	564.8	180.1	31.9%	22.1	12.3%
1995	565.9	208.5	36.8%	22.7	10.9%
1996	563.0	212.6	37.8%	22.3	10.5%
1997	558.1	208.6	37.4%	22.7	10.9%
1998	553.4	211.4	38.2%	23.6	11.1%
1999	553.5	220.2	39.8%	24.4	11.1%
2000	537.9	218.1	40.5%	24.9	11.4%
2001	532.5	224.3	42.1%	25.8	11.5%
2002	535.4	225.0	42.0%	26.4	11.7%
2003	539.2	227.8	42.2%	27.1	11.9%
2004	514.3	225.5	43.9%	28.3	12.5%
2005	513.0	232.4	45.3%	29.3	12.6%
2006	502.6	230.0	45.8%	29.3	12.8%
2007	504.1	234.5	46.5%	30.8	13.2%
2008	509.1	234.8	46.1%	31.0	13.2%
2009	500.1 (2)	229.9	46.0%	31.0	13.5%

(1) 'NFA' cases are deaths notified to coroners which required neither an inquest nor a post-mortem, and where no certificate of any kind was issued. From 1995 onwards all 'NFA' cases have been included in the number of reported deaths. Prior to that, these cases were excluded. Figures for 1995 onwards are therefore not directly comparable to those for previous years.

(2) Statistics on the number of registered deaths in England and Wales are published by the Office for National Statistics. However, the total number of registered deaths in 2009 is not yet available and has been estimated for the purposes of this table; see Explanatory Notes for more information.

Table 3: Deaths reported to coroners, post-mortem examinations held and inquests opened, 1995-2009

England and Wales — Numbers and percentages

Year	Inquest opened						No inquest opened					Post-mortems		
	Post-mortem examination held		No post-mortem held		Total inquests opened	% of deaths reported (1)	Post-mortem examination held		No post-mortem held		Total non-inquest cases, inc. NFA	Total post-mortems held	% of deaths reported (1)	Total deaths reported inc. NFA
	Number	% of inquest cases	Number	% of inquest cases			Number	% of non-inquest cases (1)	Number, inc. NFA	% of non-inquest cases (1)				
1995	22,247	98.1%	423	1.9%	**22,670**	10.9%	104,151	56.0%	81,701	44.0%	**185,852**	**126,398**	60.6%	**208,522**
1996	21,863	98.0%	455	2.0%	**22,318**	10.5%	104,321	54.8%	85,945	45.2%	**190,266**	**126,184**	59.4%	**212,584**
1997	22,336	98.4%	367	1.6%	**22,703**	10.9%	100,679	54.2%	85,196	45.8%	**185,875**	**123,015**	59.0%	**208,578**
1998	23,191	98.4%	377	1.6%	**23,568**	11.1%	101,165	53.8%	86,700	46.2%	**187,865**	**124,356**	58.8%	**211,433**
1999	23,896	98.0%	479	2.0%	**24,375**	11.1%	100,884	51.5%	94,917	48.5%	**195,801**	**124,780**	56.7%	**220,176**
2000	24,117	97.0%	740	3.0%	**24,857**	11.4%	100,419	52.0%	92,816	48.0%	**193,235**	**124,536**	57.1%	**218,092**
2001	24,617	95.4%	1,176	4.6%	**25,793**	11.5%	96,495	48.6%	101,998	51.4%	**198,493**	**121,112**	54.0%	**224,286**
2002	25,363	96.0%	1,067	4.0%	**26,430**	11.7%	92,321	46.5%	106,248	53.5%	**198,569**	**117,684**	52.3%	**224,999**
2003	25,754	95.0%	1,359	5.0%	**27,113**	11.9%	93,856	46.8%	106,821	53.2%	**200,677**	**119,610**	52.5%	**227,790**
2004	26,618	94.1%	1,656	5.9%	**28,274**	12.5%	89,155	45.2%	108,082	54.8%	**197,237**	**115,773**	51.3%	**225,511**
2005	27,537	94.1%	1,734	5.9%	**29,271**	12.6%	87,083	42.9%	116,047	57.1%	**203,130**	**114,620**	49.3%	**232,401**
2006	27,305	93.1%	2,022	6.9%	**29,327**	12.8%	82,919	41.3%	117,761	58.7%	**200,680**	**110,224**	47.9%	**230,007**
2007	28,510	92.4%	2,331	7.6%	**30,841**	13.2%	81,850	40.2%	121,767	59.8%	**203,617**	**110,360**	47.1%	**234,458**
2008	28,518	92.0%	2,481	8.0%	**30,999**	13.2%	79,842	39.2%	123,943	60.8%	**203,785**	**108,360**	46.2%	**234,784**
2009	28,213	91.1%	2,764	8.9%	**30,977**	13.5%	77,141	38.8%	121,765	61.2%	**198,906**	**105,354**	45.8%	**229,883**

(1) Percentages shown are of deaths reported including "no further action" (NFA) cases. NFA cases are deaths notified to coroners which required neither an inquest nor a post-mortem, and where no certificate of any kind was issued. From 1995 onwards all 'NFA' cases have been included in the number of reported deaths. Prior to that, these cases were excluded. There are therefore no directly comparable figures for the total number of reported deaths including 'NFA' cases prior to 1995.

Table 4: Inquest verdicts returned, 2009

England and Wales — Number of verdicts returned

Verdict	Males	Females	Total
Homicide, of which:			
killed unlawfully	156	66	222
killed lawfully	4	1	5
Suicide	2,596	734	3,330
Attempted or self-induced abortion	-	-	-
Cause of death aggravated by lack of care, or self-neglect	26	10	36
Dependence on drugs	260	56	316
Non-dependent abuse of drugs	216	34	250
Want of attention at birth	1	-	1
Death from industrial diseases	2,425	198	2,623
Death by accident or misadventure	5,585	3,088	8,673
Stillborn	5	2	7
Deaths from natural causes	5,280	3,001	8,281
Open verdicts	1,583	657	2,240
Disasters	-	-	-
All other verdicts	2,321	1,476	3,797
Total verdicts returned, 2009	**20,458**	**9,323**	**29,781**

Table 5: Age of deceased in inquests where a verdict was returned, 2009

England and Wales — Number and percentage

Age of deceased at time of death	Number of inquest verdicts returned, 2008	As a % of total verdicts returned
Under 1 year	659	2.2%
1 to 14 years	428	1.4%
15 to 24 years	1,672	5.6%
25 to 44 years	6,469	21.7%
45 to 64 years	7,491	25.2%
65 years and over	13,052	43.8%
Age not known or could not be readily provided	10	0.0%
Total verdicts returned, 2009	**29,781**	**100.0%**

Table 6: Inquest verdicts returned, 1995-2009

England and Wales — Number of verdicts returned

Verdict	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Homicide, of which:															
killed unlawfully	217	169	165	142	167	178	192	177	182	206	248	223	257	263	222
killed lawfully	6	1	2	3	2	4	2	6	1	5	4	2	2	2	5
Suicide	3,579	3,399	3,355	3,756	3,693	3,626	3,389	3,242	3,255	3,368	3,235	3,220	3,007	3,305	3,330
Attempted or self-induced abortion	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	0
Cause of death aggravated by lack of care, or self-neglect	35	59	59	47	44	33	43	46	50	51	27	30	35	35	36
Dependence on drugs	139	156	177	258	289	323	309	294	248	280	299	328	324	343	316
Non-dependent abuse of drugs	162	199	220	237	284	282	313	260	254	269	261	268	276	274	250
Want of attention at birth	9	5	4	5	1	4	6	1	4	3	2	3	-	1	1
Death from industrial diseases	1,878	1,784	1,836	2,091	2,373	2,591	2,661	2,653	2,403	2,571	2,567	2,496	2,332	2,474	2,623
Death by accident or misadventure	9,142	9,286	9,646	9,199	9,558	9,796	9,882	9,379	9,594	9,420	9,498	9,353	8,930	9,230	8,673
Stillborn	8	6	6	12	4	4	8	3	10	11	10	12	21	13	7
Deaths from natural causes	2,483	2,498	2,756	2,852	3,306	3,642	4,068	4,334	4,766	5,296	6,175	6,828	7,011	7,556	8,281
Open verdicts	2,257	2,151	2,319	2,571	2,509	2,449	2,519	2,445	2,619	2,600	2,531	2,378	2,242	2,167	2,240
Disasters	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	4	-	-	-	0
All other verdicts	136	142	154	160	119	156	225	583	873	1,412	1,952	2,406	2,923	3,333	3,797
Total verdicts returned	**20,051**	**19,855**	**20,699**	**21,333**	**22,349**	**23,088**	**23,617**	**23,423**	**24,259**	**25,494**	**26,814**	**27,547**	**27,360**	**28,996**	**29,781**

Table 7: Inquests concluded which were held with juries and inquests adjourned; High Court orders and exhumations, 1995-2009, estimated average time taken to process inquests, 2004-2009(1)

England and Wales — Number

Year	Juries			Verdicts / adjournments			Total inquests concluded	Estimated average time to process an inquest (weeks)(1)	Inquests held by order of the High Court (2)	Inquisitions quashed or amended by the High Court	Exhumations ordered by the coroner
	Inquests without juries	Inquests with juries	% with juries	Verdicts returned	Inquests adjourned and not resumed	% adjourned					
1995	20,093	857	4.1%	20,051	899	4.3%	20,950	n/a	50	2	4
1996	19,844	903	4.4%	19,855	892	4.3%	20,747	n/a	7	1	3
1997	20,774	774	3.6%	20,699	849	3.9%	21,548	n/a	3	2	1
1998	21,141	1,035	4.7%	21,333	843	3.8%	22,176	n/a	2	0	5
1999	22,298	823	3.6%	22,349	772	3.3%	23,121	n/a	-	2	2
2000	23,243	824	3.4%	23,088	979	4.1%	24,067	n/a	1	1	7
2001	23,757	759	3.1%	23,617	899	3.7%	24,516	n/a	3	2	5
2002	23,859	687	2.8%	23,423	1,123	4.6%	24,546	n/a	2	1	3
2003	24,531	636	2.5%	24,259	908	3.6%	25,167	n/a	1	4	1
2004	25,869	568	2.1%	25,494	943	3.6%	26,437	22	1	1	2
2005	27,302	520	1.9%	26,814	1,008	3.6%	27,822	23	3	1	3
2006	27,934	569	2.0%	27,547	956	3.4%	28,503	24	2	2	2
2007	27,747	539	1.9%	27,360	926	3.3%	28,286	26	1	1	4
2008	29,344	485	1.6%	28,996	833	2.8%	29,829	26	-	2	1
2009	30,239	466	1.5%	29,781	924	3.0%	30,705	26	1	1	2

(1) A direct average of the time taken to process an inquest cannot be calculated from the data collected; an estimate has been made instead. Figures only relate to those inquests where the death occurred in England or Wales; figures are not collected on the time taken to process inquests where the death occurred elsewhere. Please see Explanatory Notes for more information. Figures were collected on a different basis prior to 2004, and therefore comparable figures are not available.

(2) The 1995 figure for inquests held by order of the High Court includes 48 inquests arising from the Marchioness pleasure boat disaster.

Table 8: Treasure inquests, 1995-2009

England and Wales — Number

Year	Treasure Act 1996			Treasure trove (1)
	Number of finds reported	Number of inquests concluded	Verdicts of treasure returned	Inquests held on treasure trove
1995	n/a	n/a	n/a	66
1996	n/a	n/a	n/a	45
1997	54	25	6	35
1998	147	53	42	20
1999	170	90	86	8
2000	213	236	123	4
2001	168	63	65	5
2002	279	144	133	3
2003	396	154	140	6
2004 (R)	412	213	191	16
2005	432	253	228	7
2006	444	252	217	12
2007	595	273	229	13
2008	610	286	270	9
2009	624	307	289	3

(R) The figure for treasure inquests held by coroners in 2004 has been revised; see Explanatory Notes for more information.

(1) Relates to finds made before the commencement of the Treasure Act in September 1997

Table 9: Reported deaths, post-mortems and inquests by jurisdiction 2009, and comparison with 2008

County / unitary authority or district	2009 cases					2008 cases					% change, 2008 to 2009		
	Reported deaths 2009, inc. NFA	Post-mortems 2009	PMs as % of rep. deaths 2009	Inquests 2009	Inquests as % of rep. deaths 2009	**Reported deaths 2008, inc. NFA**	Post-mortems 2008	PMs as % of rep. deaths 2008	Inquests 2008	Inquests as % of rep. deaths 2008	% change in reported deaths, inc. NFA	change in % PMs	change in % inquests
The Queen's Household	0	0	n/a	0	n/a	**0**	0	n/a	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
ENGLAND													
NORTH EAST													
DURHAM													
Darlington and South Durham	**1,190**	618	52%	145	12%	**1,087**	657	60%	140	13%	9.5%	-8.5%	-0.7%
North Durham	**1,313**	784	60%	249	19%	**1,222**	772	63%	223	18%	7.4%	-3.5%	0.7%
HARTLEPOOL	**492**	240	49%	50	10%	**472**	176	37%	50	11%	4.2%	11.5%	-0.4%
NORTHUMBERLAND													
North Northumberland	**730**	334	46%	154	21%	**738**	371	50%	106	14%	-1.1%	-4.5%	6.7%
South Northumberland	**440**	300	68%	117	27%	**489**	335	69%	94	19%	-10.0%	-0.3%	7.4%
TEESSIDE	**2,618**	1,024	39%	307	12%	**2,731**	1,065	39%	349	13%	-4.1%	0.1%	-1.1%
TYNE AND WEAR													
Gateshead and South Tyneside	**1,945**	823	42%	188	10%	**1,981**	846	43%	244	12%	-1.8%	-0.4%	-2.7%
Newcastle upon Tyne	**1,849**	736	40%	370	20%	**1,922**	776	40%	294	15%	-3.8%	-0.6%	4.7%
North Tyneside	**832**	453	54%	226	27%	**864**	533	62%	221	26%	-3.7%	-7.2%	1.6%
Sunderland	**1,638**	617	38%	394	24%	**1,685**	599	36%	339	20%	-2.8%	2.1%	3.9%
NORTH WEST													
CHESHIRE	**5,130**	2,444	48%	799	16%	**4,714**	2,416	51%	775	16%	8.8%	-3.6%	-0.9%
CUMBRIA													
South and East Cumbria	**1,022**	642	63%	175	17%	**1,100**	670	61%	176	16%	-7.1%	1.9%	1.1%
North and West Cumbria	**1,267**	655	52%	175	14%	**1,311**	634	48%	141	11%	-3.4%	3.3%	3.1%
GREATER MANCHESTER													
Manchester city	**3,136**	1,853	59%	783	25%	**2,972**	1,744	59%	743	25%	5.5%	0.4%	0.0%
Manchester North	**2,655**	914	34%	469	18%	**2,584**	993	38%	393	15%	2.7%	-4.0%	2.5%
Manchester South	**3,106**	1,790	58%	585	19%	**3,215**	1,954	61%	612	19%	-3.4%	-3.1%	-0.2%
Manchester West	**4,105**	1,922	47%	586	14%	**4,094**	2,038	50%	658	16%	0.3%	-3.0%	-1.8%
LANCASHIRE													
Blackburn, Hyndburn and Ribble Valley	**2,689**	1,002	37%	363	13%	**2,508**	812	32%	297	12%	7.2%	4.9%	1.7%
Blackpool/Fylde	**1,694**	841	50%	130	8%	**1,720**	807	47%	127	7%	-1.5%	2.7%	0.3%
East Lancashire	**636**	420	66%	135	21%	**664**	432	65%	147	22%	-4.2%	1.0%	-0.9%
Preston and West Lancashire	**2,760**	1,545	56%	409	15%	**2,979**	1,661	56%	446	15%	-7.4%	0.2%	-0.2%
MERSEYSIDE													
Sefton, Knowsley and St Helens	**2,406**	828	34%	270	11%	**2,620**	898	34%	270	10%	-8.2%	0.1%	0.9%
Liverpool	**2,733**	873	32%	507	19%	**2,912**	908	31%	509	17%	-6.1%	0.8%	1.1%
Wirral	**1,737**	665	38%	267	15%	**1,621**	639	39%	267	16%	7.2%	-1.1%	-1.1%

Table 9: Reported deaths, post-mortems and inquests by jurisdiction 2009, and comparison with 2008 *(continued)*

County / unitary authority or district	2009 cases					2008 cases					% change, 2008 to 2009		
	Reported deaths 2009, inc. NFA	Post-mortems 2009	PMs as % of rep. deaths 2009	Inquests 2009	Inquests as % of rep. deaths 2009	**Reported deaths 2008, inc. NFA**	Post-mortems 2008	PMs as % of rep. deaths 2008	Inquests 2008	Inquests as % of rep. deaths 2008	% change in reported deaths, inc. NFA	change in % PMs	change in % inquests
YORKSHIRE AND THE HUMBER													
EAST RIDING and HULL	**2,971**	1,133	38%	293	10%	**3,013**	1,112	37%	293	10%	-1.4%	1.2%	0.1%
NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE and GRIMSBY	**1,477**	455	31%	124	8%	**1,368**	438	32%	127	9%	8.0%	-1.2%	-0.9%
YORK CITY	**982**	411	42%	101	10%	**1,084**	442	41%	105	10%	-9.4%	1.1%	0.6%
North Yorkshire Eastern District	**1,139**	661	58%	132	12%	**1,196**	654	55%	125	10%	-4.8%	3.4%	1.1%
North Yorkshire Western District	**1,078**	368	34%	129	12%	**1,051**	400	38%	126	12%	2.6%	-3.9%	0.0%
South Yorkshire Eastern District	**2,513**	1,550	62%	352	14%	**2,751**	1,603	58%	366	13%	-8.7%	3.4%	0.7%
South Yorkshire Western District	**3,120**	1,514	49%	453	15%	**3,244**	1,504	46%	479	15%	-3.8%	2.2%	-0.2%
West Yorkshire Eastern District	**3,686**	1,658	45%	513	14%	**3,778**	1,809	48%	585	15%	-2.4%	-2.9%	-1.6%
West Yorkshire Western District	**3,388**	1,749	52%	495	15%	**3,609**	1,779	49%	505	14%	-6.1%	2.3%	0.6%
EAST MIDLANDS													
DERBYSHIRE													
Derby and South Derbyshire	**2,600**	1,105	43%	283	11%	**2,709**	1,211	45%	295	11%	-4.0%	-2.2%	0.0%
North Derbyshire	**1,975**	814	41%	327	17%	**2,099**	652	31%	308	15%	-5.9%	10.2%	1.9%
LEICESTERSHIRE													
Leicester City and South Leicestershire	**3,318**	865	26%	413	12%	**3,426**	1,257	37%	668	19%	-3.2%	-10.6%	-7.1%
Rutland and North Leicestershire	**866**	451	52%	168	19%	**874**	486	56%	170	19%	-0.9%	-3.5%	-0.1%
LINCOLNSHIRE													
Boston and Spalding	**1,021**	413	40%	64	6%	**1,012**	400	40%	59	6%	0.9%	0.9%	0.4%
West Lincolnshire	**1,558**	525	34%	136	9%	**1,652**	546	33%	128	8%	-5.7%	0.6%	1.0%
Spilsby and Louth	**522**	279	53%	58	11%	**539**	291	54%	56	10%	-3.2%	-0.5%	0.7%
Stamford	**139**	70	50%	20	14%	**142**	53	37%	12	8%	-2.1%	13.0%	5.9%
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE	**2,504**	1,069	43%	239	10%	**2,579**	1,085	42%	299	12%	-2.9%	0.6%	-2.0%
NOTTINGHAMSHIRE	**6,003**	1,577	26%	445	7%	**6,009**	1,575	26%	429	7%	-0.1%	0.1%	0.3%
WEST MIDLANDS													
HEREFORDSHIRE	**786**	371	47%	104	13%	**869**	370	43%	84	10%	-9.6%	4.6%	3.6%
SHROPSHIRE													
Mid and North Shropshire	**893**	410	46%	89	10%	**923**	474	51%	110	12%	-3.3%	-5.4%	-2.0%
South Shropshire	**256**	159	62%	45	18%	**287**	169	59%	43	15%	-10.8%	3.2%	2.6%
STAFFORDSHIRE													
Staffordshire South	**2,268**	862	38%	360	16%	**2,514**	921	37%	354	14%	-9.8%	1.4%	1.8%
Stoke-on-Trent and North Staffordshire	**3,712**	1,442	39%	468	13%	**3,702**	1,444	39%	480	13%	0.3%	-0.2%	-0.4%
TELFORD and WREKIN	**775**	377	49%	82	11%	**761**	394	52%	80	11%	1.8%	-3.1%	0.1%
WARWICKSHIRE	**1,816**	763	42%	222	12%	**1,935**	847	44%	241	12%	-6.1%	-1.8%	-0.2%
WEST MIDLANDS													
Birmingham and Solihull	**4,488**	1,761	39%	1,082	24%	**4,370**	1,747	40%	1,122	26%	2.7%	-0.7%	-1.6%
Black Country	**3,166**	972	31%	345	11%	**3,866**	1,227	32%	344	9%	-18.1%	-1.0%	2.0%
Coventry	**2,030**	579	29%	220	11%	**1,988**	541	27%	211	11%	2.1%	1.3%	0.2%
Wolverhampton	**1,172**	436	37%	205	17%	**1,273**	551	43%	191	15%	-7.9%	-6.1%	2.5%
WORCESTERSHIRE	**2,487**	1,120	45%	366	15%	**2,468**	1,027	42%	301	12%	0.8%	3.4%	2.5%

Table 9: Reported deaths, post-mortems and inquests by jurisdiction 2009, and comparison with 2008 *(continued)*

County / unitary authority or district	2009 cases					2008 cases					% change, 2008 to 2009		
	Reported deaths 2009, inc. NFA	Post-mortems 2009	PMs as % of rep. deaths 2009	Inquests 2009	Inquests as % of rep. deaths 2009	**Reported deaths 2008, inc. NFA**	Post-mortems 2008	PMs as % of rep. deaths 2008	Inquests 2008	Inquests as % of rep. deaths 2008	% change in reported deaths, inc. NFA	change in % PMs	change in % inquests
EAST OF ENGLAND													
BEDFORDSHIRE AND LUTON	**2,025**	812	40%	212	10%	**2,066**	810	39%	240	12%	-2.0%	0.9%	-1.1%
CAMBRIDGESHIRE													
North and East Cambridgeshire	**382**	221	58%	57	15%	**387**	235	61%	67	17%	-1.3%	-2.9%	-2.4%
South and West Cambridgeshire	**2,022**	709	35%	195	10%	**1,891**	689	36%	192	10%	6.9%	-1.4%	-0.5%
ESSEX and THURROCK	**4,599**	2,629	57%	492	11%	**4,698**	2,470	53%	509	11%	-2.1%	4.6%	-0.1%
HERTFORDSHIRE	**3,055**	1,611	53%	386	13%	**3,268**	1,819	56%	413	13%	-6.5%	-2.9%	0.0%
NORFOLK													
Great Yarmouth	**744**	296	40%	64	9%	**723**	276	38%	50	7%	2.9%	1.6%	1.7%
Greater Norfolk	**3,357**	1,593	47%	436	13%	**3,141**	1,634	52%	413	13%	6.9%	-4.6%	-0.2%
PETERBOROUGH	**1,005**	381	38%	92	9%	**1,025**	377	37%	107	10%	-2.0%	1.1%	-1.3%
SOUTHEND-ON-SEA	**1,515**	674	44%	146	10%	**1,579**	664	42%	139	9%	-4.1%	2.4%	0.8%
SUFFOLK	**2,647**	1,313	50%	286	11%	**2,796**	1,389	50%	262	9%	-5.3%	-0.1%	1.4%
LONDON													
City of London	**134**	43	32%	19	14%	**126**	40	32%	17	13%	6.3%	0.3%	0.7%
East London	**3,770**	1,814	48%	416	11%	**3,940**	1,822	46%	376	10%	-4.3%	1.9%	1.5%
Inner North London	**3,538**	1,630	46%	597	17%	**3,061**	1,362	44%	460	15%	15.6%	1.6%	1.8%
Inner South London	**3,253**	1,906	59%	513	16%	**3,524**	2,134	61%	576	16%	-7.7%	-2.0%	-0.6%
Inner West London	**2,500**	1,182	47%	381	15%	**2,723**	1,307	48%	426	16%	-8.2%	-0.7%	-0.4%
North London	**3,840**	1,843	48%	490	13%	**3,822**	1,944	51%	512	13%	0.5%	-2.9%	-0.6%
South London	**3,217**	1,731	54%	309	10%	**3,285**	1,747	53%	296	9%	-2.1%	0.6%	0.6%
West London	**3,771**	1,553	41%	498	13%	**3,858**	1,655	43%	453	12%	-2.3%	-1.7%	1.5%
SOUTH EAST													
BERKSHIRE	**2,529**	1,136	45%	301	12%	**2,690**	1,245	46%	309	11%	-6.0%	-1.4%	0.4%
BRIGHTON AND HOVE	**1,439**	717	50%	234	16%	**1,416**	710	50%	237	17%	1.6%	-0.3%	-0.5%
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE	**1,417**	703	50%	150	11%	**1,365**	688	50%	170	12%	3.8%	-0.8%	-1.9%
EAST SUSSEX	**2,318**	1,431	62%	322	14%	**2,410**	1,385	57%	326	14%	-3.8%	4.3%	0.4%
HAMPSHIRE													
Central Hampshire	**1,204**	580	48%	191	16%	**1,137**	560	49%	180	16%	5.9%	-1.1%	0.0%
North East Hampshire	**1,117**	608	54%	119	11%	**1,103**	633	57%	120	11%	1.3%	-3.0%	-0.2%
Portsmouth and South East Hampshire	**2,593**	1,229	47%	371	14%	**2,682**	1,255	47%	309	12%	-3.3%	0.6%	2.8%
Southampton and New Forest	**2,082**	772	37%	203	10%	**2,279**	854	37%	218	10%	-8.6%	-0.4%	0.2%
ISLE OF WIGHT	**670**	417	62%	75	11%	**743**	431	58%	89	12%	-9.8%	4.2%	-0.8%
KENT													
Central and South East Kent	**1,498**	1,003	67%	201	13%	**1,430**	987	69%	164	11%	4.8%	-2.1%	1.9%
Mid Kent and Medway	**2,429**	1,292	53%	248	10%	**2,465**	1,389	56%	246	10%	-1.5%	-3.2%	0.2%
North East Kent	**1,938**	1,232	64%	221	11%	**1,898**	1,176	62%	196	10%	2.1%	1.6%	1.1%
North West Kent	**1,578**	869	55%	231	15%	**1,638**	926	57%	188	11%	-3.7%	-1.5%	3.2%
MILTON KEYNES	**781**	513	66%	130	17%	**735**	501	68%	104	14%	6.3%	-2.5%	2.5%

Table 9: Reported deaths, post-mortems and inquests by jurisdiction 2009, and comparison with 2008 *(continued)*

County / unitary authority or district	2009 cases					2008 cases					% change, 2008 to 2009		
	Reported deaths 2009, inc. NFA	Post-mortems 2009	PMs as % of rep. deaths 2009	Inquests 2009	Inquests as % of rep. deaths 2009	**Reported deaths 2008, inc. NFA**	Post-mortems 2008	PMs as % of rep. deaths 2008	Inquests 2008	Inquests as % of rep. deaths 2008	% change in reported deaths, inc. NFA	change in % PMs	change in % inquests
OXFORDSHIRE	**2,000**	846	42%	290	15%	**2,080**	848	41%	274	13%	-3.8%	1.5%	1.3%
SURREY	**4,095**	2,051	50%	372	9%	**4,290**	2,009	47%	388	9%	-4.5%	3.3%	0.0%
WEST SUSSEX	**3,149**	1,533	49%	293	9%	**3,137**	1,669	53%	355	11%	0.4%	-4.5%	-2.0%
SOUTH WEST													
AVON	**4,623**	2,257	49%	703	15%	**4,966**	2,388	48%	702	14%	-6.9%	0.7%	1.1%
CORNWALL	**2,637**	1,674	63%	350	13%	**2,689**	1,659	62%	341	13%	-1.9%	1.8%	0.6%
DEVON													
Exeter and Greater Devon	**2,893**	931	32%	326	11%	**2,970**	1,199	40%	385	13%	-2.6%	-8.2%	-1.7%
Plymouth and South West Devon	**2,178**	1,078	49%	390	18%	**2,210**	1,142	52%	387	18%	-1.4%	-2.2%	0.4%
Torbay and South Devon	**2,071**	762	37%	171	8%	**2,047**	795	39%	159	8%	1.2%	-2.0%	0.5%
DORSET													
Bournemouth, Poole and Eastern Dorset	**2,269**	788	35%	171	8%	**2,368**	840	35%	179	8%	-4.2%	-0.7%	0.0%
Western Dorset	**1,005**	452	45%	95	9%	**1,052**	462	44%	98	9%	-4.5%	1.1%	0.1%
GLOUCESTERSHIRE	**1,986**	1,256	63%	390	20%	**2,124**	1,284	60%	429	20%	-6.5%	2.8%	-0.6%
ISLES OF SCILLY	**4**	1	25%	1	25%	**2**	2	*	0	*	*	*	*
SOMERSET													
Eastern Somerset	**1,037**	568	55%	145	14%	**1,046**	582	56%	154	15%	-0.9%	-0.9%	-0.7%
Western Somerset	**1,333**	569	43%	145	11%	**1,330**	543	41%	157	12%	0.2%	1.9%	-0.9%
WILTSHIRE and SWINDON	**2,306**	1,136	49%	402	17%	**2,240**	1,119	50%	348	16%	2.9%	-0.7%	1.9%
WALES													
Bridgend and Glamorgan Valleys	**2,646**	1,163	44%	285	11%	**2,920**	1,320	45%	237	8%	-9.4%	-1.3%	2.7%
Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan	**1,665**	840	50%	390	23%	**1,671**	860	51%	409	24%	-0.4%	-1.0%	-1.1%
Carmarthenshire	**768**	353	46%	91	12%	**822**	374	45%	99	12%	-6.6%	0.5%	-0.2%
Central North Wales	**1,287**	768	60%	226	18%	**1,476**	818	55%	250	17%	-12.8%	4.3%	0.6%
Ceredigion	**284**	196	69%	34	12%	**282**	191	68%	41	15%	0.7%	1.3%	-2.6%
Gwent	**2,510**	947	38%	133	5%	**2,610**	925	35%	152	6%	-3.8%	2.3%	-0.5%
Neath and Port Talbot	**466**	262	56%	79	17%	**480**	250	52%	48	10%	-2.9%	4.1%	7.0%
North East Wales	**1,165**	656	56%	233	20%	**1,143**	646	57%	230	20%	1.9%	-0.2%	-0.1%
North West Wales	**1,162**	511	44%	151	13%	**1,121**	517	46%	163	15%	3.7%	-2.1%	-1.5%
Pembrokeshire	**606**	259	43%	68	11%	**641**	240	37%	78	12%	-5.5%	5.3%	-0.9%
Powys	**301**	221	73%	70	23%	**301**	207	69%	63	21%	0.0%	4.7%	2.3%
City and County of Swansea	**1,638**	591	36%	201	12%	**1,566**	612	39%	192	12%	4.6%	-3.0%	0.0%
ENGLAND and WALES	**229,883**	**105,354**	**46%**	**30,977**	**13%**	**234,784**	**108,360**	**46%**	**30,999**	**13%**	**-2.1%**	**-0.3%**	**0.3%**

NOTE: NFA cases are deaths notified to coroners which required neither an inquest nor a post-mortem, and where no certificate of any kind was issued.
(1) Percentages not shown because of the low volume of caseload.

Table 10: Inquest verdicts returned, by jurisdiction, 2009

County / unitary authority or district	Verdict category										Total, all verdicts
	Homicide, killed unlawfully and killed lawfully	Suicide	Lack of care or self-neglect	Dependence on drugs	Non-dependent abuse of drugs	Death from industrial diseases	Death by accident or mis-adventure	Deaths from natural causes	Open verdicts	All other verdicts (1)	
The Queen's Household	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**0**
ENGLAND											
NORTH EAST											
DURHAM											
Darlington and South Durham	0	17	0	2	2	26	24	43	11	8	**133**
North Durham	1	30	0	4	4	39	39	108	9	13	**247**
HARTLEPOOL	0	3	0	0	2	12	10	6	7	10	**50**
NORTHUMBERLAND											
North Northumberland	0	4	0	0	1	12	15	45	6	36	**119**
South Northumberland	0	14	0	0	0	4	45	31	0	2	**96**
TEESSIDE	2	24	0	2	0	40	121	55	31	7	**282**
TYNE AND WEAR											
Gateshead and South Tyneside	4	10	0	0	2	38	81	41	10	16	**202**
Newcastle upon Tyne	0	18	0	1	6	40	60	98	8	59	**290**
North Tyneside	0	19	0	0	0	20	79	55	17	22	**212**
Sunderland	1	2	0	1	0	62	39	195	12	43	**355**
NORTH WEST											
CHESHIRE	0	77	0	1	1	91	186	365	39	70	**830**
CUMBRIA											
South and East Cumbria	0	11	0	1	1	16	37	41	13	46	**166**
North and West Cumbria	2	19	0	3	2	6	28	18	12	2	**92**
GREATER MANCHESTER											
Manchester city	2	39	0	5	9	24	203	261	28	184	**755**
Manchester North	0	60	0	5	2	8	82	216	19	83	**475**
Manchester South	3	49	2	0	0	28	254	232	52	33	**653**
Manchester West	0	74	0	12	6	46	201	84	65	148	**636**
LANCASHIRE											
Blackburn, Hyndburn and Ribble Valley	1	32	1	0	0	10	79	141	7	85	**356**
Blackpool/Fylde	0	15	0	4	0	13	61	20	7	2	**122**
East Lancashire	1	27	0	0	0	14	47	56	8	11	**164**
Preston and West Lancashire	1	56	0	2	0	43	113	126	21	69	**431**
MERSEYSIDE											
Sefton, Knowsley and St Helens	0	50	0	4	2	12	94	68	10	9	**249**
Liverpool	3	30	0	13	10	30	132	164	9	93	**484**
Wirral	0	7	0	0	4	33	59	87	21	34	**245**

Table 10: Inquest verdicts returned, by jurisdiction, 2009 *(continued)*

County / unitary authority or district	Verdict category										Total, all verdicts
	Homicide, killed unlawfully and killed lawfully	Suicide	Lack of care or self-neglect	Dependence on drugs	Non-dependent abuse of drugs	Death from industrial diseases	Death by accident or mis-adventure	Deaths from natural causes	Open verdicts	All other verdicts (1)	
YORKSHIRE AND THE HUMBER											
EAST RIDING and HULL	0	26	0	0	0	32	68	63	41	60	**290**
NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE and GRIMSBY	3	19	0	3	1	17	33	25	4	37	**142**
YORK CITY	0	13	0	5	0	13	23	32	6	1	**93**
North Yorkshire Eastern District	0	22	0	0	0	6	54	21	8	2	**113**
North Yorkshire Western District	3	27	0	1	2	5	35	26	10	9	**118**
South Yorkshire Eastern District	1	26	0	1	3	75	62	46	11	46	**271**
South Yorkshire Western District	1	51	1	0	0	87	108	123	12	73	**456**
West Yorkshire Eastern District	2	58	0	13	19	80	142	114	37	49	**514**
West Yorkshire Western District	6	70	0	7	19	38	171	107	16	20	**454**
EAST MIDLANDS											
DERBYSHIRE											
Derby and South Derbyshire	1	38	0	1	2	46	60	66	25	36	**275**
North Derbyshire	1	2	0	0	1	23	54	154	22	24	**281**
LEICESTERSHIRE											
Leicester City and South Leicestershire	2	46	0	1	0	26	185	254	27	95	**636**
Rutland and North Leicestershire	2	23	0	0	0	4	65	52	10	17	**173**
LINCOLNSHIRE											
Boston and Spalding	0	9	0	1	1	3	28	9	5	3	**59**
West Lincolnshire	1	17	0	4	7	6	26	20	24	8	**113**
Spilsby and Louth	2	11	0	0	1	4	22	7	16	2	**65**
Stamford	0	4	0	0	0	0	6	6	2	2	**20**
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE	4	39	0	1	1	23	108	69	26	20	**291**
NOTTINGHAMSHIRE	4	50	0	0	0	67	152	70	38	12	**393**
WEST MIDLANDS											
HEREFORDSHIRE	2	13	0	0	0	9	29	25	7	8	**93**
SHROPSHIRE											
Mid and North Shropshire	2	15	0	0	0	9	32	8	4	13	**83**
South Shropshire	1	14	1	0	0	4	15	1	3	5	**44**
STAFFORDSHIRE											
Staffordshire South	3	63	0	4	2	61	148	70	12	10	**373**
Stoke-on-Trent and North Staffordshire	1	21	1	4	0	59	124	59	19	117	**405**
TELFORD and WREKIN	0	12	0	0	0	7	27	14	4	14	**78**
WARWICKSHIRE	8	35	1	1	8	17	78	44	9	7	**208**
WEST MIDLANDS											
Birmingham and Solihull	3	17	3	0	0	31	141	273	28	466	**962**
Black Country	1	37	0	12	1	23	56	83	16	37	**266**
Coventry	5	30	0	1	5	8	50	82	18	5	**204**
Wolverhampton	0	6	1	1	0	3	17	46	11	31	**116**
WORCESTERSHIRE	1	36	0	2	4	5	111	99	34	50	**342**

Table 10: Inquest verdicts returned, by jurisdiction, 2009 *(continued)*

County / unitary authority or district	Verdict category										Total, all verdicts
	Homicide, killed unlawfully and killed lawfully	Suicide	Lack of care or self-neglect	Dependence on drugs	Non-dependent abuse of drugs	Death from industrial diseases	Death by accident or mis-adventure	Deaths from natural causes	Open verdicts	All other verdicts (1)	
EAST OF ENGLAND											
BEDFORDSHIRE and LUTON	5	37	0	5	0	23	63	48	5	7	**193**
CAMBRIDGESHIRE											
North and East Cambridgeshire	1	16	0	0	1	2	12	8	2	7	**49**
South and West Cambridgeshire	1	34	1	1	0	14	67	52	5	26	**201**
ESSEX and THURROCK	2	59	0	1	0	73	90	87	35	10	**357**
HERTFORDSHIRE	0	63	1	0	1	28	115	151	13	29	**401**
NORFOLK											
Great Yarmouth	4	8	0	0	0	6	27	17	12	1	**75**
Greater Norfolk	0	45	0	0	0	44	133	121	4	111	**458**
PETERBOROUGH	0	8	0	0	0	4	35	19	10	7	**83**
SOUTHEND-ON-SEA	1	23	0	0	0	18	28	13	23	30	**136**
SUFFOLK	2	43	0	0	0	20	67	40	36	60	**268**
LONDON											
City of London	0	5	0	0	1	2	6	3	0	3	**20**
East London	6	50	1	2	0	41	71	69	56	35	**331**
Inner North London	22	68	1	23	27	33	123	160	92	35	**584**
Inner South London	3	56	2	21	12	24	106	128	80	45	**477**
Inner West London	2	54	3	8	11	7	140	88	32	35	**380**
North London	7	21	0	2	3	27	121	141	84	78	**484**
South London	2	30	0	6	2	23	82	38	44	19	**246**
West London	2	91	0	4	2	26	136	95	34	61	**451**
SOUTH EAST											
BERKSHIRE	0	24	1	0	0	11	122	40	31	68	**297**
BRIGHTON and HOVE	2	28	6	17	0	7	97	24	22	15	**218**
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE	2	14	0	0	0	7	50	14	12	3	**102**
EAST SUSSEX	1	58	0	5	2	25	95	97	18	21	**322**
HAMPSHIRE											
Central Hampshire	0	26	1	1	0	25	47	71	22	2	**195**
North East Hampshire	0	23	1	0	0	10	41	18	13	4	**110**
Portsmouth and South East Hampshire	0	55	0	4	0	56	113	154	9	30	**421**
Southampton and New Forest	3	24	0	5	0	24	67	54	11	18	**206**
ISLE OF WIGHT	0	10	0	2	2	8	29	9	11	1	**72**
KENT											
Central and South East Kent	0	17	0	3	0	17	68	34	18	32	**189**
Mid Kent and Medway	1	39	0	0	0	60	68	47	16	26	**257**
North East Kent	2	17	0	0	0	19	78	55	20	21	**212**
North West Kent	5	29	0	0	0	30	68	73	24	1	**230**
MILTON KEYNES	0	18	0	2	0	8	41	36	8	5	**118**

Table 10: Inquest verdicts returned, by jurisdiction, 2009 *(continued)*

County / unitary authority or district	Verdict category										Total, all verdicts
	Homicide, killed unlawfully and killed lawfully	Suicide	Lack of care or self-neglect	Dependence on drugs	Non-dependent abuse of drugs	Death from industrial diseases	Death by accident or mis-adventure	Deaths from natural causes	Open verdicts	All other verdicts (1)	
OXFORDSHIRE	1	33	0	0	0	20	96	51	28	32	**261**
SURREY	4	53	1	6	2	56	118	85	74	17	**416**
WEST SUSSEX	0	36	0	3	3	27	96	49	14	32	**260**
SOUTH WEST											
AVON	18	62	0	33	2	38	192	240	65	34	**684**
CORNWALL	2	34	1	1	0	17	84	97	45	46	**327**
DEVON											
Exeter and Greater Devon	3	54	0	6	35	22	166	81	15	8	**390**
Plymouth and South West Devon	4	28	2	6	5	63	97	195	23	56	**479**
Torbay and South Devon	0	25	0	1	0	14	49	12	12	7	**120**
DORSET											
Bournemouth, Poole and Eastern Dorset	0	25	0	5	1	14	41	29	17	21	**153**
Western Dorset	0	11	0	1	0	11	24	11	24	0	**82**
GLOUCESTERSHIRE	2	42	0	0	0	34	147	86	30	25	**366**
ISLES OF SCILLY	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**0**
SOMERSET											
Eastern Somerset	0	17	0	0	0	4	36	53	12	18	**140**
Western Somerset	0	21	0	7	3	11	44	52	4	11	**153**
WILTSHIRE AND SWINDON	29	56	1	3	1	32	102	116	13	37	**390**
WALES											
Bridgend and Glamorgan Valleys	1	17	0	0	0	10	68	38	19	28	**181**
Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan	2	6	0	8	0	12	55	120	34	127	**364**
Carmarthenshire	0	12	0	0	0	3	40	19	7	0	**81**
Central North Wales	0	22	0	0	0	8	108	60	17	32	**247**
Ceredigion	0	5	1	0	0	0	20	9	3	0	**38**
Gwent	2	39	0	0	0	4	93	12	13	5	**168**
Neath and Port Talbot	0	24	0	0	1	2	19	24	4	3	**77**
North East Wales	2	20	0	0	0	18	91	51	18	26	**226**
North West Wales	0	17	1	1	2	11	45	30	7	17	**131**
Pembrokeshire	0	11	0	0	0	5	31	22	2	0	**71**
Powys	0	9	0	0	0	2	25	20	4	2	**62**
City and County of Swansea	0	21	0	0	0	5	61	91	7	11	**196**
TOTAL ENGLAND and WALES	**227**	**3,330**	**36**	**316**	**250**	**2,623**	**8,673**	**8,281**	**2,240**	**3,805**	**29,781**

(1) All other verdicts include those categories from Tables 4 and 6 for which separate columns are not shown in this table.

NB: A table showing inquest verdicts by district broken down by males and females can be found in the spreadsheet version of the coroners statistics tables.

Explanatory notes

1. This is a National Statistics publication produced by the Ministry of Justice. National Statistics are produced to high professional standards set out in the National Statistics Code of Practice. They undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure that they meet customer needs. They are produced free from any political interference.

2. The data analysed in this publication are based on annual returns from H.M. Coroners. Coroners are required under the provisions of Section 28 of the Coroners Act 1988 to furnish to the Secretary of State returns in relation to inquests held and deaths inquired into by him (or her) in such form and containing such particulars as the Secretary of State may direct. Thanks are due to coroners and their staff for their work in preparing these returns.

Symbols and conventions

The following symbols have been used throughout the tables in this bulletin:

n/a	= Not applicable
-	= Nil
..	= Not available
(R)	= Revised data

Definitions

The following brief definitions are intended as a guide to the meaning of terms in this bulletin concerning coroners and their work; more detailed definitions will be found in the Coroners Act 1988 and the Treasure Act 1996.

Coroner; deaths reported

In England and Wales, all violent and unnatural deaths, sudden deaths of unknown cause, and all deaths of persons in custody, are reported to coroners. Coroners are appointed by local authorities; they must be barristers, solicitors or registered medical practitioners and must have at least five years' standing in the relevant profession. The relevant legislation and guidance is contained within the Coroners Act 1988 and the Coroners Rules 1984 (as amended).

Non-inquest cases

The coroner's investigation is concluded most often without an inquest being held. The coroner will have satisfied himself or herself, by means of a post-mortem examination or other investigation, on the physical cause of death, and that the death was not one on which he or she is required by law to hold an inquest.

Post mortem examinations

A coroner may request that a post-mortem examination be conducted, whether or not an inquest is held, particularly if the cause of death is not clear. In many cases a post-mortem examination is conducted in order to determine whether or not an inquest is necessary. Other post-mortem examinations are held which are not ordered by the coroner. Details of these are collected by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). See the further information section below for details of how to obtain statistics on this and other related topics.

Inquests

A coroner must hold an inquest if the body of a person ('the deceased') lies within his or her district[4] and if he or she has reasonable cause to suspect that the deceased:

(a) died a violent or unnatural death;
(b) died a sudden death the cause of which is unknown; or
(c) died in prison or in such place or in such circumstances as to require an inquest under any other Act.

The holding of an inquest requires the coroner to determine:

(a) who the deceased was;
(b) how, when and where the deceased came by his or her death, and any further particulars necessary to enable the death to be registered.

Verdicts are returned in nearly all coroners' inquests. The exceptions are those inquests adjourned by the coroner which he or she later decides not to resume, and are mainly inquests into deaths by unlawful killing and deaths by dangerous driving or careless driving when under the influence of alcohol or drugs, in which court proceedings have been instituted. This avoids the need for two tribunals to consider the same evidence. A "narrative verdict" is where the coroner makes a brief and factual statement at the conclusion of the inquest but does not return one of the suggested short-form verdicts.

Timeliness of inquests

For the purpose of determining the timeliness of inquests, the time taken to conduct an inquest is deemed to be from the day the death was reported to the coroner until either (a) the day the inquest is concluded by the delivery of a verdict or (b) the day the coroner certifies that an adjourned inquest will not be resumed.

The average time for an inquest to be conducted is estimated in the following way: Coroners are asked in their annual return to state how many inquests were concluded within certain time periods. There are five time

[4] The cause of death does not need to have arisen within the coroner's district.

bands, which are: within one month; 1-3 months; 3-6 months; 6-12 months; and over 12 months. All the inquests falling within a time-band are then assumed to have been completed at or near the mid-point of the various time-bands for the purposes of calculating the average, although inquests within the "under one month" band are assumed to have taken 3 weeks for this purpose of this estimation, and those inquests taking over a year to conclude were deemed to have taken 18 months, although the time-band itself is open-ended. Numbers are then aggregated and the average figure (in weeks) calculated in the normal way.

Only deaths occurring within England and Wales are included in the calculation. Statistics are not collected on the time taken for inquests where the death occurred outside England and Wales. Deaths occurring abroad are often significantly delayed because of the difficulty, for example, of obtaining reports from other countries.

Juries

Nearly all inquests are held by a coroner sitting alone, without a jury. A jury must be summoned where the death occurred:

(a) in prison, or in such a place or such circumstances as to require an inquest under another Act;
(b) in police custody, or resulted from an injury caused by a police officer in the purported execution of his or her duty;
(c) where there are certain statutory reporting obligations under the Health and Safety Act 1974 or any other Act, and in certain other circumstances, especially where there may be a continuing or recurring danger to the public.

Treasure and treasure trove

In addition to inquiring into certain deaths, coroners also have jurisdiction to inquire into any treasure which is found in their districts and to establish who were the finders. With the commencement of the Treasure Act 1996 on 24 September 1997 inquests into finds which previously might have been declared treasure trove are supplemented by those now conducted to determine whether finds made on or after that date are treasure.

Registered deaths

All deaths in England and Wales must be registered with the Registrar of Births and Deaths. The term 'registered deaths' in this bulletin refers to deaths registered within a specific time period (in this case, calendar years).

Statistics on registered deaths in England and Wales are published by the ONS in their series on mortality statistics, and in their publication Health Statistics Quarterly. At the time of going to press, figures had been published for the number of registered deaths in the first three quarters of 2009, but not for the full year as a whole. Provisional statistics on the total number of registered deaths in 2009 will not be available until late May 2010, after publication of this bulletin, and final figures not until July 2010. In the interim period, therefore, an estimate of 500,100 was derived by

adding the number of registered deaths in the final quarter of *2008* to the provisional total for the first three quarters of 2009.

Revisions to statistics for previous years

The provisional figure for the number of registered deaths in 2008 in Table 2 has been replaced by an actual figure.

Table 8 incorporates a revision to the number of finds reported to coroners in 2004 under the Treasure Act 1996. The coroner for the county of Suffolk stated that the coroner for Lowestoft (which was in 2004 a separate district) had incorrectly reported the number of Treasure Act inquests concluded in 2004 as 60 instead of four.

Further notes

Prior to 1 June 2005, policy responsibility for H.M. Coroners lay with the Home Office, but on that date it passed to the Department for Constitutional Affairs as part of machinery of government changes following the 2005 general election. Responsibility now lies with the Ministry of Justice, which was created on 9 May 2007.

Further information on deaths occurring annually in England and Wales is published by the Office for National Statistics in their Mortality Statistics series (DH1, DH2, etc.); these may be downloaded from their website at www.statistics.gov.uk.

Prior to the transfer of responsibility, the Home Office published statistical bulletins based on coroners' annual returns, since 1980. The last four bulletins published in the Home Office Statistical Bulletin series were as follows: for year 2003, bulletin 9/04; for 2002, bulletin 6/03; for 2001, bulletin 3/02; and for year 2000, bulletin 7/01. These may be found at: www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pubsstatistical.html.

Although care is taken in completing and analysing the returns used to compile the figures in this bulletin, the figures are of necessity subject to possible inaccuracies inherent in any large-scale collection of this type. For this reason, figures may not be accurate to the final digit. In the text, numbers have been rounded, usually to the nearest 100, although some smaller figures may be given exactly.

Contact points for further information

Current and previous editions of this publication are available for download at www.justice.gov.uk/publications/coronersannual.htm. A spreadsheet file of the statistics tables in this bulletin are also available for download from this address.

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

Tel: 020 3334 3573
Email: andrew.chiles@justice.gsi.gov.uk

Other enquiries about these statistics should be directed to:

Richard Allen
Ministry of Justice
7th Floor (7.18)
102 Petty France
London SW1H 9AJ
Tel: 020 3334 3737
Email: statistics.enquiries@justice.gsi.gov.uk

A copy of the data collection form which was sent to coroners can be obtained via the contact details above.

An extended version of Table 10, showing inquest verdicts by district broken down by males and females, can be found in the spreadsheet file of the statistics tables on the Ministry of Justice website via the web address at the top of this page. User feedback would be welcome on the continuing relevance of the statistics included in this table.

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport's annual reports on the Treasure Act 1996 may be found on their website: www.culture.gov.uk.

General enquiries about the statistical work of the Ministry of Justice can be e-mailed to: statistics.enquiries@justice.gsi.gov.uk.

Other National Statistics publications, and general information about the official statistics system of the UK, are available from www.statistics.gov.uk.

Produced by the Ministry of Justice

Alternative formats are available on request from
statistics.enquiries@justice.gsi.gov.uk