

Crime in Lancashire 2014/15

Summary

Latest figures from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) estimate that there were 6.8 million crimes in England and Wales, based on interviews with a representative sample of households and resident adults in the year ending March 2015. This represents a 7% decrease compared with the previous year's survey. This latest estimate is the lowest since the survey began in 1981 and is now less than half its peak level in 1995. In contrast, Police recorded crime has shown a 3% increase compared with the previous year.

In the Lancashire-14 area police recorded crime has shown a 3% decrease (92,646 criminal offences) in 2014/15 compared with 2013/14 which was in contrast to northwest region change of +4% and the national change of +2%. Violence against the person saw a rise of 5% in Lancashire, mainly due to the increased recording of violence without injury. Sexual offences also saw an increase of 7% in the county.

Introduction

Lancashire-14 crime statistics are derived from an annual publication "[Crime in England and Wales](#)" that combines the reporting of police recorded crime and the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW, previously known as the Crime Survey for England and Wales). It also draws on data from other sources to provide a more comprehensive picture. In 2009 the CSEW was extended to cover children aged 10-15. Due to the long time series for which comparable data are available, the main analysis and commentary is given for adults and households. Definitions and perceptions of crime change all the time as does people's willingness to tell the police about it. The above sources provide a complementary series that together are held to provide a better picture of crime than could be obtained from either source alone.



The police recorded crime statistics provide a good measure of trends in well-reported crimes. They are an important indicator of police workload and can be used for local crime pattern analysis. Recorded crime provides the only measure of homicide and also the only reliable measure of relatively uncommon crimes such as robbery. Unlike the Crime Survey for England and Wales, recorded crime also includes crimes committed against businesses and against those aged under 10. Police recorded crime relates to the location of the

incident and can be provided for small geographic areas. Unless otherwise stated, this is the main source of the Lancashire statistics used in this article.

Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) results are based on interviews conducted with adults living in private households and relate to where the respondent lives. For the crime types it covers, the CSEW can provide a better reflection of the true extent of household and personal crime because it includes crimes that are not reported to the police and thus not recorded by them. The CSEW does not aim to provide a total count of crime but does give a better indicator of trends in crime over time because it has a consistent methodology and is unaffected by changes in levels of reporting to the police, recording practices or police activity. It is estimated that about 39% of all CSEW crime is reported to the police although this varies for individual offence types.

The National Picture

The release of the 2014/15 crime statistics by the Office for National Statistics was accompanied by a report “Crime in England and Wales 2014/15” that provides a wealth of crime data with information on and interpretation of the national crime situation. A few selected key points are given below:

- Latest figures from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) showed that, for the offences it covers, there were an estimated 6.8 million incidents of crime against households and resident adults (aged 16 and over). This is a 7% decrease compared with the previous year’s survey, and the lowest estimate since the CSEW began in 1981.
- The decrease in all CSEW crime was driven by a reduction in the all theft offences category (down 8%). Within this group there were falls in the sub-categories of theft from the person (down 21%) and other theft of personal property (down 22%). However, there was no significant change in other sub-categories such as domestic burglary and vehicle-related theft.
- In contrast to the CSEW, there was a 3% increase in police recorded crime compared with the previous year, with 3.8 million offences recorded in the year ending March 2015.
- The rise in the police figures was driven by increases in violence against the person offences (up by 23% compared with the previous year). However, this increase is thought to reflect changes in recording practices rather than a rise in violent crime. The CSEW estimate for violent crime showed no change compared with the previous year’s survey, following decreases over the past 4 years.

- Offences involving knives and sharp instruments increased by 2% in the year ending March 2015. This small rise masked more significant changes at offence level with an increase in assaults (up 13%, from 11,911 to 13,488) and a decrease in robberies (down 14%, from 11,927 to 10,270). In addition, the related category of weapon possession offences also rose by 10% (from 9,050 to 9,951). Such serious offences are not thought to be prone to changes in recording practice.
- Sexual offences recorded by the police rose by 37% with the numbers of rapes (29,265) and other sexual offences (58,954) being at the highest level since the introduction of the National Crime Recording Standard in 2002/03. As well as improvements in recording, this is also thought to reflect a greater willingness of victims to come forward to report such crimes. In contrast, the latest estimate from the CSEW showed no significant change in the proportion of adults aged 16-59 who reported being a victim of a sexual assault (including attempted assaults) in the last year (1.7%).
- While other acquisitive crimes recorded by the police continued to decline there was an increase in the volume of fraud offences recorded by Action Fraud (up 9%) largely driven by increases in non-investment fraud (up 15%) – a category which includes frauds related to online shopping and computer software services. This is the first time a year-on-year comparison can be made on a like for like basis. It is difficult to know whether this means actual levels of fraud rose or simply that a greater proportion of victims reported to Action Fraud. However, other sources also show year on year increases, including data supplied to the National Fraud Investigation Bureau from industry sources (up 17%).

The Lancashire Picture



Lancashire Constabulary Headquarters, Hutton

Overview

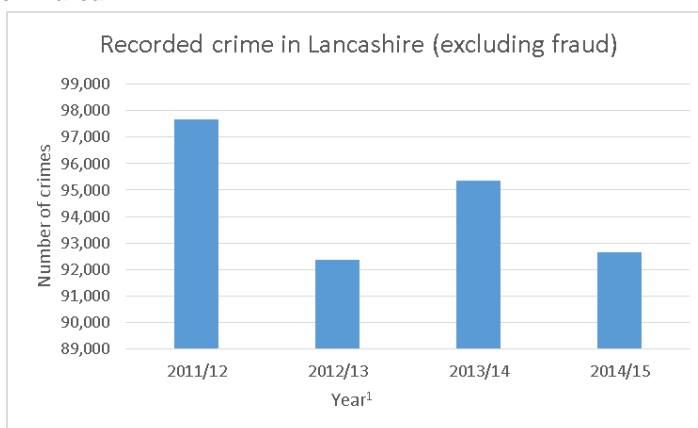
Total recorded crime (excluding fraud) has decreased by 3% in the Lancashire-14 area from the previous year in contrast to the North West region which increased by 4%, and England and Wales which increased by 2%. This equates to 2,726 fewer crimes in the county.

Table 1 Recorded crime in the Lancashire-14 area

Year ¹	Recorded Crime excluding fraud	Percentage change on previous year
2011/12	97,679	
2012/13	92,357	
2013/14	95,372	3.3
2014/15	92,646	-2.9

Note 1: Financial years 1 April to 31 March inclusive

Source: Office for National Statistics – Crime in England & Wales, 2014/15



2012/13 was an exceptionally low crime year. Summer 2013 was unusually hot and saw an above average increase in criminal activity which settled back to more normal levels from September 2013.

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary ([HMIC](#)) independently assesses police forces. They provide authoritative information to allow the public to compare the performance of their force against others. The initial [HMIC report on data quality](#) showed that some police forces were under-recording crime by up to 20%, particularly in less serious offences such as violence without injury. All constabularies, including Lancashire, are working at improving their compliance with the counting rules and this might be having a small impact on the figures. The [HMIC report](#) on Lancashire's compliance was published in November 2014 and stated that the force has a good approach to ensuring the integrity of crime data.

Crime in Lancashire makes up 19.8% of crime in the North West and 2.6% of all recorded crimes in England & Wales. The Lancashire rate is 63 offences per 1,000 resident population (down from 94 per thousand in 2006/07). This is below Greater Manchester (73.8), Merseyside (70.1), but higher than Cheshire (51.4) and Cumbria (49.9) per 1,000 population.

Types of offences

Violence against the person saw an increase of 5.3% to 21,112 crimes. Homicides and violence with injury stayed the same or reduced. Violence without injury was the main area where increases were seen. This will have been impacted by the HMIC inspection which tightened up the rules on reporting this type of crime, as shown by the increases across all parts of the country. The rate per 1000 population of violence against the person is still slightly higher than both the North West and England and Wales averages.



Sexual offences also showed an increase (6.6%) for the third year running. There has been an ongoing process across the county to encourage more reporting of sexual offences, and this is showing in the statistics. The CSEW shows that there is no evidence that more of these types of offences are occurring; the increase is attributed to increased confidence in reporting these crimes to the police and the significant media coverage on sexual offences over the past few years.

Calls to the police about domestic abuse have decreased (-19%)¹ in Lancashire between 2013/14 and 2014/15. Lancashire has improved its provision of domestic abuse services in the last twelve months and this might be reflected in the reduced numbers of victims requiring police intervention or repeat intervention. The Trauma and Intelligence Injury Group report² that there were 747 attendances at accident and emergency departments in Lancashire between April 2013 and March 2014 for an assault that took place at home.

Theft offences reduced by 5% overall but domestic burglary increased by 11.6%, vehicle offences by 0.6% and theft from the person by 9.5%. These changes were broadly in line with the rest of England and Wales.

¹ Source: Lancashire Constabulary/MADE

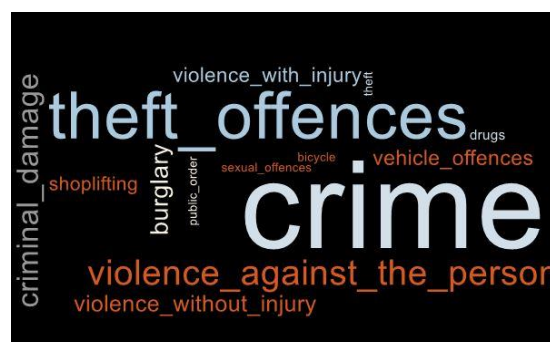
² [Assaults in Lancashire - an analysis of emergency department data \(April 2013 to March 2014\)](#)

Table 2 Recorded police crime by offence group, Lancashire-14 2014/15

	Offence category	Lancashire-14			North West		England & Wales	
		2014/15	Rate ¹	% change 2013/14 - 2014/15	Rate ¹	% change 2013/14 - 2014/15	Rate ¹¹	% change 2013/14 - 2014/15
Victim-based	Violence against the person	21,112	14.4	5.3	14.0	26.9	13.7	22.8
	Sexual offences	2,005	1.4	6.6	1.5	36.9	1.5	37.4
	Robbery	606	0.4	-15.6	0.8	-10.9	0.9	-13.1
	Theft offences	45,881	31.2	-5.0	31.8	-2.7	30.8	-4.9
	Criminal damage and arson	15,873	10.8	-5.8	10.6	-0.6	8.8	-0.4
Other crimes	Drug offences	3,258	2.2	-10.0	3.1	-14.2	3.0	-14.3
	Possession of weapons offences	435	0.3	-12.8	0.4	4.9	0.4	6.2
	Public order offences	2,327	1.6	-3.2	2.7	24.4	2.8	18.7
	Miscellaneous crimes against society	1,149	0.8	11.2	1.0	30.2	0.9	15.5
	Total recorded crime (excluding fraud ⁵)	92,646	63.1	-2.9	65.9	4.1	62.9	2.1

Note 1 Rate per 1,000 population, based on 2013 mid-year estimates.
Source: Office for National Statistics – Crime in England & Wales, 2014/15

75% of recorded crime were victim based crime, 23% violence against the person, 50% theft offences (11% domestic burglary, 16% non-domestic burglary, 19% vehicle offences, 18% shoplifting) and 17% criminal damage and arson.

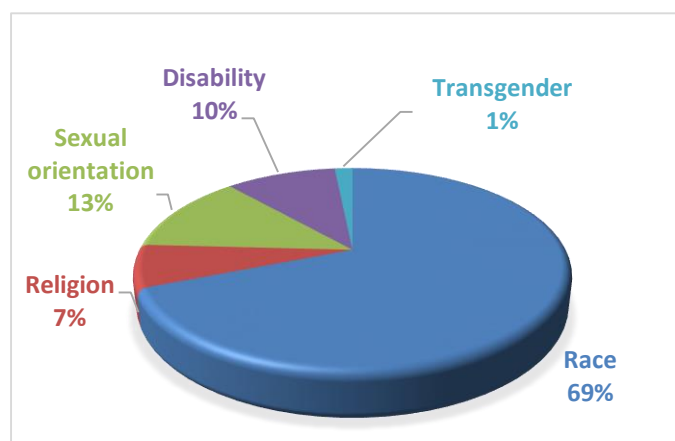


There were 881 hate crimes in Lancashire in 2014/15 according to the Home Office, a fall of 20% compared with the 1,103 recorded hate crimes in 2013/14 but similar to the 821 recorded crimes in 2012/13. Race related hate crimes make up 69% of the total. Small numbers mean that annual variances can be quite large. In England, hate crime has increased by 18% between 2013/14 and 2014/15 and race hate crimes make up a higher percentage of the total (82%) than in Lancashire.

Table 3 Monitored hate crimes, Lancashire-14 2014/15

Strand	Number
Race	645
Religion	64
Sexual orientation	118
Disability	93
Transgender	15
Total number of hate crimes	881

Source: [Home Office](#)



Geographic Patterns

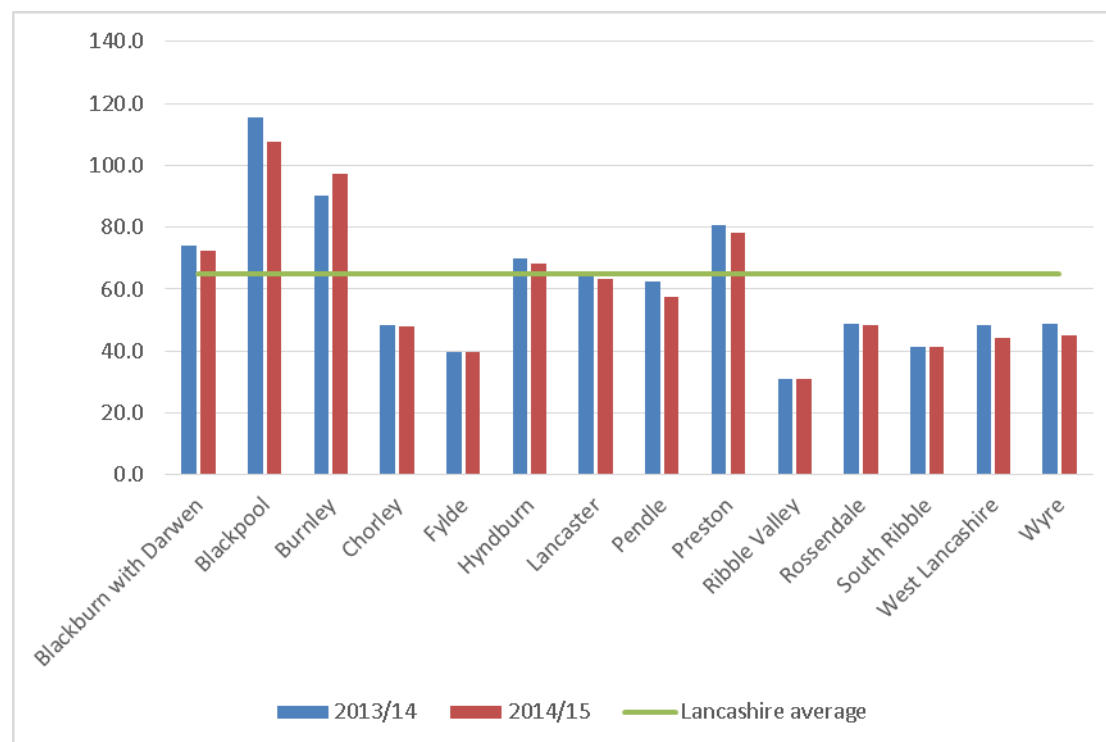
Recorded crime data is also published for “Community Safety Partnerships”. The availability of such data as well as that from the CSEW clearly indicates that crime is not evenly distributed across England and Wales and that geographic patterns and concentrations of offences also vary across crime types. For example, 44% of robberies in England and Wales were recorded in London alone and 38% of domestic burglaries occurred in London, Greater Manchester or West Midlands.

Geographic patterns and concentrations of offences vary across crime types. The CSEW has found that adults are more likely to be a victim of crime in an urban area than a rural area (18% urban, 12.5% rural). Adults are more likely to be a victim of crime in a deprived area (20% most deprived areas, compared with 15% in the least deprived areas).

Similar considerations also apply in Lancashire where a very diverse pattern of recorded crime distribution is apparent between community safety partnership areas. This may be illustrated by the chart of all crime (Chart 2). The highest rates (all above the national average), are found in the four largest urban districts, with Blackpool at 108 offences per 1,000 population heading the table, followed by Burnley, 97 offences per 1,000 population, Preston with 78 offences per 1,000 population and Blackburn with Darwen 72 offences per 1,000 population. These districts have concentrations of some of the “most deprived” areas in England.

Conversely, the lowest crime rates are to be found in Fylde and Ribble Valley, two relatively prosperous districts each ranked amongst the “least deprived” in England. Ribble Valley is predominantly rural and one of the safest places in England and Wales. These patterns have been set for a number of years.

Chart 1 All recorded crime (excluding fraud), rate per 1000 population by Community Safety Partnership



Source: Recorded Crime per 1,000 Population (denominator, census 2013 mid-year population).

Note: Monthly updated Community Safety Partnership crime graphs are available on the statistics area of [Safer Lancashire](#).

Highest ranking Blackpool in the table below is especially characterised by the large number of recorded crimes of violence against the person, accounting for nearly a fifth (19%) of the county total (Table 4). The district's rate for this offence at 29 per thousand households which is more than double the England & Wales average of 14. Blackpool has a thriving night-time economy, high visitor numbers and areas of high deprivation.

Burnley, a district with high levels of deprivation, has the highest level of criminal damage and arson and the second highest rate of theft offences and violence against the person,

Preston has the third highest rate of violence, also due to a lively night-time economy. The violence is extremely localised, occurring mainly in the town centre where pubs and nightclubs are concentrated. Preston also has a busy shopping centre with high visitor numbers and has the third highest rate of theft offences.

Large swathes of Lancashire outside the larger urban districts, particularly Ribble Valley and Fylde, have criminal offence rates across all key categories that are below, and often significantly below the national average. This bears out the CSEW findings that rural areas have lower crime rates than urban areas.

Table 4 Recorded crime for victim-based crimes, 2014/15, Lancashire Districts

Local Authority name	Victim-based crime									
	Violence against the person		Sexual offences		Robbery		Theft offences		Criminal damage and arson	
	Number	Rate per 1000 pop	Number	Rate per 1000 pop	Number	Rate per 1000 pop	Number	Rate per 1000 pop	Number	Rate per 1000 pop
Burnley	1,730	19.9	135	1.6	50	0.6	4,455	51.3	1,446	16.6
Chorley	1,218	11.0	97	0.9	26	0.2	2,529	22.9	983	8.9
Fylde	634	8.3	77	1.0	9	0.1	1,632	21.3	523	6.8
Hyndburn	1,180	14.7	105	1.3	24	0.3	2,717	33.9	1,024	12.8
Lancaster	2,024	14.4	228	1.6	45	0.3	4,313	30.7	1,630	11.6
Pendle	1,121	12.4	110	1.2	21	0.2	2,716	30.1	823	9.1
Preston	2,474	17.6	216	1.5	118	0.8	5,283	37.6	1,817	12.9
Ribble Valley	394	6.8	35	0.6	5	0.1	1,003	17.3	258	4.5
Rossendale	734	10.7	71	1.0	13	0.2	1,728	25.1	597	8.7
South Ribble	980	9.0	103	0.9	24	0.2	2,239	20.6	812	7.5
West Lancashire	1,071	9.6	106	1.0	57	0.5	2,284	20.5	986	8.9
Wyre	1,164	10.8	101	0.9	23	0.2	2,324	21.5	928	8.6
Lancashire 12	14,724	12.5	1,384	1.2	415	0.4	33,223	28.2	11,827	10.0
Blackburn with Darwen	2,337	15.9	251	1.7	79	0.5	5,392	36.6	1,725	11.7
Blackpool	4,051	28.6	370	2.6	112	0.8	7,266	51.4	2,321	16.4
Lancashire 14	21,112	14.4	2,005	1.4	606	0.4	45,881	31.2	15,873	10.8
England and Wales		14.4		1.5		0.9		30.8		8.8

Source: Office of National Statistics, Population base, mid-year 2013 population

For interactive maps of key offences by district in Lancashire, please [click here](#).



Crime rates can, of course, also vary considerably within individual districts themselves, being closely associated with such factors as levels of local deprivation, housing and income levels, health and the number of transient visitors. For crime rates in your neighbourhood, please go to [Your Area](#) on the Safer Lancashire website.

Perceptions of Crime in Lancashire

Lancashire County Council's panel of customers, [Living in Lancashire](#), was asked about community safety in June 2015. The survey found that:

- Around nine out of ten respondents (87%) consider their local area to be safe while one in ten (10%) consider their local area to be unsafe.
- For respondents who consider their area to be safe, the most common reason given is a sense of community spirit or that neighbours look out for each other (24%). For respondents who consider their area to be unsafe, the most common reason given is that there is anti-social behaviour or gangs of young people in the area (25%).
- Around a third of respondents (35%) think that rubbish or litter is at least a fairly big problem in their local area while around a quarter of respondents (26%) think that vehicle anti-social behaviour is at least a fairly big problem.
- Around three-fifths of respondents (56%) are dissatisfied with dog fouling in their local area.
- The most common response for the biggest community safety problems in respondents' local area is theft from garden, grounds, shed, garage etc. (63%) followed by drug dealing (39%), vehicle damage (38%) and burglary in the home (37%).
- Around three-fifths of respondents feel that the level of crime in their area is better than that in other areas of Lancashire (61%) and better than the UK (59%).
- In relation to the root causes of crime, around three-quarters of respondents (74%) think that drugs are at least a fairly big problem. Around two-thirds (68%) think that alcohol is at least a fairly big problem and around three-fifths (61%) think that unemployment is at least a fairly big problem.
- Around three-fifths of respondents (63%) agree that the police and other local public services are successfully dealing with crime in their local area, while a slightly lower proportion (56%) agree that they are dealing with anti-social behaviour.
- Around nine out of ten respondents (89%) would report crime and/or anti-social behaviour to the police and around half (53%) would report it to their local authority.

The police hold a public monthly meeting in each neighbourhood policing area (Police and Communities Together, PACT). Issues of concern to those in the neighbourhood are identified through this forum. Analysis of these priorities shows that anti-social behaviour was a PACT priority in the majority of areas, particularly nuisance anti-social behaviour, such as inconsiderate use of vehicles and rowdy behaviour (often linked to alcohol). The other priority which was identified in more than a third of neighbourhoods was road related issues, such as speeding and parking. PACT priorities by neighbourhood are detailed on [Lancashire Constabulary's website](#).

Outcomes

A new outcomes framework was introduced in April 2014 which allows every crime recorded by the police to be given a detailed outcome, showing how the police deal with crimes (including crimes which are still under investigation). 97% of crimes in Lancashire were given a recorded outcome in 2014/15. The remaining 3% will be given an outcome at a later date. Rates are calculated as the number of outcomes divided by the total number of offences.

Table 5 details these outcomes. Lancashire has a slightly higher number of offenders charged or summonsed (18.1) than England and Wales (16.7) but this is in line with the North West average. Lancashire has a higher percentage of community resolution outcomes (5.3) than both the North West (4.4) and England and Wales (3.3). In more than half (56%) of cases the investigation was completed and a suspect was not identified. This is higher than the England and Wales average of 42%, but in line with the North West average.

Table 5 Outcome types 2014/15

Outcome type	Lancashire-14		North West	England and Wales
	Number	Rate	Rate	Rate
Charged/ Summoned	16,729	18.1	18.3	16.7
Caution – youths	413	0.4	0.5	0.6
Caution – adults	2,875	3.1	2.7	3.5
Taken into consideration ¹	481	0.5	0.4	0.7
Offender died	19	0.0	0.0	0.0
Penalty Notices for Disorder	640	0.7	1.0	0.9
Cannabis/Khat Warning	668	0.7	1.2	1.3
Community Resolution	4,882	5.3	4.4	3.3
Not in public interest (CPS)	11	0.0	0.3	0.2
Not in public interest (Police)	115	0.1	1.3	1.0
Prosecution prevented: suspect under age	224	0.2	0.2	0.1
Prosecution prevented: suspect too ill	507	0.5	0.2	0.2
Prosecution prevented: victim/key witness dead/too ill	38	0.0	0.0	0.0
Evidential difficulties: suspect not identified; victim does not support further action	1,481	1.6	1.9	1.6
Evidential difficulties: suspect identified; victim supports action	4,325	4.7	7.2	7.3
Evidential difficulties: suspect identified; victim does not support further action	4,775	5.2	5.3	5.9
Prosecution time limit expired	95	0.1	0.1	0.1
Investigation complete – no suspect identified	51,859	56.0	55.6	42.3

Notes:

1. Offences asked to be taken into consideration by a court (TICs)
2. Eleven forces did not provide data on outcomes 5, 9-18 to cover the full year, and total numbers shown for these outcomes are therefore lower than expected
3. Rate based on number of outcomes recorded in 2014/15 divided by number of offences recorded in 2014/15. Rates shown for outcome types where full year of data was provided by all forces
4. Numbers show outcomes recorded in 2014/15, some of which will have been assigned to offences recorded in previous years

Source: [Home Office](#)

A separate research monitor, [prison populations](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/prison-population-figures-2015), covers criminal justice outcomes.
<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/prison-population-figures-2015>.



Preston Street Kiosk

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