



Crime in Lancashire 2020/21

Key findings for Lancashire-14

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Hate crime section updated October 2020

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Contents

Summary	1
The Lancashire picture	2
All crime	2
Types of offence	3
Change within offence type	3
Hate crime (data on hate crime is published mid-Oct)	6
Geographic patterns	7
About the data	9
Further information.....	10

Summary

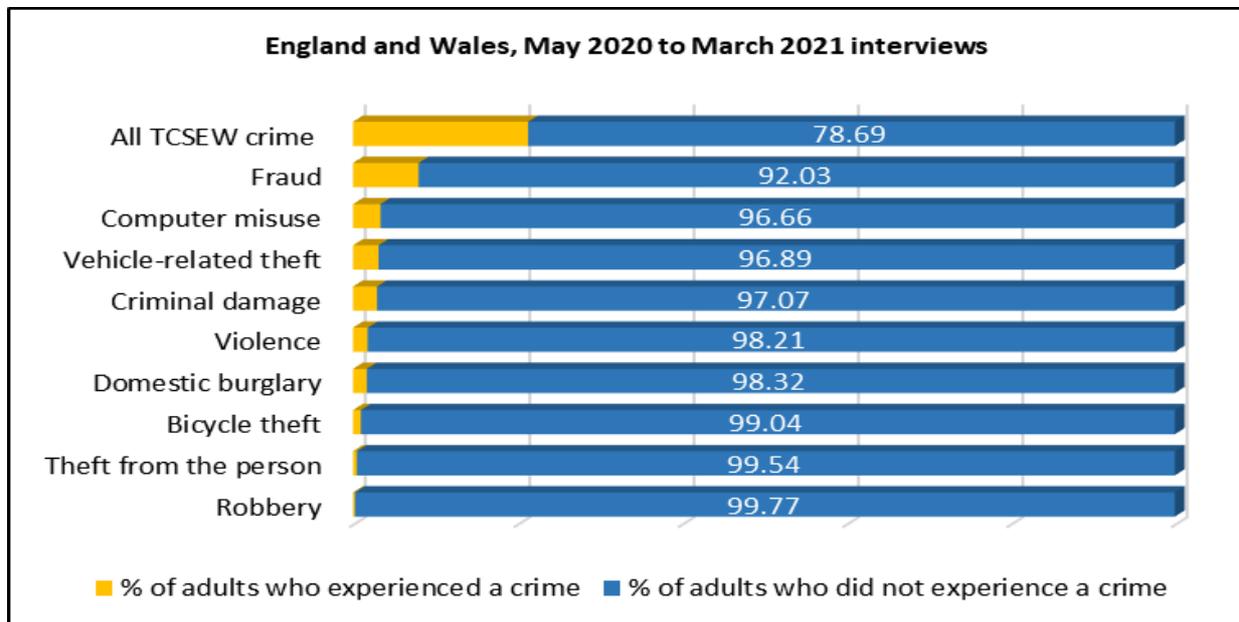
Crime against households and adults uses data from police recorded crime and the new Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales (TCSEW). This includes the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on crime and people’s perceptions of crime during the May 2020 to March 2021 interview periods. The latest estimates show that 8 in 10 adults did not experience any of the crimes asked about in the TCSEW in the year ending March 2021.

The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has had a significant impact on patterns of crime. There were large decreases in theft offences, such as domestic burglary and theft from the person, as more people stayed at home and limited their social contact.

At the same time, there were substantial increases in fraud and computer misuse offences such as hacking, as fraudsters took advantage of behavioural changes during the pandemic, such as increased online shopping.

The number of people who became victims of violent crime also fell, driven by decreases in violence where the offender was a stranger. This likely reflects a decrease in violence taking place in public spaces during national lockdown restrictions.

Chart 1: The likelihood of being a victim of crime varies by crime type



Notes: 1. Data from the TCSEW are published as Experimental Statistics.
 2. Percentages for violence, robbery, theft from the person, fraud and computer misuse are quoted for adults. Percentages for domestic burglary and criminal damage are quoted for households. Percentage for vehicle-related theft and bicycle theft are quoted for vehicle or bicycle owning households.
 3. For all TCSEW crime, including fraud and computer misuse, this is the estimated percentage of adults who have been a victim of at least one personal crime or have been resident in a household that was a victim of at least one household crime.

Source: Office for National Statistics – [Crime Survey for England and Wales](#)

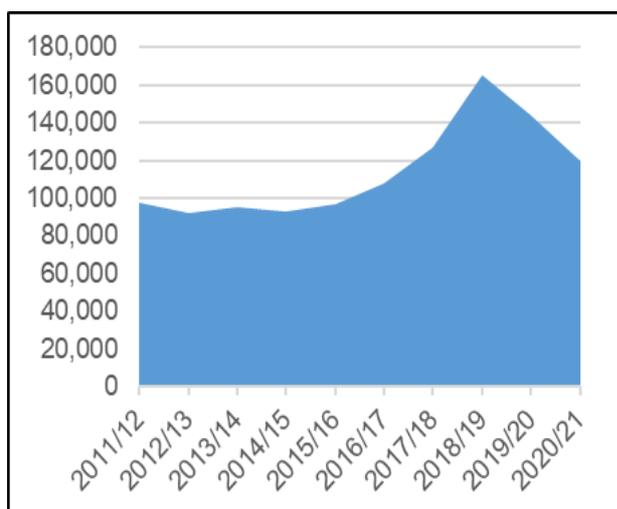
The Lancashire picture

All crime

Police recorded crime (excluding fraud) for the 12 months ending March 21 shows a decrease in England and Wales of 13%, compared with the previous 12 months. Lancashire-14 has seen a decrease of 17% (-23,940 crimes), continuing the trend from the previous year.

Table 1: Recorded crime (excluding fraud) in the Lancashire-14 area

Year ¹	Recorded crime (excluding fraud)	Percentage change on previous year
2011/12	97,679	
2012/13	92,357	-5.4%
2013/14	95,372	3.3%
2014/15	92,559	-2.9%
2015/16	97,112	4.9%
2016/17	107,610	10.8%
2017/18	127,028	18.0%
2018/19	165,368	30.0%
2019/20	143,736	-12.8%
2020/21	119,796	-16.6%



Note 1: Financial years 1 April to 31 March inclusive

Source: Office for National Statistics – [Crime in England & Wales, 2020/21](#)

These changes need to be seen in the context of the focus on the quality of crime recording by the police in recent years. This follows inspections of forces by [Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services \(HMICFRS\)](#), the [Public Administration Select Committee inquiry](#) into crime statistics, and the [UK Statistics Authority's decision](#) to remove the National Statistics designation from police recorded crime statistics in 2014. Lancashire Constabulary introduced a new crime recording system in November 2018.

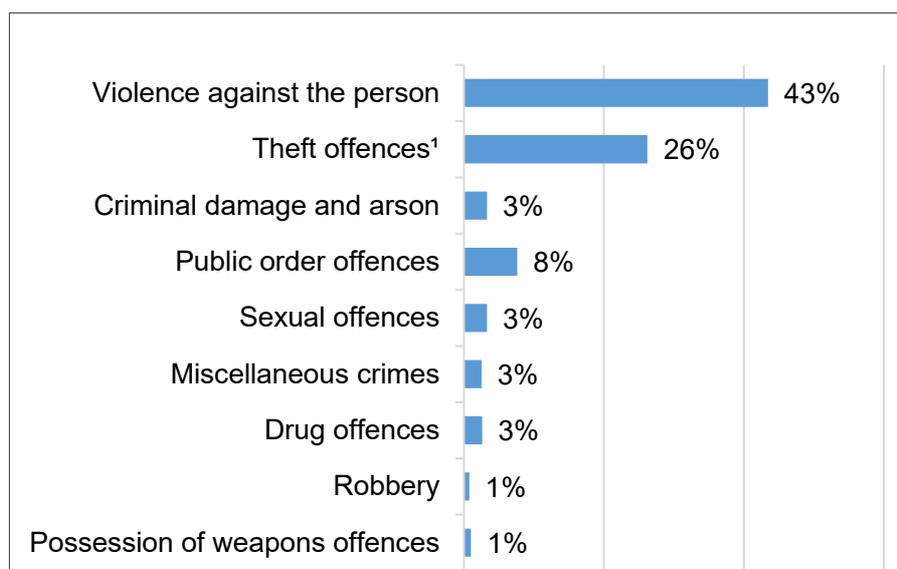
Crime in Lancashire makes up 18.7% of crime in the North West and 2.6% of all recorded crimes in England and Wales. The Lancashire rate is 79.4 offences per 1,000 population (96 per thousand in 2019/20). This is the 3rd highest rate in the North West, below Greater Manchester (97.3) and Merseyside (90.2). Cheshire is in 4th place (78.7) and Cumbria (61.9) in 5th place with the lowest rate. Lancashire crime is slightly above the England and Wales rate of 77.6 per 1,000 population.

Types of offence

In 12 months ending March 2021, victim-based crime represented 77% of all recorded crime in Lancashire-14, with miscellaneous crimes against society 14%. Violence against the person were the highest volume, followed by theft offences¹.

¹Figures may differ slightly as data from some forces include a very small number of crimes which have been erroneously recorded against an expired offence code (e.g. domestic and non-domestic burglary).

Chart 2: Percentage of all recorded crime in Lancashire-14



Source: Office for National Statistics – [Crime in England & Wales, 2020/21](#)

Change within offence type

Table 2: Percentage change 2020 to 2021

PERCENTAGE CHANGE 2020/21		
Offence type	Lancashire	England and Wales
Possession of weapons offences	25	-6
Drug offences	24	14
Robbery	-23	-34
Violence against the person	-9	0
Theft offences	-33	-32
Criminal damage and arson	-14	-15
Miscellaneous crimes against society	6	4
Sexual offences	-11	-9
Public order offences	-12	5

Source: Office for National Statistics – [Crime in England & Wales, 2020/21](#)

Possession of weapons offences had the highest percentage increase of all selected increased at 25%, in contrast to a decrease seen nationally (-6%).

Drug offences increased by 24% in Lancashire-14, this compares to increases shown for England and Wales (14%) and the North West (19%). The largest increase in the North West was Greater Manchester (37%) and the lowest Cheshire (1%).

Despite a sharp increase in **Violence against the person** crimes in Lancashire-14 by 53% to 63,324 in 2019, there was a decrease of 10% to 56,921 in 2020, followed by a decrease of 17% to 52,020³ in the year ending March 2021. This is a greater decrease than the England and Wales average decrease of 13%. Since March 2020 the night-time economy (pubs and nightclubs) have been closed or operating at a reduced capacity, which will have had a positive impact on alcohol-related violence against the person.

There were 22 homicide crimes recorded in Lancashire-14 in 2020/21, the same as recorded in 2019/20 (22).

Violence with injury decreased by 13% in Lancashire-14, a similar decrease to that seen in England and Wales (14%). Cumbria (26%) had the largest decrease in the North West, followed by Cheshire (14%). ONS say that the number of people who became victims of violent crime fell, driven by decreases in violence where the offender was a stranger. This likely reflects a decrease in violence taking place in public spaces during national lockdown restrictions.

There were 243 assault attendances at Lancashire NHS hospitals for the year ending March 2021, where the weapon was recorded as a sharp object, according to data supplied by [TIIG](#)¹. This is a decrease of 36% as there were 382 for the year ending March 2020.

Knife and sharp implement crimes fell by 10.2% 2019/2020 compared with 2020/2021. This fall was higher than the North West change (9.9%) but lower than the England and Wales change (-14.6%). 6% of crimes involved knife and sharp implements in the year ending March 2021, which equated to 1,020 crimes. The decrease is largely attributable to a decrease in robbery offences which, in turn, reduced because of the national lockdown and Covid-19 restrictions.

Sexual offences showed a decrease of 11% in Lancashire-14, compared to that seen nationally (9%). This trend is likely to reflect the diminishing impact of recording improvements as well as the effects of national lockdown restrictions. There is also likely to be a natural reduction in historic crimes reported after high profile cases during Operation Yewtree which peaked in 2015.

¹ Attempted murder, threats to kill, actual bodily harm & grievous bodily harm, robbery, rape, sexual assault

² There are known under-recording issues with NHS weapon recording and as there is some variation between different hospital trusts on their completion rates for this indicator.

³ Lancashire police force - Violence against the person offences are higher than expected by approximately 1200 offences (year ending March 2021).

In the year ending March 2021, Lancashire recorded 1,053 crimes flagged as child sexual abuse and 417 crimes flagged as child sexual exploitation.

Estimates from the Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales (TCSEW) showed that 29% of adults personally witnessed or experienced **anti-social behaviour (ASB)** in their area in the last 12 months. There were 96,398 incidents of ASB in Lancashire April 2020 to March 2021 recorded by Lancashire Constabulary. A rate of 63.9 per 1,000 population, significantly above the England and Wales rate of 36.9.

The TCSEW showed that 50% of all adults noticed individuals breaching virus restrictions in their local area since the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Of these, 7% reported the breach to the police.

The TCSEW also showed that there were 4.6 million **fraud offences** in the year ending March 2021, a 24% increase compared with the year ending March 2019. This included increases in consumer and retail fraud, advance fee fraud and other fraud and may represent fraudsters taking advantage of behaviour changes possibly related to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, such as increased online shopping and increased savings. There were 8,272 fraud and computer misuse offences in Lancashire 2020/21, a 28.7% increase on the previous 12 months. This increase was higher than both England and Wales (26.7%) and North West (24.8%)

In Lancashire-14, theft offences decreased by 33% overall with theft from the person decreasing by 42% and shoplifting reduced by 39%. These falls were driven by national lockdown restrictions with non-essential shops and the night-time economy being closed and people spending more time in their homes.

Table 3: Recorded police crime by offence group, Lancashire-14 2020/21

	Offence category	Lancashire-14			North West		England & Wales	
		2020/21	Rate ¹	% change 2019/20-2020/21	Rate ¹	% change 2019/20-2020/21	Rate ¹	% change 2019/20-2020/21
Victim-based	Violence against the person	52,050	34.5	-8.6	34.7	2.6	29.9	0.5
	Sexual offences	3,934	2.6	-10.5	2.8	-4.9	2.5	-9.2
	Robbery	910	0.6	-23.4	0.9	-31.3	1.0	-33.9
	Theft offences	31,416	20.8	-32.9	21.8	-31.5	21.9	-32.4
	Criminal damage and arson	15,015	10.0	-14.2	9.5	-14.0	8.0	-15.2
Other crimes	Drug offences	3,118	2.1	24.4	3.8	19.3	3.5	13.9
	Possession of weapons offences	1,208	0.8	24.5	0.9	-2.1	0.7	-6.3
	Public order offences	9,134	6.1	-12.1	10.5	1.5	8.1	5.2
	Miscellaneous crimes against society	3,118	2.0	5.6	2.3	11.8	1.9	4.4
	Total recorded crime (excluding fraud)	119,796	79.4	-16.6	87.1	-10.5	77.6	-13.1

Note 1: Rate per 1,000 population, based on 2019 mid-year estimates.

Source: [Office for National Statistics – Crime in England & Wales, 2020-21](#)

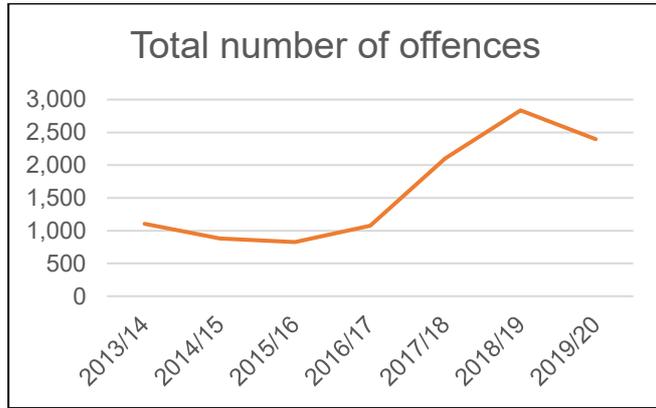
Hate crime (data on hate crime is published mid-Oct)

Official data from 2019/20 shows that there has been a reduction in hate crime in Lancashire of 15.6%. This reduction is much lower than the 1.7% increase seen in England and Wales as a whole.

The large rise in 2017/18 is ascribed to changes in recording practices following Lancashire's Crime Data Integrity inspection. Whereas previously some of these crimes would have been closed off as ASB incidents, the view is now that if the complainant was concerned enough to phone the police, then the threshold for criminality has been crossed so Lancashire are recording them as crime. Also, partnership working under the Lancashire wide Hate Crime Strategy and more understanding around the issue has increased confidence in reporting.

Table 4: Total number of offences and annual percentage change

Year	Number of offences	Annual percentage change
2013/14	1,103	
2014/15	881	-20.1%
2015/16	826	-6.2%
2016/17	1,076	30.3%
2017/18	2,105	95.6%
2018/19	2,836	34.7%
2019/20	2,395	-15.6%



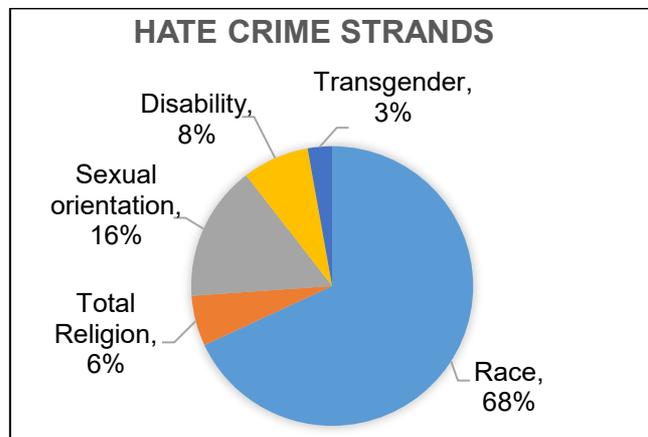
Source: [Home Office - Hate crime, England and Wales, 2019 to 2020](#) (data on hate crime is published mid-Oct)

While variations in hate crime over the last five years have been mainly driven by changes in crime recording by the police, there has been spikes in hate crime following certain events such as the EU Referendum and the terrorist attacks in 2017².

Race related hate crimes make up 68% of the total. Small numbers mean that annual variances can be quite large.

Table 5: Monitored hate crimes, Lancashire-14 2019/20

Strand	Number
Race	1,668
Religion	133
Sexual orientation	432
Disability	166
Transgender	73
Total number of motivating factors¹	2,472



Source: Lancashire Constabulary - It is possible for a hate crime offence to have more than one motivating factor which is why the above numbers sum to more than 2,395.

Geographic patterns

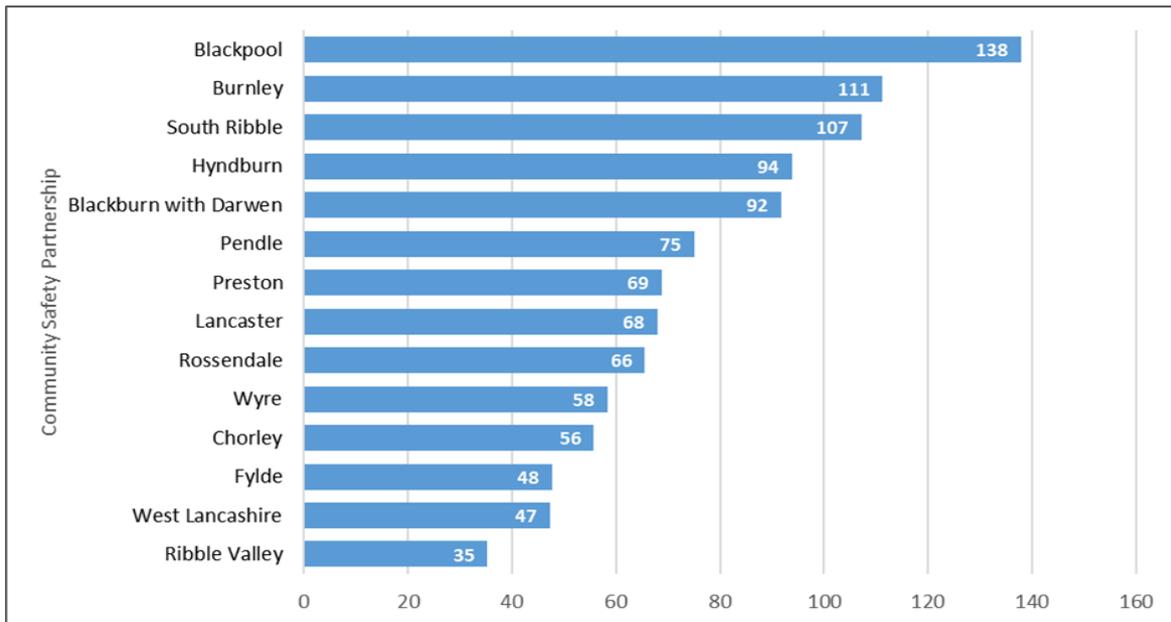
Recorded crime data has been published for “Community Safety Partnerships” (CSP), year ending March 2021.

² Westminster attack, March 2017; Manchester Arena bombing, May 2017; London Bridge attack, June 2017; Finsbury Park attack, June 2017, Parsons Green bombing, September 2017

The availability of such data as well as that from the TCSEW/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.

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 below:

Chart 3: CSP recorded crime rate per 1,000 population for headline offences, year ending March 2021



The highest rates (all above the national average), are found in urban areas with high concentrations of deprivation. Blackpool at 138 offences per 1,000 population heads the table and has the fourth highest crime rate of any CSP in England and Wales.

Blackpool CSP has the highest rate for Violence against the Person and joint highest with Northampton and Norwich for Sexual Offences of any CSP in England and Wales.

Burnley has the second highest rate in the Lancashire-14 area, 111 offences per 1,000 population and is ranked 14/342 CSPs for total recorded crime. Blackpool, South Ribble and Burnley are all in the worst 10% of CSPs for violence against the person. Blackpool, Burnley, South Ribble and Blackburn with Darwen are in the worst 10% for criminal damage and arson.

Conversely, the lowest crime rates are to be found in Fylde, West Lancashire and Ribble Valley, three 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. The district has the joint 2nd lowest rate (35) for total recorded crime (excluding fraud) in England and Wales together with Wealden, Sussex and East and Mid Devon. Isles of Scilly has the lowest (11).

About the data

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. The Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales (TCSEW) became operational on the 20 May 2020. It was a replacement for the face-to-face Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) which was suspended on the 17 March 2020 because of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. It was set up with the intention of measuring the level of crime during the pandemic. As the pandemic has continued throughout the 2020/21 survey year, questions have been raised as to whether the year ending March 2021 TCSEW is comparable with estimates produced in earlier years by the face-to-face CSEW. These sources cannot provide a complete picture, and each have different strengths and limitations.

The TCSEW/CSEW is a telephone/face-to-face victimisation survey in which people resident in households in England and Wales are asked about their experiences of a selected range of offences in the 12 months prior to the interview. For the population and offence types it covers, the TCSEW/CSEW generally provides the better measure of trends on a consistent basis over time, because it is unaffected by changes in levels of reporting to the police or police recording practices. The methodology employed in the headline estimate of crime has remained comparable since the survey began in 1981.

The TCSEW/CSEW is able to capture a broad range of victim-based crimes experienced by those interviewed, not just those that have been reported to, and recorded by, the police. However, there are some serious but relatively low-volume offences, such as homicide and sexual offences, which are not included in its main estimates. The survey also does not cover sufficient respondents to provide any information at a local level.

Police recorded crime figures are restricted to a subset of notifiable offences that have been reported to and recorded by the police. Therefore, while the police recorded crime series covers a wider population and a broader set of offences than the CSEW (for example, residents of institutions, tourists and crimes against commercial bodies), it does not include crimes that do not come to the attention of the police or are not recorded by them. The police recorded crime series is prone to changes in recording practices and police activity as well as changing behaviour in public reporting of crime. As a result, trends will not always reflect changing levels of criminal activity.

Further information

A separate research monitor, [prison populations](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/prison-population-figures-2020), covers criminal justice <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/prison-population-figures-2020>.

Fraud - <http://www.actionfraud.police.uk/fraud-statistics>

News article – "Which? exposes fraud hotspots across England and Wales".
<https://press.which.co.uk/whichpressreleases/which-exposes-fraud-hotspots-across-england-and-wales/>

Hate crime - <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/hate-crime-statistics>

ONS visual - People greatly overestimate their likelihood of being robbed -
<https://visual.ons.gov.uk/people-greatly-overestimate-their-likelihood-of-being-robbed/>

ONS statistical bulletin - [Crime in England and Wales: year ending March 2021](#)

ONS related links - [Guide to finding crime statistics](#)