

Statistics on deaths reported to coroners England and Wales, 2008

Ministry of Justice
Statistics bulletin

Published 7 May 2009

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Also available on the Ministry of Justice website at

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Executive summary

This bulletin presents statistics of coroners' work during the calendar year 2008, 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 234,800 deaths were reported to coroners in 2008, a rise of 300 (0.1 per cent) from the 2007 figure. (*Tables 1,2, and 3*)
- The proportion of all registered deaths reported to coroners rose from 46.5 per cent in 2007 to an estimated 46.7 per cent in 2008, in line with the prevailing trend. (*Table 2*)
- The percentage of cases involving post-mortem examinations, as a proportion of all deaths reported to coroners, fell from 47 per cent in 2007 to 46 per cent in 2008, continuing the existing downward trend. (*Table 3*)
- Inquests were opened on 31,000 deaths, representing just over 13 per cent of all deaths reported to coroners, similar to the level reported in 2007. (*Table 3*)
- As in recent years, the most common verdicts returned at inquests were death by accident or misadventure (in 32 per cent of cases), deaths from natural causes (26 per cent) and suicide (11 per cent). (*Tables 4 and 6*)
- Verdicts of suicide rose by 10 per cent in 2008 compared to the previous year; there were rises in the number of verdicts of death by accident or misadventure, from natural causes, and from industrial diseases. 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 short-form categories. (*Table 6*)

Introduction and important note on counting methodology

This bulletin presents statistics of deaths reported to coroners in England and Wales in 2008 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.

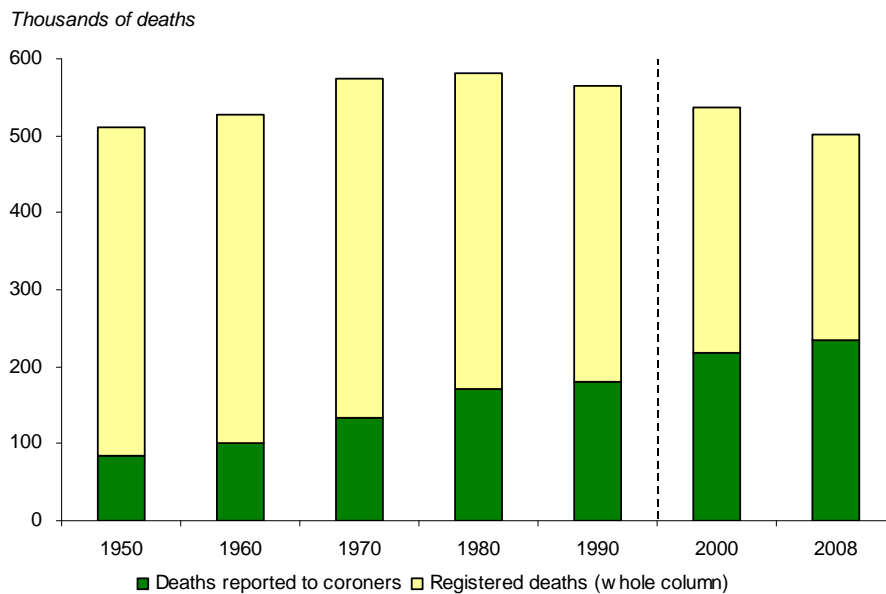
Prior to 1995, however, NFA cases were not reported in the annual statistics. It should be noted therefore that in Tables 2 and 3, which show figures over a number of years, figures for the total number of deaths reported to coroners since 1995 are not directly comparable to those for earlier years, 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 2008 rose by 300 (0.1 per cent) from the previous year, from 234,500 in 2007 to 234,800 during 2008, the highest annual total to date. The proportion of registered deaths in the calendar year 2008 that were reported to coroners in 2008 rose by a small amount from 46.5 per cent to an estimated 46.7 per cent, continuing a long-term trend. This proportion is also the highest figure recorded to date.

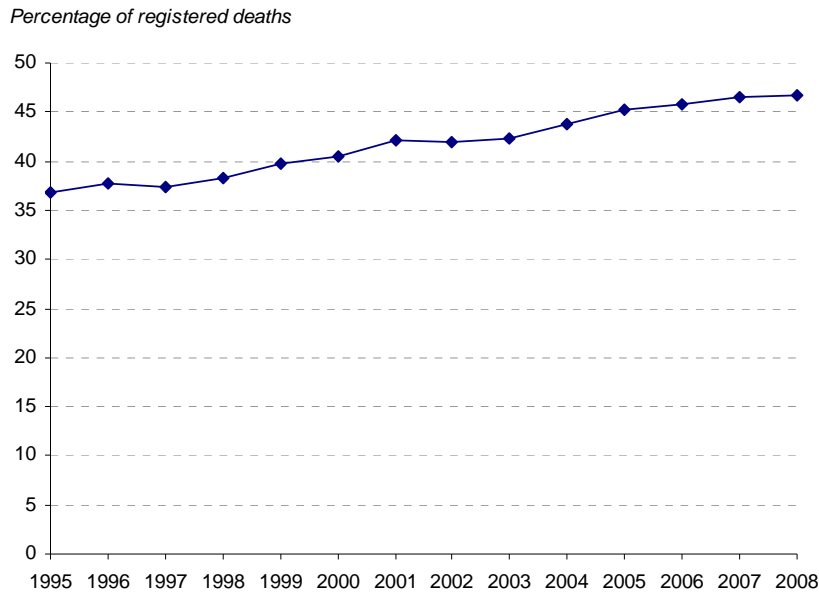
Figure 1: Registered deaths, and deaths reported to coroners, England and Wales, 1950-2008



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).

The long-term trend, as well as that of the proportion of deaths reported, is 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 greater referrals to coroners.

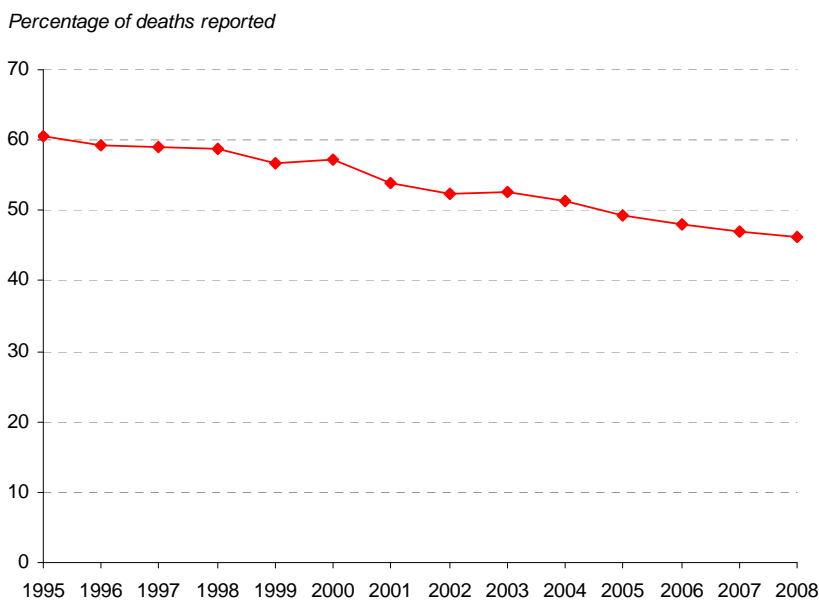
Figure 2: Deaths reported to coroners as a percentage of registered deaths, England and Wales, 1995-2008



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

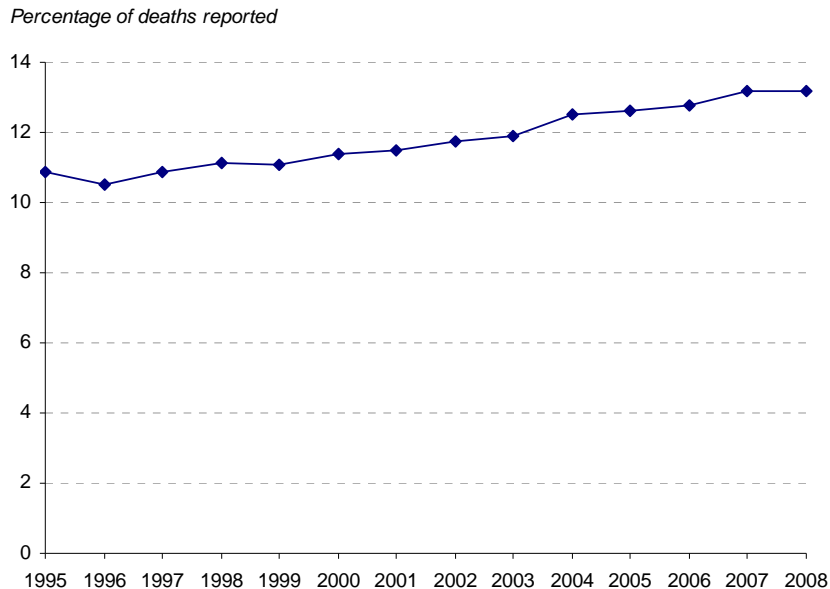
Post-mortem examinations were ordered by coroners in 46 per cent of all cases reported to them in 2008. This was just under one percentage point lower than in 2007, continuing the long-term downward trend. The actual number of deaths reported to coroners in 2008 where a post-mortem was held was 108,400, some 2,000 fewer than in the year before.

Figure 3a: Post-mortems as a percentage of deaths reported to coroners, England and Wales, 1995-2008



Inquests were opened on 31,000 deaths reported to coroners in 2008, about 200 more than in 2007, and the highest annual number since at least 1980. Inquest cases represented just over one in eight of all the deaths reported to coroners in 2008, the same proportion of the total as in the previous year.

Figure 3b: Inquests as a percentage of deaths reported to coroners, England and Wales, 1995-2008



Post-mortems in inquest cases (Table 3)

When an inquest is held a post-mortem examination has usually been conducted, and in 2008 post-mortems were conducted in 92 per cent of such cases. This is a marginally 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 2008 there were nearly 2,500 inquests without a post-mortem, over 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 2008, there were just under 80,000 non-inquest cases where a post-mortem was held, and the percentage of non-inquest cases that required a post-mortem fell to 39 per cent. This proportion has fallen steadily in recent years; in 1995 it was 56 per cent of all non-inquest cases. Note that Figure 3a above shows the proportion of all deaths reported to coroners where a post-mortem was held, whether there was an inquest or not.

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

There were also 124,000 cases reported to coroners where there was neither an inquest nor a post-mortem. This particular category of case has been increasing in number in recent years. In addition, as a proportion of all coroners' cases, those where there was neither an inquest nor a post-mortem examination have increased, from around 40 per cent or just above in the late 1990s, to 53 per cent in 2008.

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

Verdicts were returned at nearly 29,000 inquests in 2008, 1,600 more than in 2007. As in previous years the most common verdicts in 2008 were: death by accident or misadventure (9,200, 32 per cent of all verdicts), deaths from natural causes (7,600, 26 per cent), and suicide (3,300, 11 per cent). Non-specific verdicts (see below) also accounted for 11 per cent of verdicts in 2008¹.

A number of categories of verdict experienced increases in 2008 compared to the previous year, including verdicts of death from natural causes, up 550 (8 per cent) on the 2007 figure to 7,600, and non-specific verdicts, up 410 (14 per cent) to over 3,300. The last-mentioned rise 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 Middleton² judgement which encouraged their use.

The number of open verdicts returned in 2008 fell slightly, from 2,240 to 2,170, a drop of 3 per cent.

Trends (Table 5 and Figure 4)

Verdicts of death from natural causes are tending to rise. 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

¹ The number of verdicts delivered in any year is not the same as the number of inquests opened. The 'number of inquests opened' referred to in this bulletin will include inquests which were still in progress at the year's end, whereas the verdicts discussed in this paragraph necessarily pertain to those inquests which have been completed. Some of these inquests may have begun in a previous year.

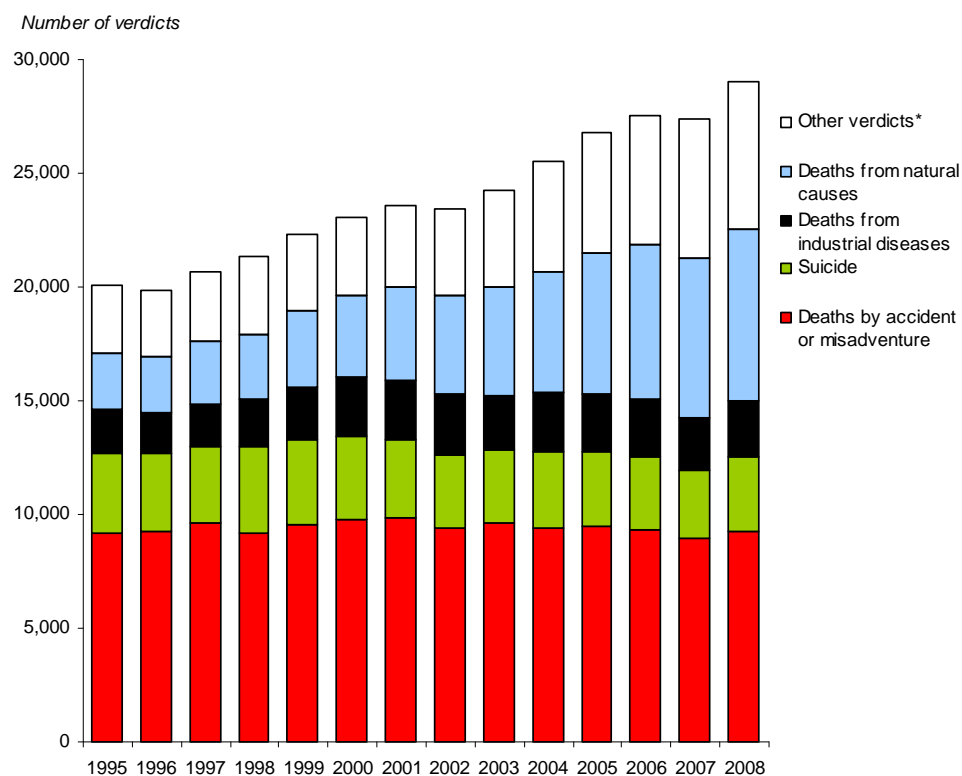
² R v H.M. Coroner for Western Somersetshire and another *ex parte* Middleton (2004)

in 2008 compared to 2007. The number of open verdicts has fallen in the last few years.

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

- Verdicts of deaths by accident or misadventure have been declining, from 47 per cent of verdicts returned in 1994 to 32 per cent in 2008.
- Suicide verdicts have been declining slowly over the same period, from 18 per cent in 1994 to around 11 per cent last year.
- Open verdicts have been falling in percentage terms in the last few years.
- Verdicts of natural causes have risen from 12 per cent in 1994 to around 26 per cent in 2008.
- Non-specific verdicts (which include narrative verdicts, as explained above) formed fewer than one per cent of the total until 2001, but accounted for over 11 per cent in 2008.

Figure 4: Verdicts returned at inquests, England and Wales, 1995-2008



*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 68 per cent of all verdicts returned in 2008; but they also included 92 per cent of verdicts of death from industrial disease, 77 per cent of verdicts of suicide, and 83 per cent of verdicts of death from dependence on, or non-dependent abuse of, drugs. For females, the most common verdict was death by accident or misadventure (37 per cent of all female verdicts) followed by death from natural causes (30 per cent). These proportions were all similar to those in recent years.

Figure 5: Verdicts returned at inquests by sex, England and Wales, 2008

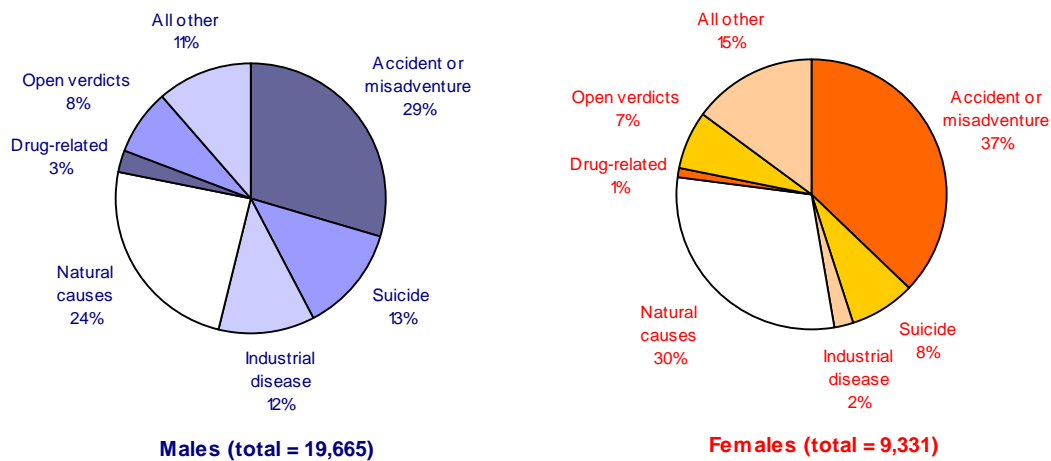
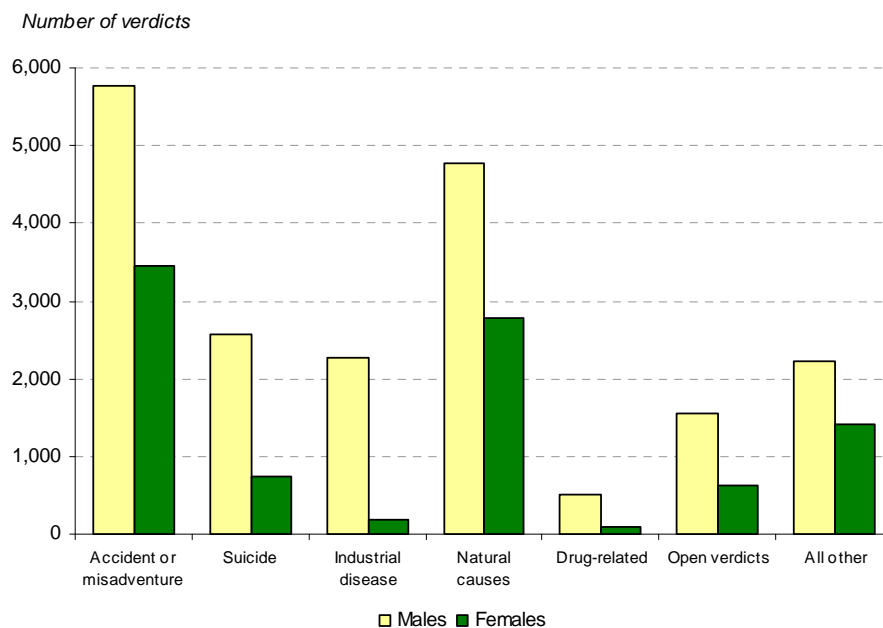


Figure 6: Number of verdicts returned at inquests, by sex, England and Wales, 2008



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

For the first time in 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. Over 40 per cent of completed inquests in 2008 were in relation to persons who were 65 years of age or more at death. Just under 10 per cent of inquests concluded were into the death of persons aged under 25. The age of the deceased was either not known or could not be readily provided in about 3 per cent of cases.

Inquests with juries, and adjourned inquests (Table 7)

Nearly all inquests concluded in 2008, as in other years, were held without juries. The number of inquests held with juries in 2008 was 490 (representing under 2 per cent of all inquests), a modest fall of about 50 compared to 2007. Both the number and proportion of inquests held with juries have been on a downward trend recent years; by comparison, 4.7 per cent of inquests concluded in 1998 had a jury.

Around 830 inquests were adjourned by the coroner under Section 16 of the Coroners Act 1988 because criminal proceedings were pending and not resumed. This is comparable with the level generally prevailing in recent years.

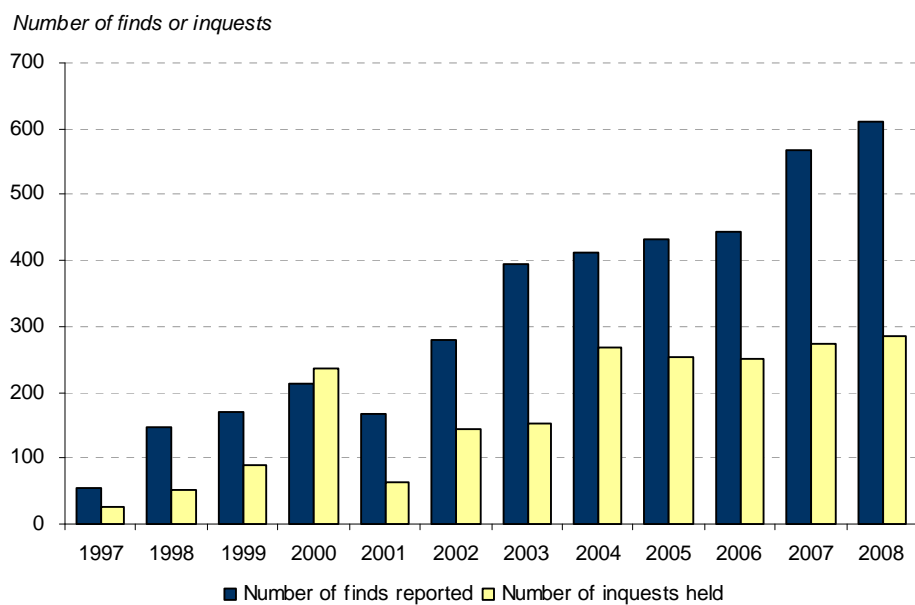
Treasure and Treasure Trove (Table 8 and Figure 7)

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 2008, 610 finds were reported and 286 inquests were concluded, from which a verdict declaring a find to be Treasure was returned in 270 cases. There were also 9 inquests held into Treasure Trove in 2008, 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.

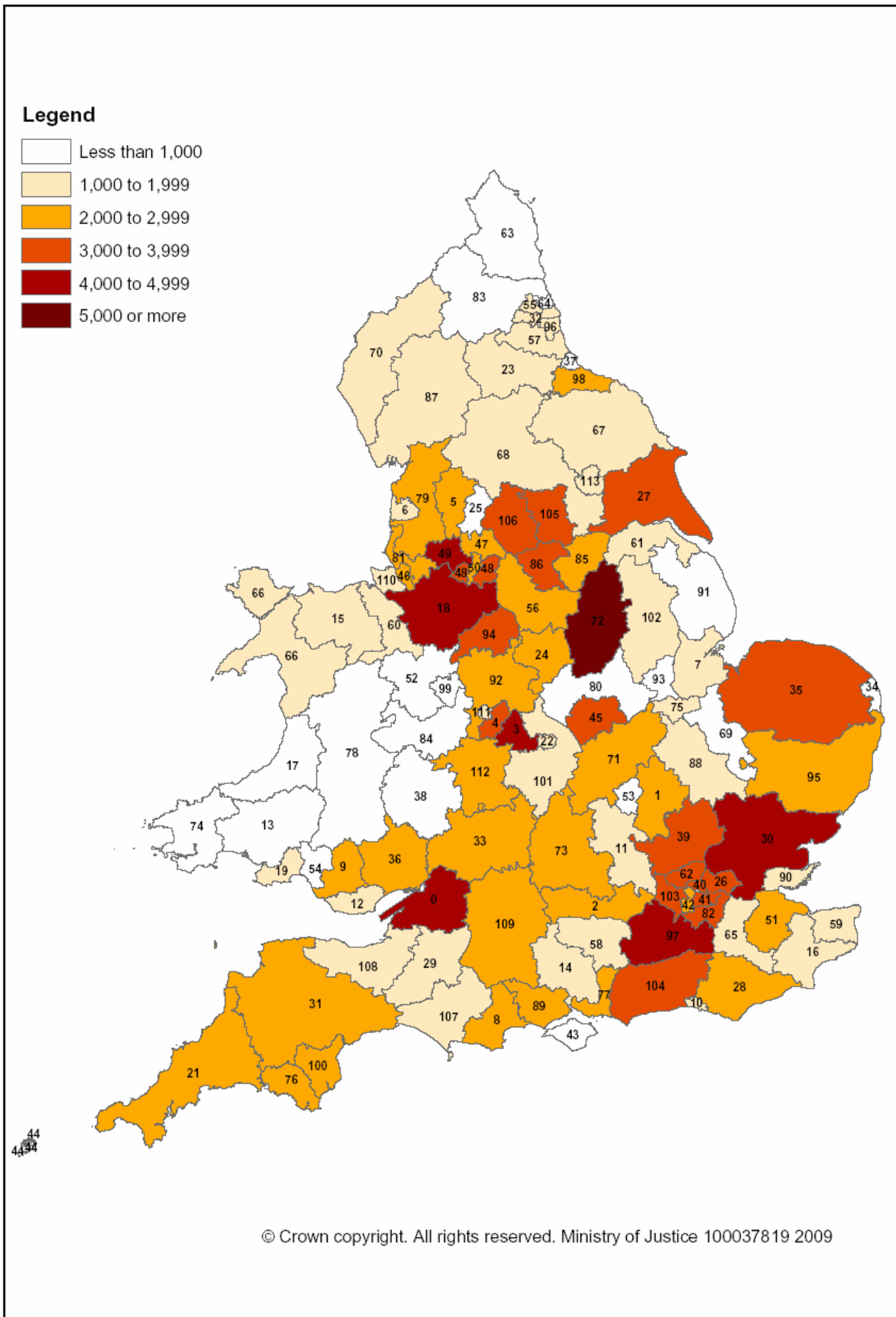
The number of finds reported has been steadily increasing in recent years; this is probably because of the increasing popularity of treasure-hunting as a hobby. The dip in reported finds in 2001 is almost certainly due to the foot-and-mouth outbreak, which severely restricted access to land during the 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, 1997-2008



Map of coroner jurisdictions in England and Wales, shaded according to the total number of deaths reported to each coroner in 2008 (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

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Table 1: Deaths reported to coroners, 2008

England and Wales	Number of reported deaths		
	Males	Females	Total
Total deaths reported to coroners, 2008 (1)(2)	124,269	110,088	234,784
<u>Inquests</u>			
Deaths reported where an inquest was opened	20,963	10,036	30,999
Deaths reported where no inquest occurred (1)(2)	103,306	100,052	203,785
<u>Post-mortem examinations</u>			
Deaths reported where a post-mortem took place	64,299	44,061	108,360
Deaths reported without a post-mortem (1)(2)	59,970	66,027	126,424

(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, 1950-2008

England and Wales	Thousands and percentages					
	Registered deaths (thousands)	Deaths reported to coroners		Inquests opened		
Year		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%	
1994	551.8	185.0	33.5%	20.8	11.3%	
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	502.6 (2)	234.8	46.7%	31.0	13.2%	

(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 2008 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, 1994-2008

England and Wales

Numbers and percentages

Year	Inquest opened						No inquest opened				Post-mortems		Total deaths reported inc. NFA	
	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)
	Number	% of inquest cases	Number	% of inquest cases			Number	% of non-inquest cases (1)	Number, inc. NFA	% of non-inquest cases (1)				
1994	20,474	98.3%	362	1.7%	20,836	n/a	104,702	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	125,176	n/a	n/a
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

(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, 2008

England and Wales		Number of verdicts returned		
Verdict	Males	Females	Total	
Homicide, of which:				
killed unlawfully	191	72	263	
killed lawfully	2	-	2	
Suicide	2,560	745	3,305	
Attempted or self-induced abortion	-	-	-	
Cause of death aggravated by lack of care, or self-neglect	18	17	35	
Dependence on drugs	273	70	343	
Non-dependent abuse of drugs	241	33	274	
Want of attention at birth	1	-	1	
Death from industrial diseases	2,278	196	2,474	
Death by accident or misadventure	5,769	3,461	9,230	
Stillborn	10	3	13	
Deaths from natural causes	4,768	2,788	7,556	
Open verdicts	1,541	626	2,167	
Disasters	-	-	-	
All other verdicts	2,013	1,320	3,333	
Total verdicts returned, 2008	19,665	9,331	28,996	

Table 5: Age of deceased in inquests where a verdict was returned, 2008

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	556	1.9%	
1 to 14 years	410	1.4%	
15 to 24 years	1,835	6.3%	
25 to 44 years	6,340	21.9%	
45 to 64 years	7,159	24.7%	
65 years and over	11,693	40.3%	
Age not known or could not be readily provided	1,003	3.5%	
Total verdicts returned, 2008	28,996	100.0%	

Table 6: Inquest verdicts returned, 1994-2008

England and Wales													Number of verdicts returned			
Verdict	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	
Homicide, of which:																
killed unlawfully	162	217	169	165	142	167	178	192	177	182	206	248	223	257	263	
killed lawfully	4	6	1	2	3	2	4	2	6	1	5	4	2	2	2	
Suicide	3,537	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	
Attempted or self-induced abortion	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	
Cause of death aggravated by lack of care, or self-neglect	58	35	59	59	47	44	33	43	46	50	51	27	30	35	35	
Dependence on drugs	124	139	156	177	258	289	323	309	294	248	280	299	328	324	343	
Non-dependent abuse of drugs	131	162	199	220	237	284	282	313	260	254	269	261	268	276	274	
Want of attention at birth	6	9	5	4	5	1	4	6	1	4	3	2	3	-	1	
Death from industrial diseases	1,839	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	
Death by accident or misadventure	9,347	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	
Stillborn	1	8	6	6	12	4	4	8	3	10	11	10	12	21	13	
Deaths from natural causes	2,388	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	
Open verdicts	2,221	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	
Disasters	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	4	-	-	-	
All other verdicts	162	136	142	154	160	119	156	225	583	873	1,412	1,952	2,406	2,923	3,333	
Total verdicts returned	19,980	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	

Table 7: Inquests concluded which were held with juries and inquests adjourned; High Court orders and exhumations, 1994-2008

England and Wales										Number
Year	Juries			Verdicts / adjournments			Total inquests concluded	Inquests held by order of the High Court (1)	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				
1994 (2)	19,935	878	4.2%	19,980	837	4.0%	20,817	-	6	4
1995	20,093	857	4.1%	20,051	899	4.3%	20,950	50	2	4
1996	19,844	903	4.4%	19,855	892	4.3%	20,747	7	1	3
1997	20,774	774	3.6%	20,699	849	3.9%	21,548	3	2	1
1998	21,141	1,035	4.7%	21,333	843	3.8%	22,176	2	0	5
1999	22,298	823	3.6%	22,349	772	3.3%	23,121	-	2	2
2000	23,243	824	3.4%	23,088	979	4.1%	24,067	1	1	7
2001	23,757	759	3.1%	23,617	899	3.7%	24,516	3	2	5
2002	23,859	687	2.8%	23,423	1,123	4.6%	24,546	2	1	3
2003	24,531	636	2.5%	24,259	908	3.6%	25,167	1	4	1
2004	25,869	568	2.1%	25,494	943	3.6%	26,437	1	1	2
2005	27,302	520	1.9%	26,814	1,008	3.6%	27,822	3	1	3
2006	27,934	569	2.0%	27,547	956	3.4%	28,503	2	2	2
2007	27,747	539	1.9%	27,360	926	3.3%	28,286	1	1	4
2008	29,344	485	1.6%	28,996	833	2.8%	29,829	-	2	1

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

(2) Includes 4 inquests in 1994 for which information about juries is not known.

Table 8: Treasure inquests, 1994-2008

England and Wales				Number
Year	Treasure Act 1996			Treasure trove
	Number of finds reported	Number of inquests concluded	Verdicts of treasure returned	Inquests held on treasure trove
1994	..	..	..	59
1995	..	..	..	66
1996	..	..	..	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	412	269	191	16
2005 (R)	432	253	228	7
2006 (R)	444	252	217	12
2007 (R)	595	273	229	13
2008	610	286	270	9

(R) The figures for treasure finds reported to coroners in 2005-2007 have been revised; see Explanatory Notes for more information.

Table 9: Reported deaths, post-mortems and inquests by jurisdiction 2008, and comparison with 2007

County / unitary authority or district	2008 cases					2007 cases					% change, 2007 to 2008		
	Reported deaths 2008, inc. NFA	Post-mortems 2008	PMs as % of rep. deaths 2008	Inquests 2008	Inquests as % of rep. deaths 2008	Reported deaths 2007, inc. NFA	Post-mortems 2007	PMs as % of rep. deaths 2007	Inquests 2007	Inquests as % of rep. deaths 2007	% 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	1,087	657	60%	140	13%	1,057	677	64%	160	15%	2.8%	-3.6%	-2.3%
North Durham	1,222	772	63%	223	18%	1,190	848	71%	298	25%	2.7%	-8.1%	-6.8%
HARTLEPOOL	472	176	37%	50	11%	590	284	48%	58	10%	-20.0%	-10.8%	0.8%
NORTHUMBHERLAND													
North Northumberland	738	371	50%	106	14%	723	411	57%	112	15%	2.1%	-6.6%	-1.1%
South Northumberland	489	335	69%	94	19%	467	363	78%	127	27%	4.7%	-9.2%	-8.0%
TEESSIDE	2,731	1,065	39%	349	13%	2,559	1,101	43%	313	12%	6.7%	-4.0%	0.5%
TYNE AND WEAR													
Gateshead and South Tyneside	1,981	846	43%	244	12%	1,952	800	41%	193	10%	1.5%	1.7%	2.4%
Newcastle upon Tyne	1,922	776	40%	294	15%	1,970	861	44%	348	18%	-2.4%	-3.3%	-2.4%
North Tyneside	864	533	62%	221	26%	795	558	70%	221	28%	8.7%	-8.5%	-2.2%
Sunderland	1,685	599	36%	339	20%	1,660	601	36%	339	20%	1.5%	-0.7%	-0.3%
NORTH WEST													
CHESHIRE													
4,714	2,416	51%	775	16%	4,679	2,443	52%	704	15%	0.7%	-1.0%	1.4%	
CUMBRIA													
South and East Cumbria	1,100	670	61%	176	16%	1,056	653	62%	149	14%	4.2%	-0.9%	1.9%
North and West Cumbria	1,311	634	48%	141	11%	1,060	577	54%	194	18%	23.7%	-6.1%	-7.5%
GREATER MANCHESTER													
Manchester city	2,972	1,744	59%	743	25%	3,049	1,704	56%	643	21%	-2.5%	2.8%	3.9%
Manchester North	2,584	993	38%	393	15%	2,578	909	35%	346	13%	0.2%	3.2%	1.8%
Manchester South	3,215	1,954	61%	612	19%	3,217	1,769	55%	520	16%	-0.1%	5.8%	2.9%
Manchester West	4,094	2,038	50%	658	16%	4,088	1,846	45%	601	15%	0.1%	4.6%	1.4%
LANCASHIRE													
Blackburn, Hyndburn and Ribble Valley	2,508	812	32%	297	12%	1,897	724	38%	247	13%	32.2%	-5.8%	-1.2%
Blackpool/Fylde	1,720	807	47%	127	7%	1,782	911	51%	138	8%	-3.5%	-4.2%	-0.4%
East Lancashire	664	432	65%	147	22%	908	512	56%	150	17%	-26.9%	8.7%	5.6%
Preston and West Lancashire	2,979	1,661	56%	446	15%	2,915	1,880	64%	496	17%	2.2%	-8.7%	-2.0%
MERSEYSIDE													
Sefton, Knowsley and St Helens	2,620	898	34%	270	10%	2,703	941	35%	242	9%	-3.1%	-0.5%	1.4%
Liverpool	2,912	908	31%	509	17%	2,858	984	34%	513	18%	1.9%	-3.2%	-0.5%
Wirral	1,621	639	39%	267	16%	1,788	714	40%	286	16%	-9.3%	-0.5%	0.5%

Table 9: Reported deaths, post-mortems and inquests by jurisdiction 2008, and comparison with 2007 (continued)

County / unitary authority or district	2008 cases					2007 cases					% change, 2007 to 2008		
	Reported deaths 2008, inc. NFA	Post-mortems 2008	PMs as % of rep. deaths 2008	Inquests 2008	Inquests as % of rep. deaths 2008	Reported deaths 2007, inc. NFA	Post-mortems 2007	PMs as % of rep. deaths 2007	Inquests 2007	Inquests as % of rep. deaths 2007	% change in reported deaths, inc. NFA	change in % PMs	change in % inquests
YORKSHIRE AND THE HUMBER													
EAST RIDING and HULL	3,013	1,112	37%	293	10%	3,021	1,057	35%	245	8%	-0.3%	1.9%	1.6%
NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE and GRIMSBY	1,368	438	32%	127	9%	1,402	432	31%	137	10%	-2.4%	1.2%	-0.5%
YORK CITY	1,084	442	41%	105	10%	1,008	448	44%	90	9%	7.5%	-3.7%	0.8%
North Yorkshire Eastern District	1,196	654	55%	125	10%	1,175	660	56%	150	13%	1.8%	-1.5%	-2.3%
North Yorkshire Western District	1,051	400	38%	126	12%	1,096	463	42%	120	11%	-4.1%	-4.2%	1.0%
South Yorkshire Eastern District	2,751	1,603	58%	366	13%	2,722	1,652	61%	334	12%	1.1%	-2.4%	1.0%
South Yorkshire Western District	3,244	1,504	46%	479	15%	3,625	1,547	43%	437	12%	-10.5%	3.7%	2.7%
West Yorkshire Eastern District	3,778	1,809	48%	585	15%	3,724	1,904	51%	539	14%	1.5%	-3.2%	1.0%
West Yorkshire Western District	3,609	1,779	49%	505	14%	3,553	1,804	51%	485	14%	1.6%	-1.5%	0.3%
EAST MIDLANDS													
DERBYSHIRE													
Derby and South Derbyshire	2,709	1,211	45%	295	11%	2,713	1,145	42%	284	10%	-0.1%	2.5%	0.4%
North Derbyshire	2,099	652	31%	308	15%	2,032	619	30%	307	15%	3.3%	0.6%	-0.4%
LEICESTERSHIRE													
Leicester City and South Leicestershire	3,426	1,257	37%	668	19%	3,345	1,271	38%	663	20%	2.4%	-1.3%	-0.3%
Rutland and North Leicestershire	874	486	56%	170	19%	831	511	61%	186	22%	5.2%	-5.9%	-2.9%
LINCOLNSHIRE													
Boston and Spalding	1,012	400	40%	59	6%	991	413	42%	76	8%	2.1%	-2.1%	-1.8%
West Lincolnshire	1,652	546	33%	128	8%	1,618	485	30%	125	8%	2.1%	3.1%	0.0%
Spilsby and Louth	539	291	54%	56	10%	520	289	56%	64	12%	3.7%	-1.6%	-1.9%
Stamford	142	53	37%	12	8%	182	94	52%	26	14%	-22.0%	-14.3%	-5.8%
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE	2,579	1,085	42%	299	12%	2,525	1,211	48%	278	11%	2.1%	-5.9%	0.6%
NOTTINGHAMSHIRE	6,009	1,575	26%	429	7%	5,976	1,619	27%	454	8%	0.6%	-0.9%	-0.5%
WEST MIDLANDS													
HEREFORDSHIRE													
HEREFORDSHIRE	869	370	43%	84	10%	890	389	44%	97	11%	-2.4%	-1.1%	-1.2%
SHROPSHIRE													
Mid and North Shropshire	923	474	51%	110	12%	902	482	53%	107	12%	2.3%	-2.1%	0.1%
South Shropshire	287	169	59%	43	15%	207	140	68%	27	13%	38.6%	-8.7%	1.9%
STAFFORDSHIRE													
Staffordshire South	2,514	921	37%	354	14%	2,612	914	35%	382	15%	-3.8%	1.6%	-0.5%
Stoke-on-Trent and North Staffordshire	3,702	1,444	39%	480	13%	3,805	1,647	43%	495	13%	-2.7%	-4.3%	0.0%
TELFORD and WREKIN	761	394	52%	80	11%	750	409	55%	73	10%	1.5%	-2.8%	0.8%
WARWICKSHIRE	1,935	847	44%	241	12%	1,896	846	45%	213	11%	2.1%	-0.8%	1.2%
WEST MIDLANDS													
Birmingham and Solihull	4,370	1,747	40%	1,122	26%	4,437	1,775	40%	1,082	24%	-1.5%	0.0%	1.3%
Black Country	3,866	1,227	32%	344	9%	3,351	1,216	36%	361	11%	15.4%	-4.5%	-1.9%
Coventry	1,988	541	27%	211	11%	1,806	497	28%	172	10%	10.1%	-0.3%	1.1%
Wolverhampton	1,273	551	43%	191	15%	1,198	464	39%	169	14%	6.3%	4.6%	0.9%
WORCESTERSHIRE	2,468	1,027	42%	301	12%	2,286	917	40%	264	12%	8.0%	1.5%	0.6%

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EAST OF ENGLAND													
BEDFORDSHIRE AND LUTON	2,066	810	39%	240	12%	2,017	740	37%	199	10%	2.4%	2.5%	1.8%
CAMBRIDGESHIRE													
North and East Cambridgeshire	387	235	61%	67	17%	403	278	69%	72	18%	-4.0%	-8.3%	-0.6%
South and West Cambridgeshire	1,891	689	36%	192	10%	1,897	797	42%	209	11%	-0.3%	-5.6%	-0.9%
ESSEX and THURROCK	4,698	2,470	53%	509	11%	4,712	2,578	55%	524	11%	-0.3%	-2.1%	-0.3%
HERTFORDSHIRE	3,268	1,819	56%	413	13%	3,326	1,683	51%	430	13%	-1.7%	5.1%	-0.3%
NORFOLK													
Great Yarmouth	723	276	38%	50	7%	715	325	45%	59	8%	1.1%	-7.3%	-1.3%
Greater Norfolk	3,141	1,634	52%	413	13%	2,838	1,671	59%	437	15%	10.7%	-6.9%	-2.2%
PETERBOROUGH	1,025	377	37%	107	10%	976	401	41%	122	13%	5.0%	-4.3%	-2.1%
SOUTHEND-ON-SEA	1,579	664	42%	139	9%	1,587	672	42%	117	7%	-0.5%	-0.3%	1.4%
SUFFOLK	2,796	1,389	50%	262	9%	2,639	1,391	53%	300	11%	5.9%	-3.0%	-2.0%
LONDON													
City of London	126	40	32%	17	13%	127	52	41%	22	17%	-0.8%	-9.2%	-3.8%
East London	3,940	1,822	46%	376	10%	4,092	1,870	46%	398	10%	-3.7%	0.5%	-0.2%
Inner North London	3,061	1,362	44%	460	15%	3,228	1,354	42%	480	15%	-5.2%	2.5%	0.2%
Inner South London	3,524	2,134	61%	576	16%	3,685	2,264	61%	572	16%	-4.4%	-0.9%	0.8%
Inner West London	2,723	1,307	48%	426	16%	2,684	1,262	47%	452	17%	1.5%	1.0%	-1.2%
North London	3,822	1,944	51%	512	13%	4,877	1,725	35%	478	10%	-21.6%	15.5%	3.6%
South London	3,285	1,747	53%	296	9%	3,804	1,819	48%	318	8%	-13.6%	5.4%	0.7%
West London	3,858	1,655	43%	453	12%	4,214	2,099	50%	760	18%	-8.4%	-6.9%	-6.3%
SOUTH EAST													
BERKSHIRE	2,690	1,245	46%	309	11%	2,557	1,243	49%	329	13%	5.2%	-2.3%	-1.4%
BRIGHTON AND HOVE	1,416	710	50%	237	17%	1,445	707	49%	200	14%	-2.0%	1.2%	2.9%
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE	1,365	688	50%	170	12%	1,350	739	55%	163	12%	1.1%	-4.3%	0.4%
EAST SUSSEX	2,410	1,385	57%	326	14%	2,321	1,397	60%	280	12%	3.8%	-2.7%	1.5%
HAMPSHIRE													
Central Hampshire	1,137	560	49%	180	16%	1,295	600	46%	216	17%	-12.2%	2.9%	-0.8%
North East Hampshire	1,103	633	57%	120	11%	1,114	606	54%	117	11%	-1.0%	3.0%	0.4%
Portsmouth and South East Hampshire	2,682	1,255	47%	309	12%	2,557	1,334	52%	333	13%	4.9%	-5.4%	-1.5%
Southampton and New Forest	2,279	854	37%	218	10%	2,095	856	41%	194	9%	8.8%	-3.4%	0.3%
ISLE OF WIGHT	743	431	58%	89	12%	673	409	61%	73	11%	10.4%	-2.8%	1.1%
KENT													
Central and South East Kent	1,430	987	69%	164	11%	1,458	1,031	71%	167	11%	-1.9%	-1.7%	0.0%
Mid Kent and Medway	2,465	1,389	56%	246	10%	2,491	1,385	56%	213	9%	-1.0%	0.7%	1.4%
North East Kent	1,898	1,176	62%	196	10%	1,984	1,340	68%	242	12%	-4.3%	-5.6%	-1.9%
North West Kent	1,638	926	57%	188	11%	1,783	981	55%	204	11%	-8.1%	1.5%	0.0%
MILTON KEYNES	735	501	68%	104	14%	709	507	72%	126	18%	3.7%	-3.3%	-3.6%

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OXFORDSHIRE	2,080	848	41%	274	13%	1,966	898	46%	307	16%	5.8%	-4.9%	-2.4%
SURREY	4,290	2,009	47%	388	9%	4,441	2,075	47%	367	8%	-3.4%	0.1%	0.8%
WEST SUSSEX	3,137	1,669	53%	355	11%	3,164	1,775	56%	382	12%	-0.9%	-2.9%	-0.8%
SOUTH WEST													
AVON	4,966	2,388	48%	702	14%	4,988	2,424	49%	645	13%	-0.4%	-0.5%	1.2%
CORNWALL	2,689	1,659	62%	341	13%	2,657	1,741	66%	363	14%	1.2%	-3.8%	-1.0%
DEVON													
Exeter and Greater Devon	2,970	1,199	40%	385	13%	2,989	1,251	42%	384	13%	-0.6%	-1.5%	0.1%
Plymouth and South West Devon	2,210	1,142	52%	387	18%	2,182	1,060	49%	261	12%	1.3%	3.1%	5.5%
Torbay and South Devon	2,047	795	39%	159	8%	1,718	722	42%	150	9%	19.2%	-3.2%	-1.0%
DORSET													
Bournemouth, Poole and Eastern Dorset	2,368	840	35%	179	8%	2,319	876	38%	184	8%	2.1%	-2.3%	-0.4%
Western Dorset	1,052	462	44%	98	9%	1,037	441	43%	65	6%	1.4%	1.4%	3.0%
GLOUCESTERSHIRE	2,124	1,284	60%	429	20%	2,076	1,314	63%	401	19%	2.3%	-2.8%	0.9%
ISLES OF SCILLY (1)	2	2	*	0	*	8	6	*	3	*	*	*	*
SOMERSET													
Eastern Somerset	1,046	582	56%	154	15%	1,075	641	60%	136	13%	-2.7%	-4.0%	2.1%
Western Somerset	1,330	543	41%	157	12%	1,368	529	39%	145	11%	-2.8%	2.2%	1.2%
WILTSHIRE and SWINDON	2,240	1,119	50%	348	16%	2,287	1,163	51%	383	17%	-2.1%	-0.9%	-1.2%
WALES													
Bridgend and Glamorgan Valleys	2,920	1,320	45%	237	8%	2,715	1,155	43%	275	10%	7.6%	2.7%	-2.0%
Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan	1,671	860	51%	409	24%	1,716	958	56%	448	26%	-2.6%	-4.4%	-1.6%
Carmarthenshire	822	374	45%	99	12%	789	348	44%	84	11%	4.2%	1.4%	1.4%
Central North Wales	1,476	818	55%	250	17%	1,678	922	55%	275	16%	-12.0%	0.5%	0.5%
Ceredigion	282	191	68%	41	15%	260	199	77%	35	13%	8.5%	-8.8%	1.1%
Gwent	2,610	925	35%	152	6%	2,456	909	37%	142	6%	6.3%	-1.6%	0.0%
Neath and Port Talbot	480	250	52%	48	10%	516	276	53%	91	18%	-7.0%	-1.4%	-7.6%
North East Wales	1,143	646	57%	230	20%	1,105	640	58%	225	20%	3.4%	-1.4%	-0.2%
North West Wales	1,121	517	46%	163	15%	1,078	526	49%	151	14%	4.0%	-2.7%	0.5%
Pembrokeshire	641	240	37%	78	12%	615	218	35%	79	13%	4.2%	2.0%	-0.7%
Powys	301	207	69%	63	21%	337	210	62%	65	19%	-10.7%	6.5%	1.6%
City and County of Swansea	1,566	612	39%	192	12%	1,525	576	38%	149	10%	2.7%	1.3%	2.5%
ENGLAND and WALES	234,784	108,360	46%	30,999	13%	234,458	110,360	47%	30,841	13%	0.1%	-0.9%	0.0%

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, 2008

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 (2)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
ENGLAND											
NORTH EAST											
DURHAM											
Darlington and South Durham	2	23	0	1	5	17	43	65	14	13	183
North Durham	2	23	0	3	4	55	52	92	14	11	256
HARTLEPOOL											
	0	2	0	0	1	16	15	8	4	2	48
NORTHUMBERLAND											
North Northumberland	0	6	0	3	1	17	20	36	1	5	89
South Northumberland	1	11	0	0	1	11	44	36	14	3	121
TEESSIDE											
	2	24	0	1	0	31	117	47	20	1	243
TYNE AND WEAR											
Gateshead and South Tyneside	0	11	0	0	4	36	82	67	14	11	225
Newcastle upon Tyne	1	22	0	13	1	44	74	122	9	65	351
North Tyneside	2	19	0	0	0	31	71	75	20	14	232
Sunderland	1	12	1	0	2	45	25	128	5	8	227
NORTH WEST											
CHESHIRE											
	6	65	0	7	2	79	184	286	21	63	713
CUMBRIA											
South and East Cumbria	0	12	0	0	0	14	54	35	9	39	163
North and West Cumbria	6	19	0	1	0	6	53	31	13	1	130
GREATER MANCHESTER											
Manchester city	6	43	0	1	12	30	299	274	32	120	817
Manchester North	1	22	0	2	3	15	74	113	17	39	286
Manchester South	2	41	0	0	0	35	242	205	50	7	582
Manchester West	1	46	0	9	5	53	216	106	56	108	600
LANCASHIRE											
Blackburn, Hyndburn and Ribble Valley	1	19	1	1	0	11	64	121	7	60	285
Blackpool/Fylde	2	28	0	12	1	10	35	16	8	1	113
East Lancashire	1	20	0	0	0	5	62	42	12	9	151
Preston and West Lancashire	5	61	0	0	0	20	121	112	18	115	452
MERSEYSIDE											
Sefton, Knowsley and St Helens	0	37	1	6	4	11	94	83	5	6	247
Liverpool	8	24	1	13	5	41	128	185	4	105	514
Wirral	0	17	1	0	0	32	63	121	23	16	273

Table 10: Inquest verdicts returned, by jurisdiction, 2008 (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	1	26	0	0	0	17	82	28	42	52	248
NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE and GRIMSBY	0	23	0	2	1	14	37	17	9	45	148
YORK CITY	0	21	0	4	1	11	32	27	6	2	104
North Yorkshire Eastern District	2	21	0	0	0	11	62	14	3	9	122
North Yorkshire Western District	1	32	0	1	2	2	50	18	17	12	135
South Yorkshire Eastern District	0	44	0	6	6	81	91	76	9	33	346
South Yorkshire Western District	2	46	0	0	0	71	93	92	7	73	384
West Yorkshire Eastern District	4	74	0	14	8	98	165	119	32	41	555
West Yorkshire Western District	6	83	0	9	17	35	182	108	29	21	490
EAST MIDLANDS											
DERBYSHIRE											
Derby and South Derbyshire	3	29	0	3	1	30	97	42	19	31	255
North Derbyshire	0	5	0	0	0	70	24	104	10	76	289
LEICESTERSHIRE											
Leicester City and South Leicestershire	0	31	0	0	0	26	305	195	39	17	613
Rutland and North Leicestershire	1	52	0	0	0	15	96	53	6	0	223
LINCOLNSHIRE											
Boston and Spalding	1	9	0	0	2	3	24	8	0	7	54
West Lincolnshire	0	26	0	4	6	8	40	17	7	6	114
Spilsby and Louth	2	3	0	3	5	3	26	5	17	0	64
Stamford	0	3	0	0	0	0	3	5	3	0	14
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE	6	41	0	0	0	21	94	46	20	10	238
NOTTINGHAMSHIRE	3	73	0	0	0	57	186	66	42	14	441
WEST MIDLANDS											
HEREFORDSHIRE											
HEREFORDSHIRE	0	18	0	0	0	3	49	18	2	3	93
SHROPSHIRE											
Mid and North Shropshire	0	12	0	0	0	18	48	12	2	17	109
South Shropshire	1	9	1	0	0	0	15	3	3	6	38
STAFFORDSHIRE											
Staffordshire South	3	51	0	2	3	43	183	66	14	11	376
Stoke-on-Trent and North Staffordshire	2	29	0	10	3	51	127	56	17	120	415
TELFORD and WREKIN	0	8	0	0	1	4	16	10	6	24	69
WARWICKSHIRE	3	38	0	2	7	13	110	54	17	5	249
WEST MIDLANDS											
Birmingham and Solihull	1	19	1	0	0	31	199	194	32	519	996
Black Country	5	49	0	16	1	17	78	107	25	30	328
Coventry	3	17	0	8	4	7	56	63	20	2	180
Wolverhampton	1	11	0	0	0	7	19	41	18	19	116
WORCESTERSHIRE	0	40	0	1	6	9	81	122	18	29	306

Table 10: Inquest verdicts returned, by jurisdiction, 2008 (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	44	0	5	4	26	68	49	1	7	209
CAMBRIDGESHIRE											
North and East Cambridgeshire	1	14	1	1	1	2	27	16	1	5	69
South and West Cambridgeshire	0	28	1	2	1	19	56	49	4	16	176
ESSEX and THURROCK	2	59	0	0	0	57	149	87	59	3	416
HERTFORDSHIRE	1	63	0	0	0	19	147	146	16	29	421
NORFOLK											
Great Yarmouth	2	6	0	0	0	4	18	15	1	0	46
Greater Norfolk	7	66	1	0	0	41	138	127	7	68	455
PETERBOROUGH	0	11	0	0	0	6	47	28	12	1	105
SOUTHEND-ON-SEA	1	9	0	0	0	3	29	11	18	11	82
SUFFOLK	1	51	0	0	0	20	71	46	42	56	287
LONDON											
City of London	0	4	0	0	0	2	4	1	3	3	17
East London	6	46	2	0	1	43	137	59	51	26	371
Inner North London	12	60	1	18	21	19	106	140	103	44	524
Inner South London	4	41	1	20	20	31	111	129	87	52	496
Inner West London (2)	2	40	1	3	10	4	140	93	36	48	377
North London	16	16	0	1	4	13	97	100	66	91	404
South London	5	31	0	2	4	37	89	61	59	10	298
West London	4	56	0	9	11	16	106	111	61	63	437
SOUTH EAST											
BERKSHIRE	0	53	0	0	0	27	109	44	48	52	333
BRIGHTON and HOVE	0	27	3	2	23	9	98	25	23	16	226
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE	0	26	0	0	0	8	55	23	20	3	135
EAST SUSSEX	2	48	0	13	1	26	92	59	28	8	277
HAMPSHIRE											
Central Hampshire	0	33	1	0	0	36	51	55	14	3	193
North East Hampshire	1	24	0	0	0	12	42	26	5	2	112
Portsmouth and South East Hampshire	0	24	0	5	1	26	54	89	9	18	226
Southampton and New Forest	6	41	0	4	4	26	46	50	7	9	193
ISLE OF WIGHT	1	5	0	0	2	11	20	28	16	1	84
KENT											
Central and South East Kent	0	6	0	0	0	9	72	36	19	16	158
Mid Kent and Medway	0	31	0	0	0	28	58	42	5	19	183
North East Kent	0	15	1	0	0	18	93	46	18	18	209
North West Kent	4	30	0	0	0	21	72	42	15	2	186
MILTON KEYNES	3	14	2	0	0	8	35	33	7	11	113

Table 10: Inquest verdicts returned, by jurisdiction, 2008 (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	5	54	0	0	0	14	121	65	22	34	315
SURREY	1	39	5	0	1	33	80	65	56	18	298
WEST SUSSEX	3	51	0	2	3	27	84	40	17	28	255
SOUTH WEST											
AVON	12	83	1	50	3	58	216	248	39	17	727
CORNWALL	0	43	2	2	2	20	97	89	66	55	376
DEVON											
Exeter and Greater Devon	0	38	1	2	20	18	113	76	7	8	283
Plymouth and South West Devon	3	16	0	5	2	41	86	99	15	41	308
Torbay and South Devon	0	24	0	3	0	10	43	6	11	5	102
DORSET											
Bournemouth, Poole and Eastern Dorset	1	43	0	12	2	7	59	22	13	26	185
Western Dorset	0	10	0	0	0	10	31	7	15	1	74
GLOUCESTERSHIRE	7	28	0	0	0	23	167	89	20	19	353
ISLES OF SCILLY	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	3
SOMERSET											
Eastern Somerset	1	22	0	1	0	6	39	51	10	16	146
Western Somerset	1	18	0	5	0	9	60	54	9	15	171
WILTSHIRE AND SWINDON	26	33	0	3	4	28	86	85	12	49	326
WALES											
Bridgend and Glamorgan Valleys	1	18	0	0	0	24	60	54	12	21	190
Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan	1	28	1	10	0	18	74	168	35	131	466
Carmarthenshire	0	21	0	0	0	3	43	19	8	0	94
Central North Wales	0	22	1	1	0	7	98	45	12	23	209
Ceredigion	0	3	0	0	0	2	22	9	1	1	38
Gwent	15	38	0	0	0	8	70	10	2	3	146
Neath and Port Talbot	0	13	0	0	1	1	13	11	7	2	48
North East Wales	0	26	1	0	0	11	108	47	14	37	244
North West Wales	0	21	0	1	3	9	50	42	5	21	152
Pembrokeshire	1	16	1	0	0	13	20	34	2	0	87
Powys	0	6	0	0	0	2	14	10	4	1	37
City and County of Swansea	0	19	0	3	0	4	36	52	10	8	132
TOTAL ENGLAND and WALES	265	3,305	35	343	274	2,474	9,230	7,556	2,167	3,347	28,996

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

(2) The inquests into the deaths of Diana, Princess of Wales and Dodi al-Fayed were concluded under the jurisdiction of the Inner West London coroner, and returned narrative verdicts (included in the "all other verdicts" column of 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* 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 cause of death does not have to have arisen within the coroner's district.]

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.

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 the bulletin 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 2008, but not for the full year as a whole. The estimate of 502,600 registered deaths in 2008 (as included in Table 2) was derived by adding the number of registered deaths in the fourth quarter of 2007 to the total for the first three quarters of 2008.

Revisions to statistics for previous years

Table 8 incorporates revisions to the number of finds reported to coroners under the Treasure Act 1996 in 2005, 2006 and 2007. Four finds in the Teesside district (two in 2005 and two in 2006) had not previously been included in the total. Some 27 finds reported to the Spilsby and Louth coroner in 2007 had also been omitted.

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.

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:

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Other enquiries about these statistics should be directed to:

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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.

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