

Crime in Lancashire 2023/24

Key findings for Lancashire-14



July 2024 edition

Hate crime section updated October 2023

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The National Picture

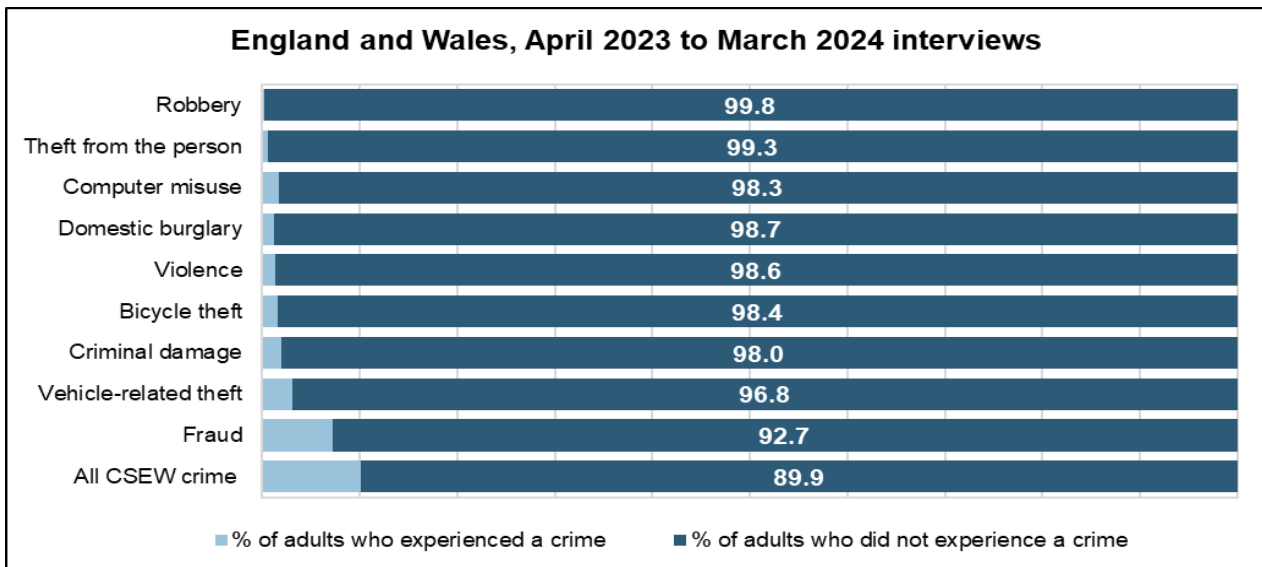
The latest figures from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) for those interviewed in the year ending March 2024 showed that, there were an estimated 8.8 million incidents of headline crime (which includes theft, robbery, criminal damage, fraud, computer misuse and violence with or without injury) in year ending March 2024. This was 22% lower compared with year ending March 2017 (the earliest comparable year for CSEW headline crime, including fraud and computer misuse) and that there was no statistically significant change in CSEW headline crime compared with the year end March 2023.

Fraud decreased by 10%, with reductions in bank and credit account fraud (12%), advance fee fraud (23%), and other fraud (39%). Computer misuse increased by 37%, mainly because of a 42% rise in unauthorised access to personal information and while there were no statistically significant changes in overall theft, there was a 40% increase in the sub-category of theft from the person. Robbery offences increased by 8% (to 81,019 offences) compared with year ending March 2023 (75,012 offences) and shoplifting offences rose by 30% (to 443,995 offences) compared with the previous year (342,428 offences).

Victim-based crime has generally decreased over the last 10 years with some notable exceptions, such as sexual assault.

Changes in recording practices have led to discontinuity in police recorded crime figures over time, with changes having a particularly large impact on the recording of violent crime over the last 10 years. Therefore, police recorded violence does not provide reliable trends in crime but is a better indicator of police activity.

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



Source: [Crime in England and Wales: Police Force Area data tables - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://ons.gov.uk/crime-in-england-and-wales/policing/policing-in-england-and-wales)

Data from the CSEW for the year ending March 2024 are not designated as accredited official statistics. When presenting long-term trends, we use the 16 to 59 years age range to give a comparable time-series; data for all people aged 16 years and over are only available from year ending March 2022 onwards. Percentages for violence, robbery, theft from the person, fraud and computer misuse are quoted for people aged 16 years and over. Percentages for domestic burglary and criminal damage are quoted for households. Percentages for vehicle-related theft and bicycle theft are quoted for vehicle or bicycle owning households. For all CSEW crime, including fraud and computer misuse, this is the estimated percentage of people aged 16 years and over 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.

The Lancashire Picture

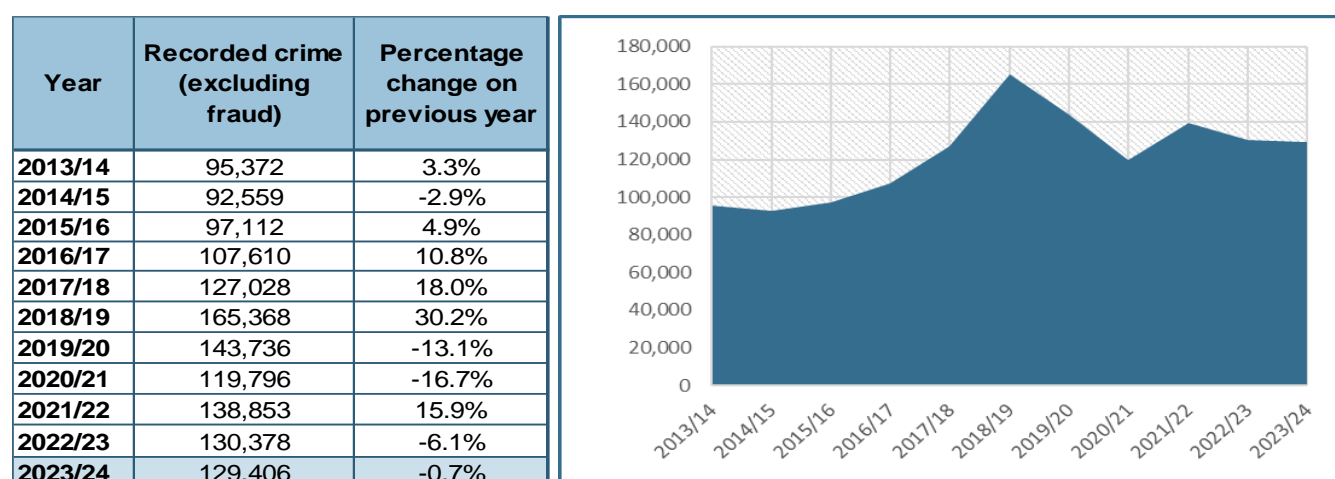
All Crime

Recorded crime is subject to variations due to activity, such as operations, campaigns or data quality improvements and recording changes and thus isn't as a good an indicator of trends as survey data. However, survey data isn't available at local authority level, so recorded crime will be the primary focus in this report.

There were 129,406 recorded crimes (excluding fraud) in the Lancashire-14 area in 2023/24. This reports a slight decrease on the previous 12 months at 972 fewer crimes and just under 1% decrease from 2022/23.

There were 93,171 recorded crimes (excluding fraud) in the Lancashire-12 area in the same period. This was a 3.3% increase, 2,976 more crimes than the previous year.

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



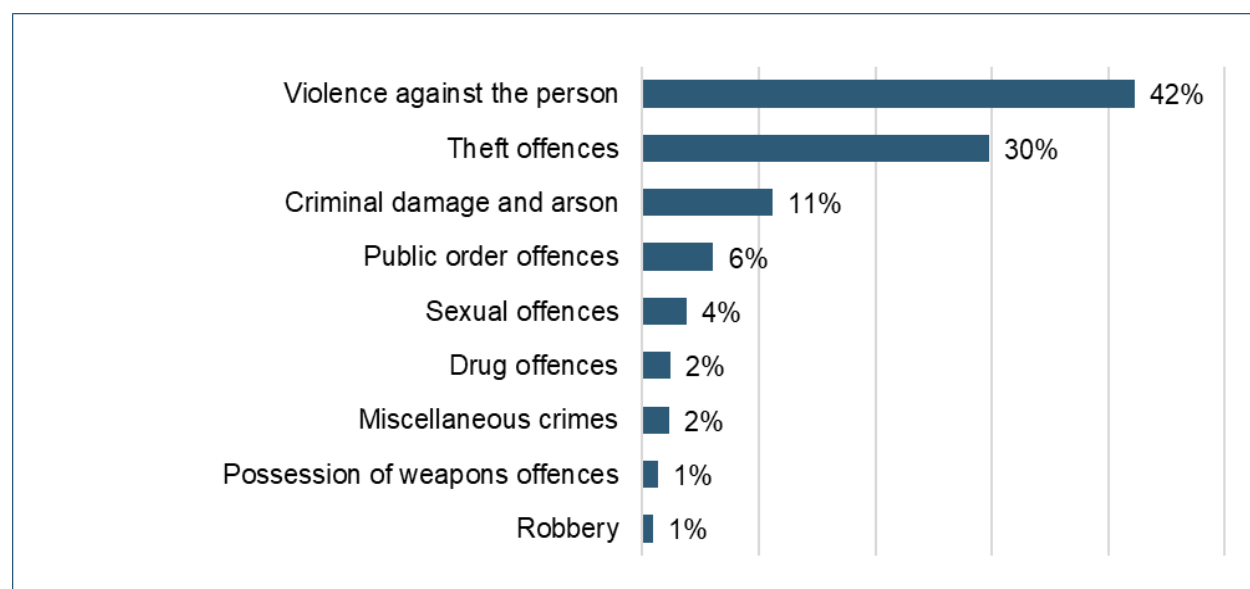
Source: [Crime in England and Wales: Police Force Area data tables - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://ons.gov.uk/crime-in-england-and-wales/policing/policing-in-england-and-wales)

Crime in Lancashire-14 accounts for 17.7% of the North West's crime and 2.4% of all recorded crimes in England and Wales. For 2023/24, the crime rate in Lancashire-14 is 83.5 offences per 1,000 population, down from 85 per 1,000 in 2022/23 and 92 per 1,000 in 2021/22. This rate is the third highest in the North West, following Greater Manchester's 117.7 and Merseyside's 100.8. Despite this, Lancashire-14's crime rate remains below the England and Wales average of 89.7 per 1,000 population.

Types of Offence

In 12 months ending March 2024, victim-based crime represented 88% of all recorded crime in Lancashire-14, with miscellaneous and other crimes against society at 12%. Violence against the person had the highest volume of 42%, followed by theft offences at just over 30% of the overall recorded crime in Lancashire.

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



Source: [Crime in England and Wales: Police Force Area data tables - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://ons.gov.uk/crime-in-england-and-wales/policing/policing-in-england-and-wales)

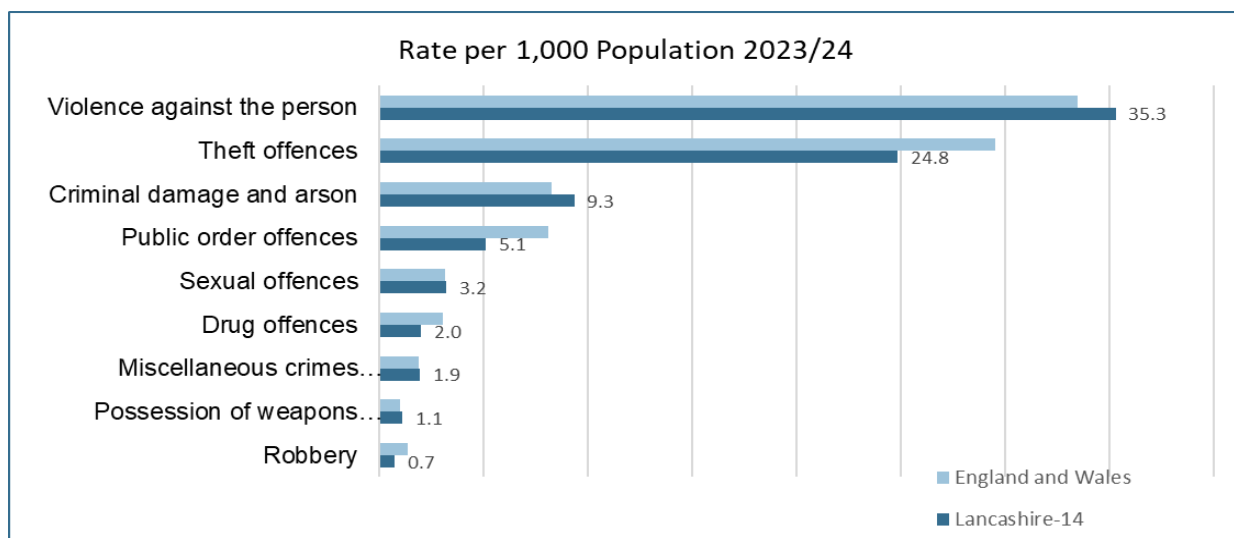
Change within offence type

Table 2 below shows the percentage change compared with the previous 12 months. Possession of weapons has fallen by a change from previous year of over 11%, however according to the CSEW Police recorded “possession of article with a blade or point” offences decreased by 3% in year end March 2024 compared with year end March 2023 and state this follows substantial increases in recent years, which may have been influenced by targeted police action to tackle knife crime. Drug Offences have also increased by almost a 28% change since the previous year.

Table 2: Percentage change 2023 to 2024

PERCENTAGE CHANGE 2023/24		
Offence type	Lancashire-14	England and Wales
Criminal damage and arson	-7.2	-6.4
Violence against the person	-1.7	-4.5
Miscellaneous crimes against society	-0.3	-3.6
Sexual offences	0.3	-2.9
Possession of weapons offences	1.6	1.2
Theft offences	2.7	3.2
Robbery	8.8	8.0
Public order offences	10.4	-17.3
Drug offences	20.9	1.1

Source: [Crime in England and Wales: Police Force Area data tables - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://ons.gov.uk/crime-in-england-and-wales/policing/policing-in-england-and-wales)

Chart 3: Rate per 1,000 population

Source: [Crime in England and Wales: Police Force Area data tables - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://ons.gov.uk/crime-in-england-and-wales)

Violence against the person offences had the highest rate per 1,000 population at 35.3. This is slightly above the rate for England & Wales, which is 33.4 per 1,000 population. However, the percentage decrease in these offences was much lower at 1.7%, compared to a 4.5% decrease in England & Wales.

Public Order offences in Lancashire-14 increased by just over 10%, making it the second most significant rise. In contrast, England and Wales saw a decrease of over 17% in these offences. Lancashire's rate per 1,000 population is 5.1, which is lower than the 8.1 rate in England and Wales.

Robbery offences in Lancashire-14 increased by 8.8%, which is a similar increase of 8% in England and Wales. The rate per 1,000 population is 0.7 in Lancashire, lower than the 1.3 rate in England and Wales.

Drug offences in Lancashire saw the highest percentage increase, rising by over 20%. This is significantly higher than the 1.1% increase in England and Wales. However, the rate per 1,000 population was similar, with Lancashire at 2.0 and England and Wales at 3.0.

In 2023/24, there were 20 **homicides** recorded in Lancashire-14, up from 14 in 2022/23. Meanwhile, the number of homicides in England and Wales decreased slightly by less than 1% compared to the year ending March 2023. The homicide rate per thousand population in Lancashire-14 is 0.012.

In the year ending March 2024, there were 304 **assault attendees** at Lancashire NHS Accident & Emergency (A&E) departments involving a knife or sharp object. This is an increase of over 14% compared to the 266 cases recorded in the previous year, ending March 2023.

Knife and sharp implement crimes in Lancashire increased by 10.5% compared to the year ending March 2023. A comparison with the North West and England & Wales is not possible because Greater Manchester Police (GMP) could not provide data on offences involving knives or sharp instruments from July 2023 to March 2024 due to an IT issue.

In 2023/24, there were 142 **firearms offences** (excluding air weapons) in Lancashire-14, an increase of just under 12%. The North West region saw an 8% rise, and England & Wales had a 6% increase by the end of March 2024.

Sexual offences in Lancashire-14 increased slightly by 2% (4,938 cases). In contrast, the North West saw a decrease of almost 4%, and England & Wales had a decrease of just over 3%. The rate of sexual offences per thousand population in Lancashire-14 is 3.2, which is slightly higher than the rate in England and Wales (3.1) but lower than the North West (3.4). High levels of non-reporting and changes in reporting trends can significantly impact the number of sexual offences recorded by the police.

Theft offences in Lancashire-14 increased by almost 4%, similar to the 3% increase in England & Wales. Lancashire-14 recorded 24.8 theft offences per thousand population, nearly the same as the 24.3 recorded at the end of March 2023. There was a significant rise in shoplifting attributable to the cost-of-living crisis and criminal gangs in 2023/24. Lancashire wasn't as impacted as other areas, seeing a rise of 21%, compared with 30% across England & Wales, and 50% across the North West region.

Vehicle offences in Lancashire increased by less than 1%, while in England & Wales, they fell by 6%.

In the year ending March 2024, Lancashire recorded 1008 crimes flagged as **child sexual abuse**, which is almost 21% increase compared with the previous year. As a subset of these, 621 crimes were flagged as **child sexual exploitation** which again is almost a 21% increase (514) when compared to the previous report year ending March 2023.

Estimates from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) for the year ending March 2023 showed that 32% of people in Lancashire had experienced or witnessed some type of **anti-social behaviour** (ASB), a 2% decrease from the previous year.

In Lancashire-14, there were 50,982 incidents of **ASB** from April 2023 to March 2024, equating to a rate of 33 per 1,000 population. This represents a further 6.6% decrease compared to the previous year. However, this rate is still significantly higher than the England and Wales rate of 17 and the North West rate of 20 per 1,000 population for the same period.

There were 7,433 **fraud and computer misuse offences** referred to the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau for Lancashire-14, an increase of almost 8% on the previous 12 months. This is 5 per 1,000 population in Lancashire-14. The England and Wales rate was 6 for the same period, April 2023 to March 2024, with a similar equivalent rise of 8%.

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

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



Hate Crime 2023/24

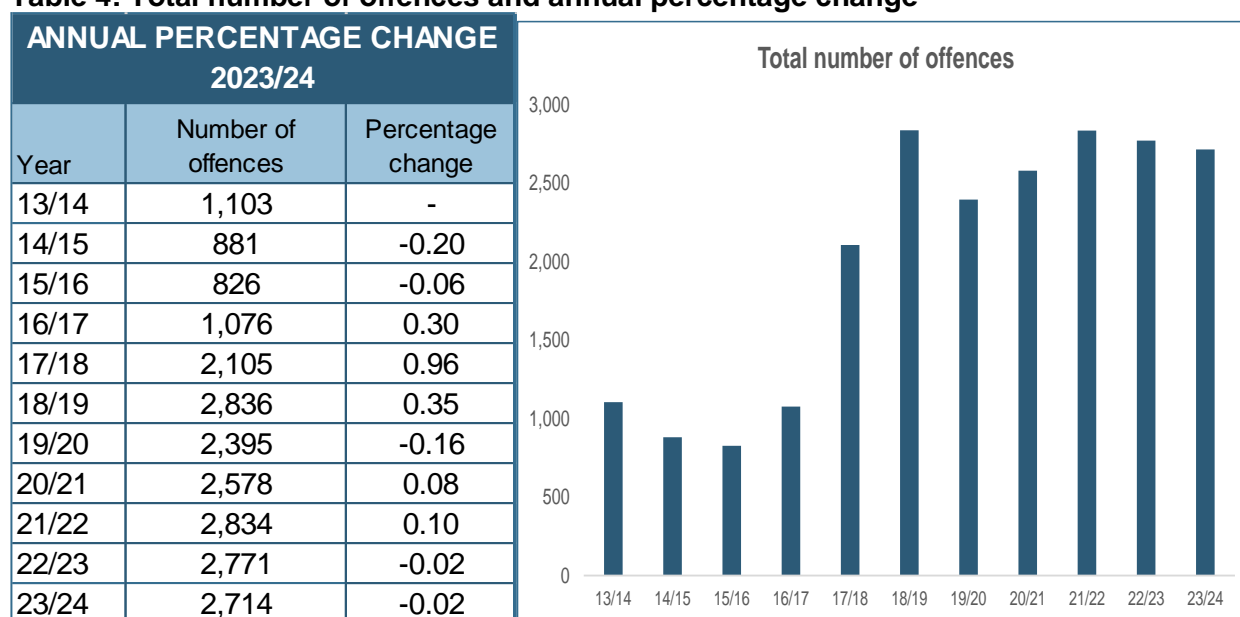
Hate crime is defined as 'any criminal offence which is perceived, by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice towards someone based on a personal characteristic.' This common definition was agreed in 2007 by the police, Crown Prosecution Service, Prison Service (now the National Offender Management Service) and other agencies that make up the criminal justice system. There are five centrally monitored strands of hate crime:

- race or ethnicity
- religion or beliefs
- sexual orientation
- disability
- transgender identity

Official data from 2023/24 shows that there has been a decrease in hate crime in Lancashire of 2%. This decrease is broadly in line with the 3% decrease seen in England and Wales as a whole. This continues the downward trend from 2021/22.

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



Source: [Home Office - Hate crime, England and Wales, year ending March 2024](#)

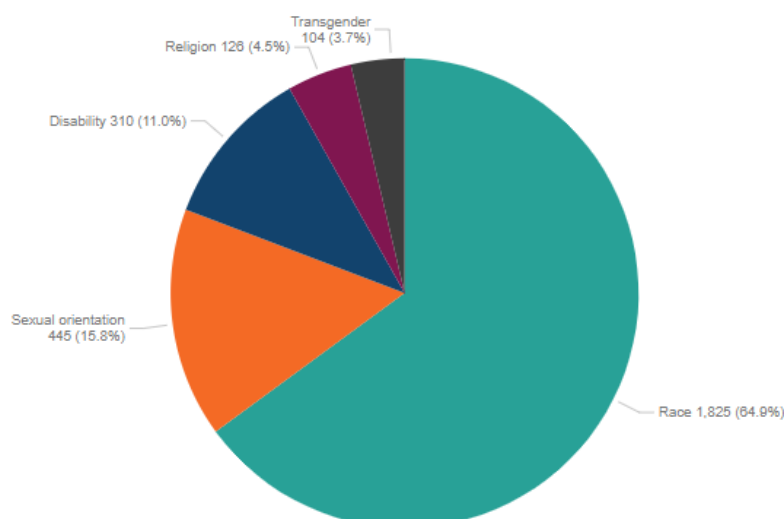
While variations in hate crime over the last five years have been mainly driven by changes in crime recording by the police, there has been spikes in hate crime following certain events such as the EU Referendum, Ukraine and Israel wars and terrorist attacks¹.

Table 5 details the types of hate incident. Race related hate crimes make up 65% of the total. Religious hate crimes have seen a slight increase in Lancashire, possibly linked to the Israel/Gaza conflict.

¹ Westminster attack March 2017; Manchester Arena bombing May 2017; London Bridge attack June 2017; Finsbury Park attack, June 2017; Parsons Green bombing, September 2017; London Bridge stabbing November 2019; Reading stabbings June 2020; MP Sir David Amess murder October 2021; Liverpool Women's Hospital bombing November 2021; Dover firebomb attack October 2022

Table 5: Monitored hate crimes, Lancashire-14 2023/24

Strand	Number
Race or ethnicity	1,825
Religion or beliefs	126
Sexual orientation	445
Disability	310
Transgender ident	104
Total number of motivating factors	2,810



Geographic patterns

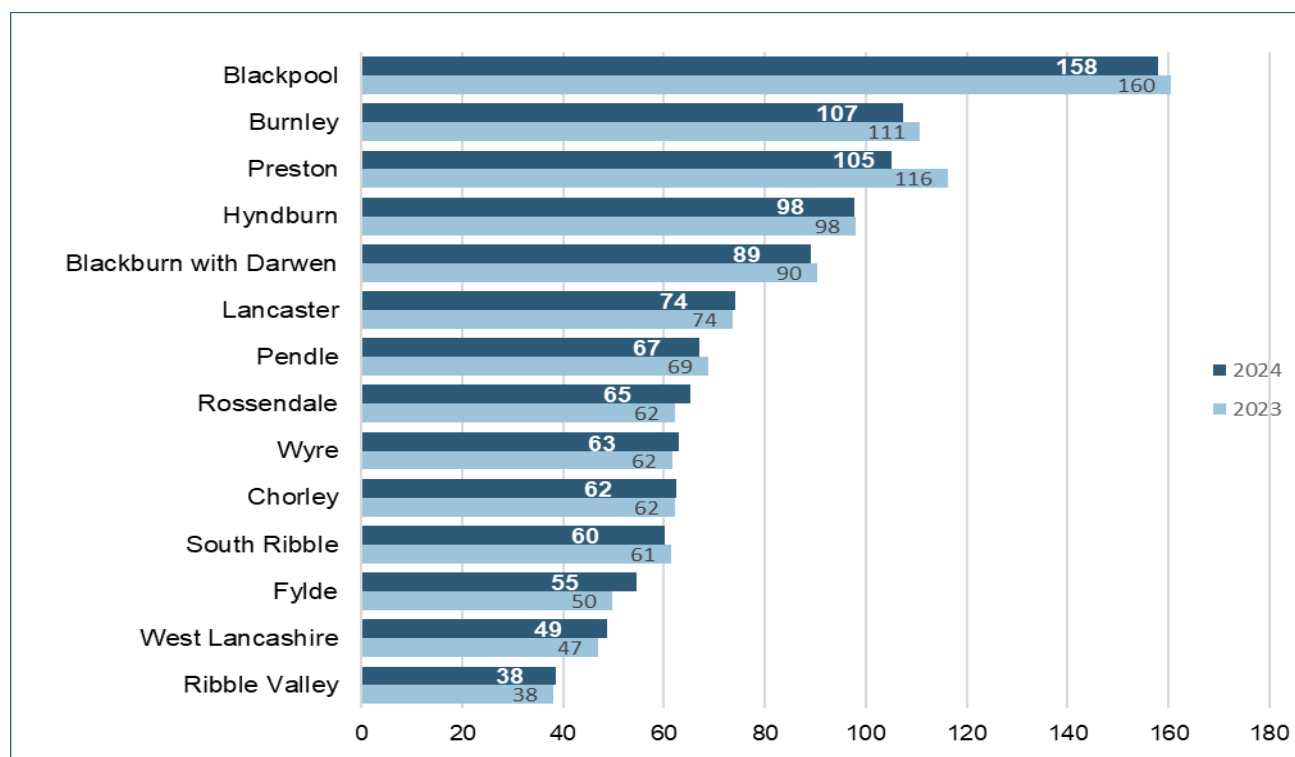
Recorded crime data for the year ending March 2024 has been published for “Community Safety Partnerships” (CSP). This data, along with information from the TCSEW/CSEW, clearly indicates that crime is not evenly distributed across England and Wales. Geographic patterns and concentrations of offences vary significantly across different crime types.

In Lancashire, a similarly diverse pattern of recorded crime distribution is evident among community safety partnership areas.

The chart below shows that Fylde, Rossendale, Wyre, and West Lancashire experienced increases in recorded crime for the financial year 2023/24. In contrast, the other 10 districts either saw no change or a slight decrease. Blackpool recorded the highest number of theft offences,

Preston saw the most significant decrease in recorded crime compared to the 2022/23 figures.

Chart 3: Recorded crime rate per 1,000 population/households for headline offences, by CSP area, year ending March 2024



Source: [Crime in England and Wales: Police Force Area data tables - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://ons.gov.uk/crime-in-england-and-wales)

Blackpool continues to have the highest recorded crime rate in the Lancashire-14 area, with 158 crimes per 1,000 population (22,950 recorded crimes), reflecting a -1.5% change compared to the previous 12 months. Blackpool ranks highest for Violence against the Person and second for Sexual Offences among all community safety partnerships (CSPs). The borough is the second most deprived local authority in England, characterized by high visitor numbers and a vibrant night-time economy.

In contrast, Ribble Valley a more rural and affluent area, has the lowest total recorded crime rate among the Lancashire-14 districts, with only two other CSP areas in England and Wales reporting lower rates.

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.

Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW)

The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) includes crimes that are not reported to, or recorded by the police, but is limited to crimes against people resident in households and does not cover all crime types. The CSEW is not available at local authority level.

Police recorded crime

The data represent a "snapshot" of the live recorded crime database taken June 2024 (for data up to the end of March 2024).



Police recorded crime has wider offence coverage and population coverage than the CSEW. It is the primary source of local crime statistics and is a good measure of offences that are well reported to, and well recorded by, the police, including lower-volume crimes (for example, homicide). In addition, the time lag between occurrence of crime and reporting results tends to be short, providing an indication of emerging trends. Police recorded crime excludes offences that are not reported to, or not recorded by, the police. Trends can be influenced by changes in recording practices, or police activity and public reporting of crime, making it difficult to make long-term comparisons. There are also concerns about the quality of recording and that crime is not recorded consistently across police forces or over time.

For more information see ONS [Crime in England and Wales Quality and Methodology Information report](#).

Further Information

A separate research monitor, [prison populations](#), covers criminal justice [Annual Prison Performance Ratings 2023/24 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

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

News article – " Which? response to latest ONS fraud figures" [Which? response to latest ONS fraud figures – Which? Press Office](#)

Hate crime - [Hate crime statistics - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

ONS article - [The impact of crime on victims and society: March 2022](#)

ONS statistical bulletin - [Crime in England and Wales: year ending March 2024](#)

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

UK Parliament House of Commons Library research briefing - [Terrorism in Great Britain: the statistics](#) (published July 2022)

