

Compendium

# Crime Statistics, Focus on Public Perceptions of Crime and the Police, and the Personal Well-being of Victims: 2013 to 2014

Crime statistics from the Crime Survey for England and Wales and police recorded crime.



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Release date:  
26 March 2015

Next release:  
To be announced

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Compendium

# About this release

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1. [About this release](#)
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# 1 . About this release

- The proportion of adults who gave the local police a positive rating (said they did a good or excellent job) was 63% in 2013/14. This represents a small increase from the 2012/13 figure (61%) and is similar to the 2011/12 figure (62%). While not directly comparable, prior to this, the proportion of adults who gave the local police a positive rating increased from 47% in 2003/04 to 59% in 2010/11
- The proportion of adults who reported seeing police officers or police community support officers (PCSOs) on foot patrol in their local area about once a week or more (high police visibility) was 32% in 2013/14. This continues the downward trend seen since 2010/11 when the reported level of high police visibility was at its peak (39%). Prior to 2010/11, the proportion of adults reporting high visibility rose from 26% in 2006/07
- There were 19% of adults who thought it was either “very” or “fairly likely” that they would be a victim of crime within the next 12 months
- In line with previous surveys, those who had been a victim of crime in the last year were more likely to: consider both local and national crime rates to have risen over the last few years; have a high level of worry about crime; and to think it likely they would suffer victimisation in the year ahead, than non-victims
- Those who were victims of crime in the previous 12 months reported significantly lower personal well-being than non-victims for measures relating to “life satisfaction”, “life worthwhile”, and “happiness yesterday”. There was no significant difference for “anxious yesterday”

## 2 . Introduction

This release is the third of 3 annual ‘Focus on’ publications produced through collaboration between ONS and Home Office analysts. The first 2 focused on property crime (published in November 2014) and violent crime (published in February 2015). These publications presented data from both police recorded crime and the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW). This publication mostly uses data from the CSEW, although there are occasional references to other data sources.

The first chapter explores people's overall ratings and confidence in the police. It then looks at measures of police visibility, before tying the two together and examining the relationship between visibility and ratings of the police. Included in this are both trends over time and demographic breakdowns from the 2013/14 CSEW. It finishes by considering victim satisfaction with the police, another key measure of police performance.

Chapter 2 presents findings from the 2013/14 CSEW and looks at people's perception of changing crime levels in their local area and in the country as a whole, including the sources of information that helped inform their opinions. It also examines people's perceived likelihood of victimisation and their worry about crimes including demographic breakdowns.

Chapter 3 looks at people's personal well-being, and the differences between how victims of crime rate their personal well-being compared with non-victims. The analysis uses as its source combined data from both the 2012/13 and 2013/14 CSEW. Combining data from two survey years increases the number of incidents available for analysis and enables comparisons between victims and non-victim's wellbeing for most crime types.

Published alongside this report are a number of supplementary tables. These are not referred to in this report, but provide information on a range of associated topics. Examples of tables included are, the public's use of online crime maps ( [Table S3 \(302.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#) ), awareness and contact with police and crime commissioners ( [Tables S7-10 \(302.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#) ), and confidence in the criminal justice system ( [Tables S11-S13 \(302.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#) ).

The Data sources and references section and [User Guide to Crime Statistics for England and Wales](#) give more details on each of the sources used in this release.

### 3. Background notes

1. If you have any queries regarding crime statistics for England and Wales please email [crimestatistics@ons.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:crimestatistics@ons.gsi.gov.uk)
2. A list of the organisations given [pre-publication access](#) to the contents of this bulletin can be found on ONS' website.
3. In accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007, statistics based on police recorded crime data have been assessed against the Code of Practice for Official Statistics and found not to meet the required standard for designation as National Statistics. The full assessment report can be found on the [UK Statistics Authority website](#).
4. Details of the policy governing the release of new data are available by visiting <http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/code-of-practice/index.html> or from the Media Relations Office email: [media.relations@ons.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:media.relations@ons.gsi.gov.uk)

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

Designation can be broadly interpreted to mean that the statistics:

meet identified user needs;

are well explained and readily accessible;

are produced according to sound methods; and

are managed impartially and objectively in the public interest.

Once statistics have been designated as National Statistics it is a statutory requirement that the Code of Practice shall continue to be observed.

Compendium

## Chapter 1: Perceptions of the Police

Crime statistics from the Crime Survey for England and Wales and police recorded crime.



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# 1 . Summary

## Summary

Since it began in 1981, the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) has asked the public a range of questions about their perceptions of the police. This chapter presents analyses on this topic from the 2013/14 survey, and on victim satisfaction with how the police handled the incident. Key findings include:

- The proportion of adults who gave the local police a positive rating (said they did a good or excellent job) was 63% in 2013/14. This represents a small increase from the 2012/13 figure (61%) and is similar to the 2011/12 figure (62%). While not directly comparable, prior to this, the proportion of adults who gave the local police a positive rating increased from 47% in 2003/04 to 59% in 2010/11
- The proportion of adults who (tended to or strongly) agreed with, overall, having confidence in the local police, was 76% in 2013/14. This represents a small increase from the 2012/13 and the 2011/12 figures (74% and 75%). While not directly comparable, prior to this, the proportion rose from 63% in 2005/06 to 72% in 2010/11
- The proportion of adults who reported seeing police officers or police community support officers (PCSOs) on foot patrol in their local area about once a week or more (high police visibility) was 32% in 2013/14. This continued the downward trend seen since 2010/11 when reported levels of high police visibility were at their peak (39%). Before this, the proportion of adults reporting high visibility rose from 26% in 2006/07
- High police visibility was associated with positive ratings of the police. For adults who reported high police visibility, 71% gave the local police a positive rating. This compares with 61% of adults who reported medium police visibility (seeing officers/PCSOs on foot patrol in their local area about/less than once a month) and 53% of adults who reported low police visibility (never seeing officers/PCSOs on foot patrol in their local area)
- In 2013/14, victims in 74% of incidents were (very or fairly) satisfied with how the police handled the matter, representing no change from the previous year. Before this, the proportion increased from a low of 58% in 2005/06

## 2 . Introduction

Research suggests that positive perceptions of police trust and fairness promote engagement and compliance with the police ([Myhill and Bradford, 2012](#)). Also, if people do not believe that the local police are fair, the police may lose legitimacy and people's connections with the police can be eroded (Jackson et al., 2013). The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) asks several questions which measure confidence and trust in the police.

Research has also shown that police visibility may impact on people's confidence in the police and their concerns about crime ([Skogan, 2009](#)). The CSEW asks adults how often they see police officers or Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) on foot patrol in their local area.

Victim satisfaction with the police is another measure of service delivery. [Myhill and Bradford, 2012](#) found that personal treatment by the police seems to be more important in driving satisfaction than criminal justice outcomes. They suggest that how officers interact with victims, for example in demonstrating interest in what they say, can positively impact on victim satisfaction. The CSEW asks victims if they were satisfied with how the police and other agencies (for example Victim Support) handled their case.

Changes in police numbers may affect perceptions of the police, police visibility and victim satisfaction with the police. Home Office figures<sup>1</sup> showed that at 31 March 2014, there were 127,909 (full-time equivalent) police officers across the 43 police forces in England and Wales (excludes the British Transport Police). This represents a decrease of 1.3% or 1,674 officers, the fifth consecutive annual fall, and the lowest number since March 2002.

The number of operational front-line police officers, may particularly impact on police visibility. Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) figures<sup>2</sup> showed that at 31 March 2014 (latest actual figures), there were 113,601 officers, representing 91% of the total number of officers. Examining a 5-year trend shows that whilst the number of front-line officers decreased from 125,756 in 31 March 2010, the proportion increased slightly from 89%.

Over the last 3 years, headline police perceptions' measures on the CSEW have remained fairly stable. These are the proportion of adults who said the local police did a good or excellent job and the proportion who tended or strongly agreed with, overall, having confidence in the local police. The proportion of adults who reported seeing officers/PCSOs on foot patrol in their local area about once a week or more (high police visibility) fell slightly over the same period. The proportion of victims who were satisfied with how the police handled their matter has remained stable in the last 2 years.

Unless otherwise stated, all changes over time and differences in measures described in this chapter are statistically significant at the 5% level. Please see Chapter 8 of the [user guide](#) for a more detailed explanation.

## Notes

1. See [Police workforce, England and Wales, 31 March 2014](#). In January 2015, figures at 30 September 2014 were published. However, to be consistent with the 2013/14 period this publication relates to, figures at 31 March 2014 have been used.
2. See [Policing in Austerity: Meeting the Challenge](#). Figures as at March 2015 are provided in the report. However, these have not been reported on as they are projections and are not precisely comparable with the 2010 to 2014 figures cited.

## 3 . Section 1 - Ratings and perceptions of the local police

The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) asks adults a number of questions on how satisfied they are with the police and the services they deliver. These range from asking for general views on how good a job the police are doing to more specific questions on, for example, how well the police understand local concerns and how effective the police are at catching criminals.

Changes to the order of the questions in the Performance of the Criminal Justice System module in the 2011/12 CSEW had the unforeseen effect of changing the way in which people perceived and responded to some questions. Essentially, because of the changes, it is likely that some questions were answered more positively. This resulted in direct comparability with previous years' data being lost. Question areas that are affected and covered in this section are "overall ratings of the local police" and "perceptions of the local police".

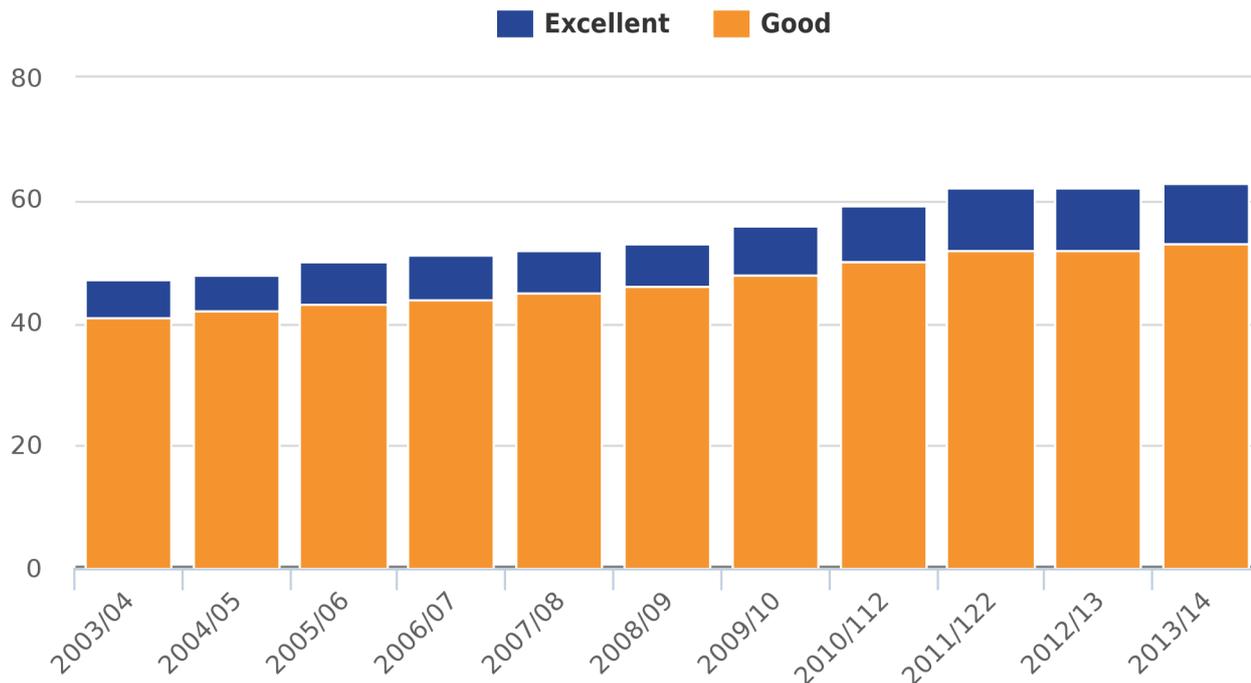
The [methodological note \(167 Kb Pdf\)](#) provides a more detailed account of the changes.

## 4 . Overall ratings of the local police

The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) has asked adults since 2003/04: "Taking everything into account, how good a job do you think the police in this area are doing?"

Figure 1.1 shows that the proportion of adults who gave the local police a positive rating (said they did a good or excellent job) in 2013/14 was 63%. This represents a small increase from the 2012/13 figure (61% <sup>1</sup>) and is similar to the 2011/12 figure (62%). While not directly comparable (see above), before this the proportion of adults who gave a positive rating increased from 47% in 2003/04 to 59% in 2010/11.

**Figure 1.1: Positive ratings of the local police, 2003/04 to 2013/14 CSEW**



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales - Office for National Statistics

**Notes:**

1. The figures for 2011/12 onwards are not directly comparable with previous years' figures. See the methodological note published alongside Focus On: Public Perceptions of Policing 2011/12 for more information

**Notes for overall ratings of the local police**

1. Whilst figure 1.1 appears to show a total value of 62% for 2012/13, the 61% percent quoted here is actually correct as the calculation for this is based on unrounded data whilst the tables are presented to the nearest whole number

## 5 . Overall ratings of the local police by background characteristics

The 2013/14 Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) showed that 63% of adults gave the local police a positive rating (said they did a good or excellent job), with no difference between adults of white and non-white ethnic backgrounds (63% and 62% respectively). In line with previous years' results, there was variation according to certain characteristics. Some of the findings included:

- Women were more likely than men to give the local police a positive rating (64% and 61% respectively)
- Those aged 75 and above were the most likely to give the local police a positive rating (69%)
- Those who were employed were more likely to give the local police a positive rating than those who were unemployed (63% compared with 52%)
- Adults who had the highest level of educational qualifications (degree or diploma) were more likely to give the local police a positive rating than those who had no qualifications (66% and 62% respectively)
- Adults who perceived local crime to be lower than average were more likely to give the local police a positive rating than those who perceived it to be higher than average (70% and 44% respectively)
- Similarly, those who perceived anti-social behaviour (ASB) in their area to be low were more likely to give the local police a positive rating than those who perceived it to be high (65% compared with 42%)
- Adults who were not victims of crime in the past 12 months were more likely to give a positive rating than those who were (64% compared with 55%)
- Adults who were living in the 20% least deprived areas<sup>1</sup> were more likely to give the local police a positive rating than adults living in the 20% most deprived areas (69% compared with 56%)

[Appendix tables 1.02 and 1.03 \(733.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#) contain further breakdowns on ratings of the local police by both personal and household/area characteristics.

## Notes for overall ratings of the local police by background characteristics

1. Deprivation is measured using an employment deprivation indicator. See section 7.1 of the [User Guide \(1.59 Mb Pdf\)](#) for more information on how this is calculated.

## 6 . Perceptions of the local police

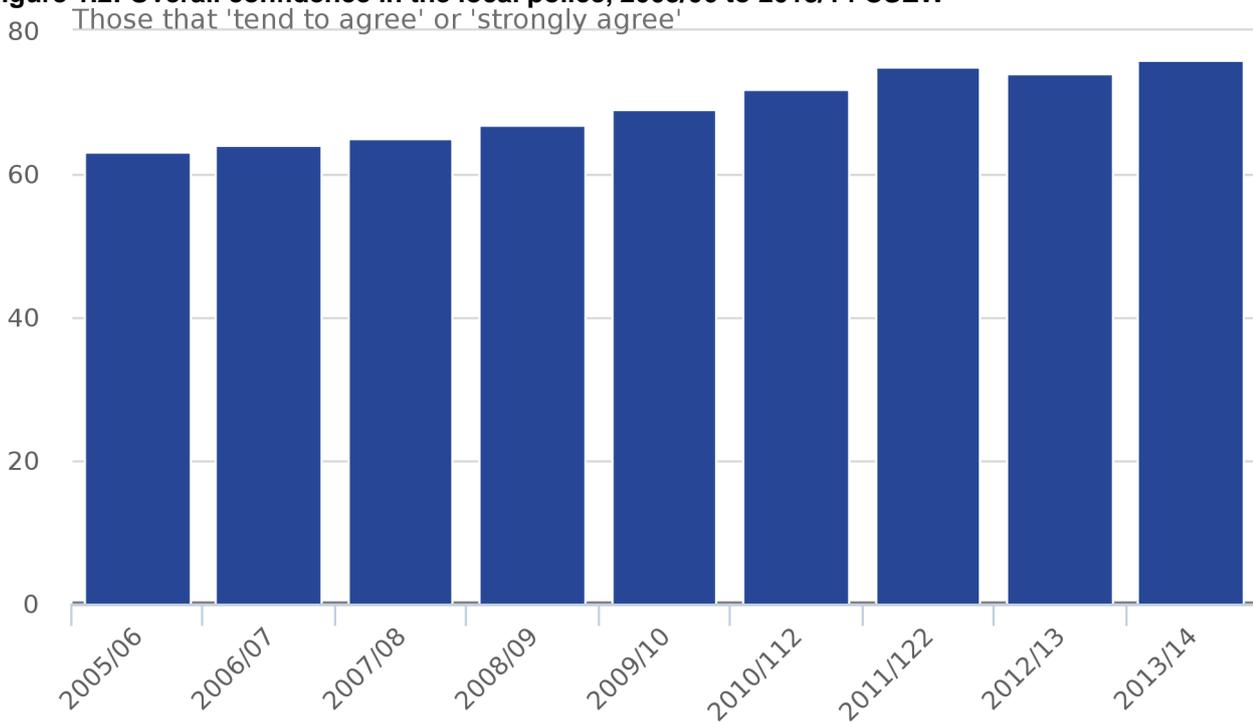
As well as the general rating's question, the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) also asks adults whether they agree or disagree with 6 specific statements relating to their perceptions of the local police:

- Police can be relied upon when needed
- Police would treat you with respect
- Police would treat you fairly
- Police understand local concerns
- Police deal with local concerns
- Taking everything into account I have confidence in the police

All 6 statements have been included in the survey since 2004, but the first full year of data was not available until the 2005/06 survey. These questions were designed to explore specific areas of police legitimacy.

Figure 1.2 shows that the proportion of adults who (tended to or strongly) agreed with, overall, having confidence in the local police, was 76% in 2013/14. This represents a small increase from the 2012/13 and the 2011/12 figures (74% and 75%). While not directly comparable (see above), prior to this, the proportion rose from 63% in 2005/06 to 72% in 2010/11.

**Figure 1.2: Overall confidence in the local police, 2005/06 to 2013/14 CSEW**



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales - Office for National Statistics

**Notes:**

1. The figures for 2011/12 onwards are not directly comparable with previous years' figures. See the methodological note published alongside Focus On: Public Perceptions of Policing 2011/12 for more information

Table 1.1 shows that there were statistically significant increases in the proportion of adults agreeing with 4 of the 6 rating statements between 2012/13 and 2013/14. These were: "police can be relied upon when needed (2 percentage point increase)", "police understand local concerns" (1 percentage point increase), "police deal with local concerns" (2 percentage point increase) and "taking everything into account I have confidence in the police" (1 percentage point increase<sup>1</sup>).

**Table 1.1: Perceptions of the local police, 2005/06 to 2013/14 CSEW**

England and Wales

Adults aged 16 and over

Perception measure	Percentage agreeing					Statistically significant change, 2012/13 - 2013/14
	2005 /06	2010 /11	2011 /12 <sup>1</sup>	2012 /13 <sup>1</sup>	2013 /14 <sup>1</sup>	
Police can be relied upon when needed	47	54	59	59	61	*
Police would treat you with respect	82	85	86	86	86	
Police would treat you fairly	63	67	67	65	65	
Police understand local concerns	60	67	72	71	72	*
Police deal with local concerns	49	58	62	60	62	*
Overall confidence in local police	63	72	75	74	76	*
Unweighted base - number of adults <sup>2</sup>	47,431	46,467	45,736	34,628	35,075	

Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Numbers from the 2011/12 CSEW onwards are not directly comparable with those previous. See the methodological note published alongside Focus On: Public Perceptions of Policing 2011/12 for more information.
2. Unweighted base refers to overall confidence in the local police. Other bases will be similar.

**Notes for perceptions of the local police**

1. Whilst table 1.1 appears to show a 2 percentage point increase between 2012/13 and 2013/14, the 1 percentage point rise is actually correct as the calculation for this is based on unrounded data whilst the tables are presented to the nearest whole number.

**7 . Overall confidence in the local police by background characteristics**

The 2013/14 Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) asked adults whether “Taking everything into account I have confidence in the police in this area”. 76% of people responded tending to or strongly agreeing with the statement. Men and women reported similar levels of confidence (75% compared with 76%) but there was some variation according to other characteristics. Some of the findings included:

- Adults in the oldest age group (75 and over) were the most likely to have confidence in the local police (84% did) whilst adults in the youngest age group (16 to 24) were the least likely (72% did)
- Asian or Asian British adults were the most likely to report confidence in the local police whilst Black or Black British adults were the least likely (79% and 70% respectively)
- Adults who perceived local crime to be lower than average were more likely to have confidence in the local police than those who perceived it to be higher than average (82% compared with 57%)
- Adults who perceived their area to have a low level of anti-social behaviour (ASB) reported more confidence in the local police than those who perceived their area to have a high level (79% and 56% respectively).

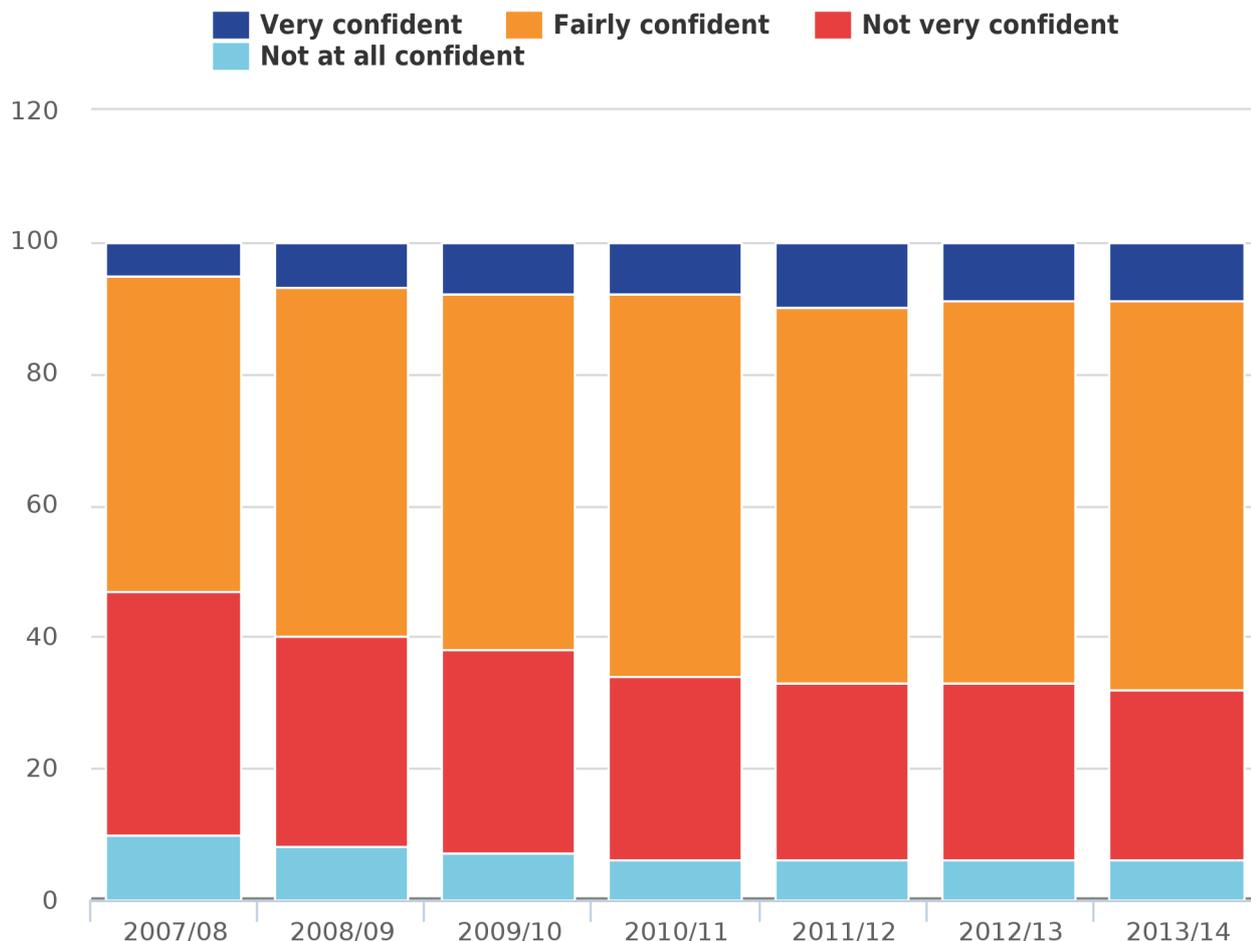
[Appendix tables 1.05 and 1.06 \(733.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#) contain further breakdowns on the overall confidence statement by both personal and household/area characteristics.

## 8 . Confidence in the police at catching criminals

Since 2007/08, the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) has asked adults “How confident are you that the police are effective at catching criminals?”. Figure 1.3 shows that the proportion of adults who were (fairly or very) confident that the police were effective at catching criminals increased from 53% in 2007/08 to 69% in 2013 /14.

[Appendix table 1.07 \(733.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#) shows trend data for this question.

**Figure 1.3: Confidence in the police at catching criminals, 2007/08 to 2013/14 CSEW**



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales - Office for National Statistics

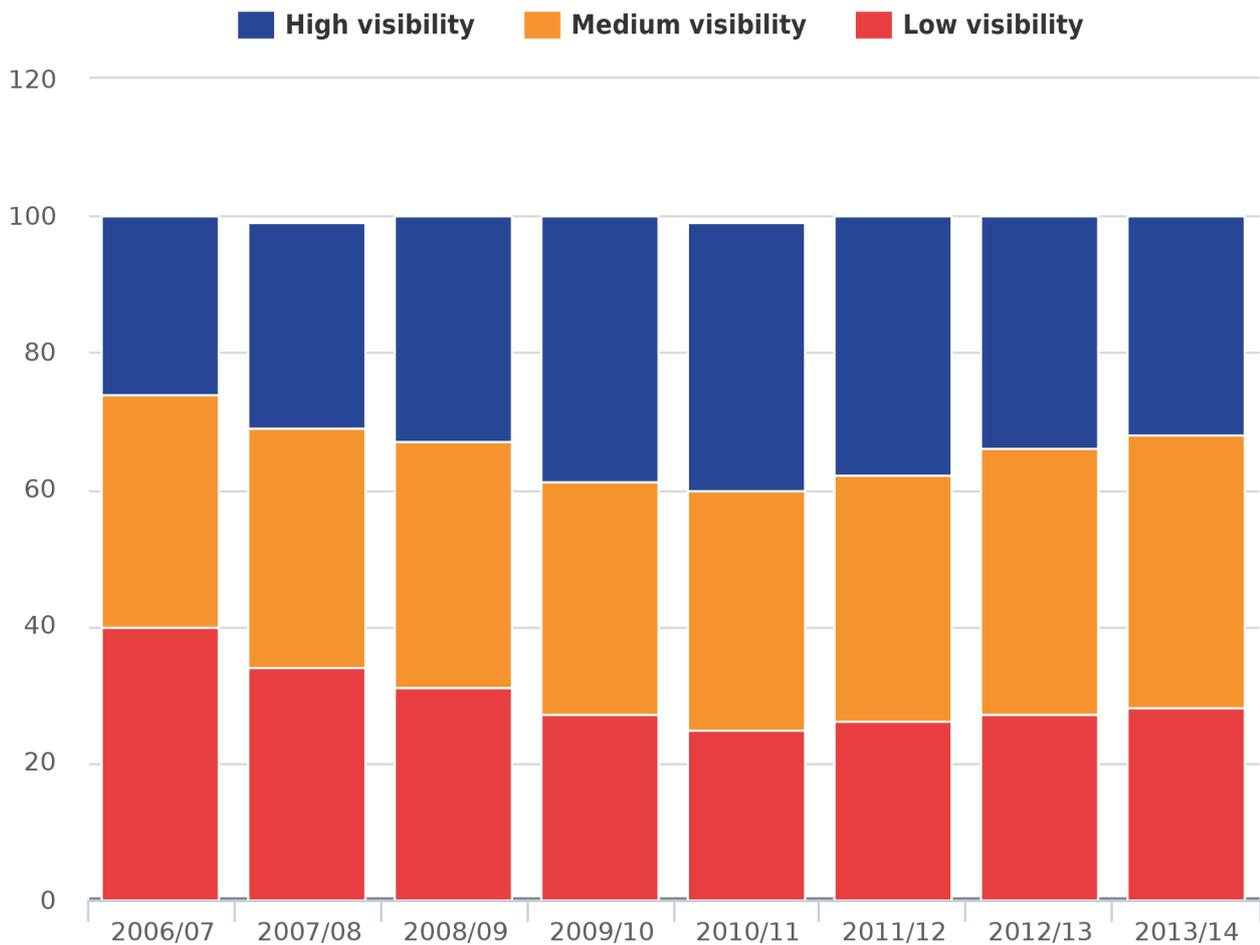
## 9 . Section 2 - Visibility of the police

Since 2006/07 the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) has asked adults how often they see police officers or Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) on foot patrol in their local area.

Figure 1.4 shows police/PCSO visibility trends. The proportion of adults who reported seeing officers/PCSOs on foot patrol in their local area about once a week or more (high visibility) was 32% in 2013/14. This continued the downward trend seen since 2010/11, when the reported level of high police visibility was at its peak (39%). Prior to then, the proportion of adults reporting high visibility rose from 26% in 2006/07.

The proportion of adults who reported seeing officers/PCSOs on foot patrol in their local area about/less than once a month (medium visibility) rose from 34% in 2006/07 to 40% in 2013/14. Finally, the proportion of adults who reported never seeing officers/PCSOs on foot patrol in their local area (low visibility) decreased from 40% in 2006/07 to 25% in 2010/11, the series low. Since then, the figure has increased to 28% in 2013/14.

**Figure 1.4: Visibility of police officer/PCSO foot patrols, 2006/07 to 2013/14 CSEW**



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales - Office for National Statistics

**Notes:**

1. Those that responded "Don't know" have been excluded from this chart

## 10 . Visibility of the police by background characteristics

Certain characteristics were associated with reporting high visibility of the police (seeing officers/Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) on foot patrol in their local area about once a week or more). Findings for the 2013/14 CSEW included:

- Men were more likely to report high visibility of the police than women (34% compared with 31%)
- Adults in the youngest grouping (those aged 16 to 24) were the most likely to report high visibility of the police (41%) whilst adults in the oldest grouping (those aged 75 and over) were the least likely (17%)
- Adults of a non-white ethnic background were more likely to report high visibility of the police (44%) than adults of a white ethnic background (31%)
- Of adults who were unemployed, 52% reported high visibility of the police compared with 33% of adults in employment
- Of adults who perceived crime to be higher than average in their local area, 38% reported high visibility of the police compared with 29% of adults who perceived crime to be lower than average
- Similarly, adults who perceived their area to have a high level of anti-social behaviour (ASB) were more likely to report high visibility of the police (45%) than adults who perceived their area to have a low level (31%)
- For adults living in urban areas, 37% reported high visibility of the police compared with 12% in rural areas
- Adults living in the 20% most deprived areas were more likely to report high visibility of the police than adults living in the 20% least deprived areas (43% compared with 24%)

[Appendix tables 1.12 and 1.13 \(733.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#) contain further breakdowns on police visibility by both personal and household/area charact

## 11 . Section 3 - Relationship between ratings and visibility of the police

Visibility provides what [Povey \(2001\)](#) refers to as “comfort factors”; these are approaches that provide reassurance to the public about police presence, such as Neighbourhood Watch schemes, patrolling police, and obvious presence of CCTV. As detailed in figure 1.5, the 2013/14 Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) shows that adults who reported high visibility of the police gave the local police a positive rating 71% of the time. This compares with 61% of adults who reported medium visibility of the police and 53% of adults who reported low visibility of the police.

**Figure 1.5: Ratings of the local police by the visibility of police officer/PCSO foot patrols, 2013/14 CSEW**



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales - Office for National Statistics

## 12 . Section 4 - Victim satisfaction

Victim satisfaction continues to be an important focus of the Criminal Justice System (CJS) and police forces have a mandatory responsibility to run their own surveys of victim satisfaction. These are known as “User Satisfaction Surveys”, which include victims of burglary, violent crime (excluding domestic violence) and vehicle crime<sup>1</sup>. Further to this, the Ministry of Justice<sup>2</sup> has recently committed to “increase transparency and accountability to ensure criminal justice agencies are held to account for the service they provide to victims”.

Since 1992, the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) has asked victims of crime “Overall, were you (the victim) satisfied or dissatisfied with the way the police handled the matter?” Responses to this question can vary according to the crime type, the victim’s background characteristics and the victim’s experiences of the criminal justice system. As the victim satisfaction question in the CSEW asks about each individual incident, victims of multiple incidents will be counted more than once. Therefore, analysis is based on the numbers of incidents, rather than on individuals.

The 2013/14 CSEW showed that victims in 74% of incidents were (“very” or “fairly”) satisfied with how the police handled the matter, representing no change from the previous year. Before this, the proportion increased from a low of 58% in 2005/06.

[Appendix table 1.14 \(733.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#) contains trend data on victim satisfaction.

### Notes for section 4 - Victim satisfaction

1. Results from these surveys are published quarterly in [HMIC's Crime and Policing Comparator](#).
2. See Section 3 of '[Our commitment to victims](#)' for more information.

# 13 . Victim satisfaction by background characteristics, crime type and experiences of the CJS

Key variations in victim satisfaction with the police by certain characteristics included:

- Victim satisfaction with the police in incidents experienced by young adults aged 16 to 24 was lower (68%) than in incidents experienced by those in the 25 to 34 (78%), 65 to 74 (80%) and the 75 and over (84%) age groups
- The apparent differences in satisfaction between incidents experienced by males and females and between incidents experienced by adults of white and non-white ethnic backgrounds were not statistically significant
- Victim satisfaction with the police in incidents experienced by people living in the 20% most deprived areas was lower (68%) than those living in the 20% least deprived areas (79%)

There were some differences in satisfaction with the police dependent on the type of offence the incident related to. Victim satisfaction with the police in incidents of violence or criminal damage was lower (70% and 67% respectively) than in incidents of theft (77%).

The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) also asks adults about their wider experiences of the Criminal Justice System, such as whether the police treated them fairly, whether anyone was caught and whether the offender went to court. For some of these issues there are differences in reported levels of victim satisfaction.

Previous analysis of the CSEW has suggested that, in keeping with the theory of “procedural justice” (which emphasises fairness and transparency in the criminal justice process), the way victims are treated by police has a greater impact on satisfaction than criminal justice outcomes ([Myhill and Bradford, 2012](#)). The 2013/14 CSEW provides some evidence to support this:

- There were far higher levels of victim satisfaction in incidents where the victim felt the police had treated them fairly (87%) compared to those where the victim felt they had not (12%)
- There was, however, no difference in satisfaction levels between those incidents in which the police found out, or knew, who committed the offence and those where they did not (both 74%)
- Satisfaction levels for incidents where the victim felt they were kept well informed by the police (89%) were higher than for when the victim felt they were not kept well informed (38%)

However, there is also some evidence to suggest that outcomes can impact upon victim satisfaction. For example, in incidents where an offender was charged there was a higher level of satisfaction (94%) than when no action was taken (50%).

[Appendix tables 1.15-1.18 \(733.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#) contain breakdowns of victim satisfaction by crime type, household and personal/area characteristics and CJS factors.

## 14. References

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (2014) "[Policing in Austerity: Meeting the Challenge](#)", HMIC: London

Home Office (2014) "[Police workforce, England and Wales](#)", HO: London

Jackson J, Bradford B, Stanko E and Hohl K (2013) Just Authority? Trust in the Police in England and Wales, Routledge: Abingdon

Ministry of Justice (2014) "[Our commitment to victims](#)", MOJ: London

Myhill A and Bradford B (2012) "[Can police enhance public confidence by improving quality of service? Results from two surveys in England and Wales](#)", Policing and Society 22, pp 397 to 425

Povey, K (2001) "[Open all hours: A thematic inspection report on the role of police visibility and accessibility in public reassurance](#)", HMIC: London

Skogan W, (2009) "[Concern about Crime and Confidence in the Police: Reassurance or Accountability](#)", Police Quarterly 12, pp 301 to 318

## 15. Background notes

1. Details of the policy governing the release of new data are available by visiting [www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/code-of-practice/index.html](http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/code-of-practice/index.html) or from the Media Relations Office email: [media.relations@ons.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:media.relations@ons.gsi.gov.uk)

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

Designation can be broadly interpreted to mean that the statistics:

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## Chapter 2: Public Perceptions of Crime

Crime statistics from the Crime Survey for England and Wales and police recorded crime.



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Release date:  
26 March 2015

Next release:  
To be announced

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# 1 . Summary

This section presents findings from the 2013/14 Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) looking at people's perception of crime in their local area and in the country as a whole. It also examines people's perceived likelihood of victimisation and their worry about crimes. Unless otherwise stated, all changes over time and differences in measures described were found to be statistically significant<sup>1</sup> at the 5% level.

- Around 6 in 10 adults (61%) perceived crime in the country as a whole to have risen over the past few years. Fewer people, however, perceived that crime had risen in their local area (32%)
- When asked about the level of crime in their local area, compared with the level nationally, only a small proportion (9%) thought crime in their local area was above average and 55% felt it was below average
- News programmes on TV and radio were most often cited as a source of information that had influenced perceptions of national crime levels (cited by 67% of people). In contrast, word of mouth was most often cited as a source influencing impressions of local crime rates (cited by 54%)
- There were 12% of adults classified as having a high level of worry about violent crime, 11% about burglary and 7% about car crime. All of these measures were at a similar level to the previous year and the general trend has been flat for a number of years
- There were 19% of adults who thought it was either "very" or "fairly likely" that they would be a victim of crime within the next 12 months
- Perception of local crime had a stronger relationship with perceived likelihood of victimisation, than perception of national crime levels. For those who felt crime had been rising locally, 33% thought they were either "very" or "fairly likely" to be a victim in the next year. This is compared with 23% who felt crime had risen in the country as a whole.
- In line with previous surveys, those who had been a victim of crime in the last year were more likely to: consider both local and national crime rates to have risen over the last few years; have a high level of worry about crime; and to think it likely they would suffer victimisation in the year ahead, than non-victims

Notes: Section 8 of the [User Guide](#) provides more information on how this is calculated

## 2 . Introduction

As well as being used to estimate levels of crime in England and Wales, the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) also contains a range of questions on respondents' perceptions of crime. These include questions on perceived levels of crime in the country as a whole and in the local area, worry about crime and perceived likelihood of victimisation. This chapter presents analyses of these questions based on responses to the 2013/14 CSEW looking at variations by household, personal and area characteristics.

## 3 . Section 1 - Perceptions of changing local and national crime levels

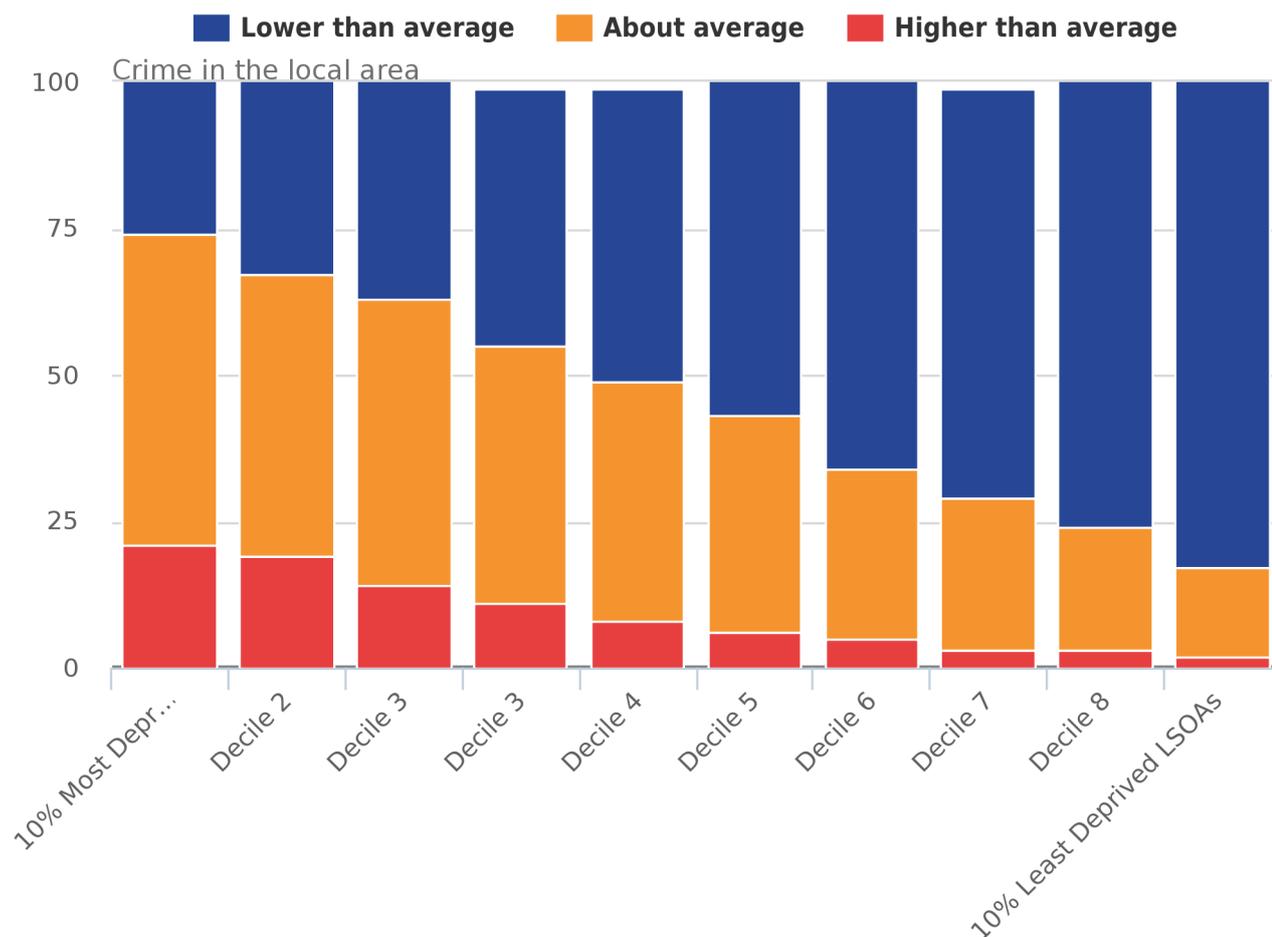
While the level of crime measured by the CSEW has been falling since a peak in 1995, the survey has consistently shown that most people perceive that crime across the country as a whole has still been rising. This contrast has continued with the 2013/14 survey showing 61% of adults thinking crime had gone up nationally in the last few years. However, the proportion of adults holding this belief is the lowest it has been since 2008/09 survey when this question was introduced into the survey ( [Appendix table 2.01 \(733.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#) )<sup>1</sup>.

While 6 in 10 adults thought crime had been rising across the country as whole, only 1 in 3 (32%) thought it had done so in their local area ( [Appendix Table 2.01 \(733.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#) ). In addition, when asked about the comparative level of crime in their local area, only a small proportion of adults (9%) thought that crime in their local area was “above average”, with many more (55%) thinking that it was “below average” (Table 2.4).

Figure 2.1 shows the relationship between people’s perceptions of the comparative level of crime in their local area and the Crime Domain of the English Indices of Deprivation (2010). The latter is based on the level of police recorded crime per head of population and is an objective measure of crime<sup>2</sup>. The chart indicates a clear relationship between objective levels of crime in a local area<sup>3</sup> and subjective perceptions. For example, the proportion of adults perceiving their area to have lower than average levels of crime rises as recorded crime levels fall. Similarly, those living in the higher crime areas were more likely to give the response that the local crime rate was “about average” or “higher than average” (Figure 2.1).

Previous sweeps of the survey have also highlighted a gap between perceptions of crime levels locally and in the country as a whole. [Duffy et al., \(2008\)](#) point to data collated on views of the NHS, as well as to data relating to views about crime levels in North America, Australia and South Africa, and note that this gap between local and national perceptions is neither new nor unique to crime, or to Britain. Duffy et al., go on to suggest a number of possible explanations for the gap between perceptions of local and national crime levels. These include: the potentially greater influence the media may have views of national as compared to local crime; and the possibility that people show a natural ‘hometown favouritism’ to their local area.

**Figure 2.1: How adults rate crime in their local area compared with the country as a whole, by Crime Domain of the English Indices of Deprivation, 2013/14 CSEW**



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales - Office for National Statistics

**Notes:**

1. Crime Domain of the English Indices of Deprivation (2010). Section 7.1 of the User Guide to Crime Statistics for England and Wales has more information on how this is calculated. Wales is excluded

**Notes for section 1 - Perceptions of changing local and national crime levels**

1. From 2008/09 the survey has included the question 'What do you think has happened to crime in the country as a whole over the past few years?' Until 2011/12 this was asked in addition to the question it eventually replaced: 'How much would you say the crime rate here has changed since two years ago? In this area, would you say there is more crime or less crime?' Possible responses to both questions are on a 5-point scale ranging from gone up a lot, to gone down a lot.
2. There is more information in Section 7.1 of the [User Guide to Crime \(1.61 Mb Pdf\)](#) Statistics for England and Wales on how the crime domain of the English Indices of Deprivation (2010) is calculated. Wales is excluded.
3. Local area definitions for the English Indices of deprivation are based on Super Output Areas (SOAs). These are a set of geographical areas developed following the census to produce a set of areas of consistent size. Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) typically have a population of around 1500.

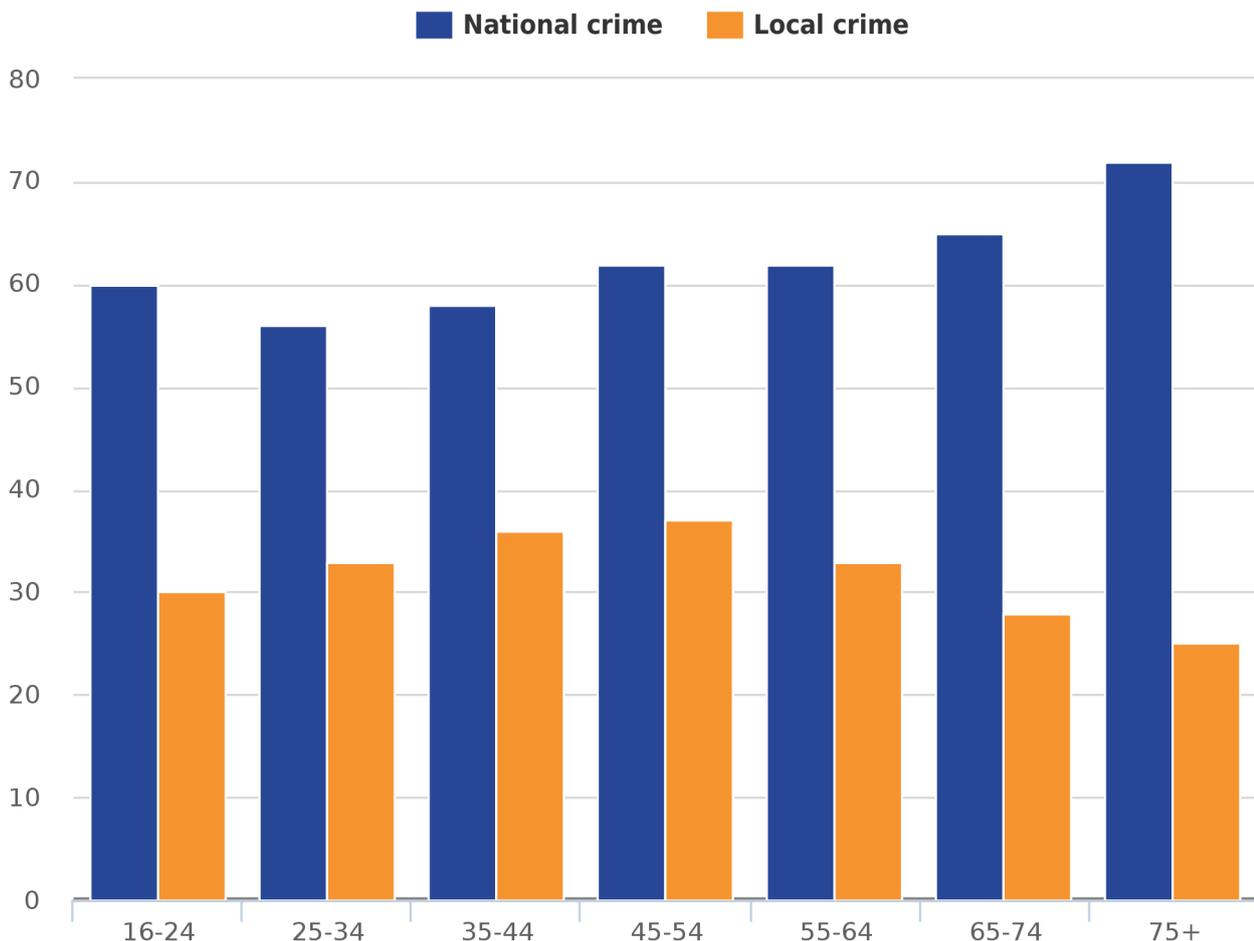
## 4 . Perceptions of changing crime levels by background characteristics

This next section examines how perceptions of crime levels varied by a range of personal, household and area characteristics.

Women were more likely than men to have believed crime had risen in recent years. This was true for both crime across the country as a whole (68% and 55%, respectively) and locally (36% and 28% respectively).

There were also differences by age group in perceptions of crime levels but the patterns were different for the local and national measures. With regard to the national picture, the general pattern was for perceptions of crime rising to rise with age; those aged 75 and over were most likely to view it as having risen in recent years (72%). Conversely perceptions of crime rising locally peaked in the 35 to 44 and 45 to 54 age groups (36% and 37% respectively), and then reduced with rising age. While those aged 75 and over were the most likely to think crime was rising across the country as whole, they were the least likely to view local crime as having risen (25%), (Figure 2.2).

**Figure 2.2: Percentage of adults saying local and national crime levels have increased over the past few years by age, 2013/14 CSEW**



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales - Office for National Statistics

**Notes:**

1. Percentages who think crime rates have increased are estimated from combining the numbers of individuals saying crime has "gone up a little" or "gone up a lot"

Personal and household characteristics associated with relative disadvantage were linked to increased likelihood of perceiving crime to be rising. This was generally true for perceptions of changes to both local and national levels of crime<sup>1</sup>.

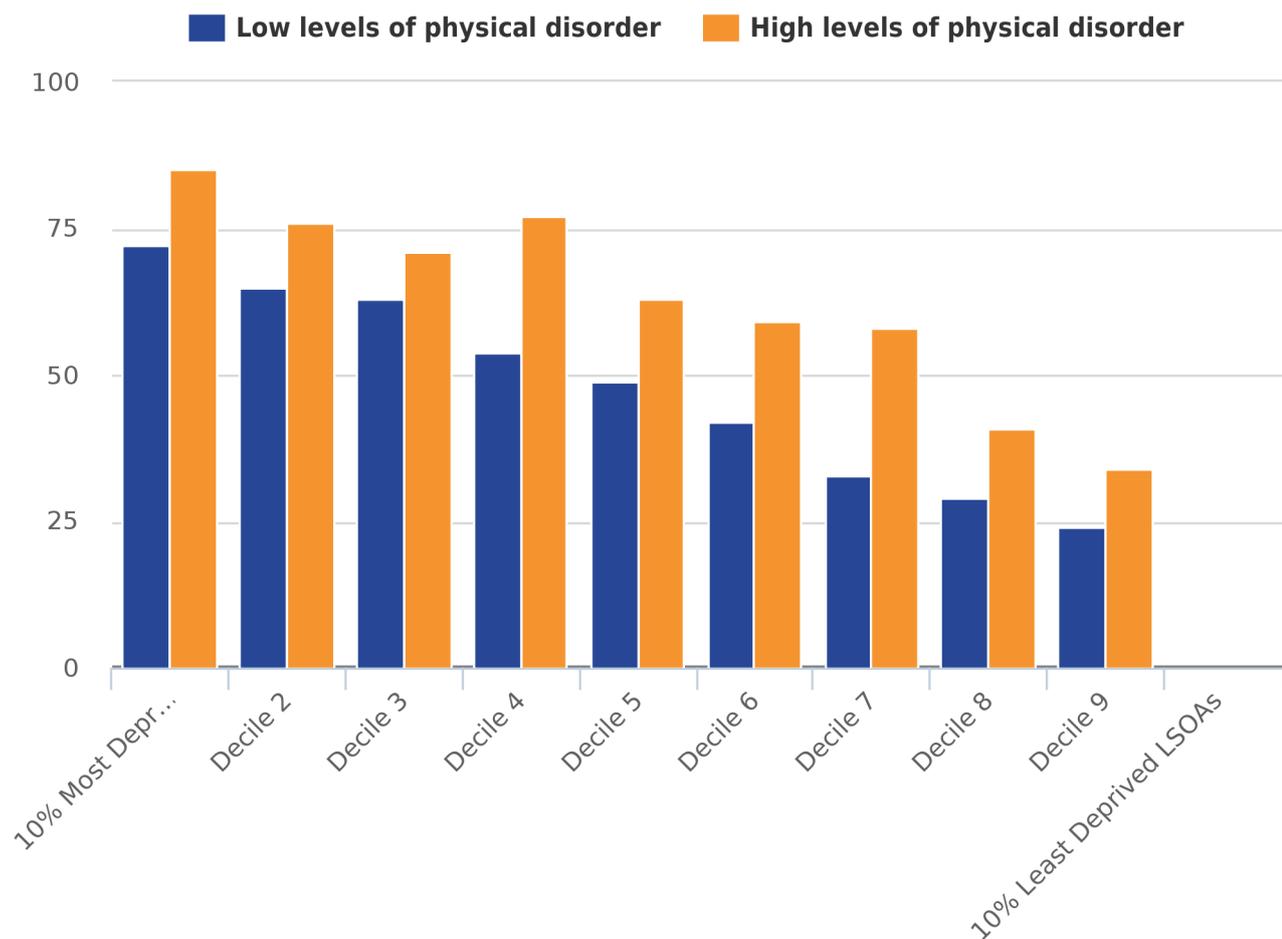
- Those with an annual household income of less than £10,000 were more likely to believe crime had risen in the country as a whole (71%) and in their local area (37%), than other groups. For example, for those in the highest household income group (£50,000 or more) only 47% were more likely to believe crime had risen in the country as a whole, and 29% in their local area ( [Appendix Table 2.03 \(733.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#) ).
- Social renters were more likely than people in other tenures to believe both crime in the country as a whole had been rising (71% compared with 61% of home owners and 56% of private renters) and locally (36% compared with 31% of home owners and 32% of private renters) ( [Appendix Table 2.03 \(733.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#) ).
- Individuals living in the 20% most deprived areas (as measured by the employment domain of the English Indices of Deprivation) were most likely perceive a rise in crime over the last few years both nationally and locally (68% and 39% respectively, compared with 55% and 26% for the least deprived output areas) ( [Appendix Table 2.03 \(733.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#) ).

Conversely, the following factors were all much more strongly related to views of changing levels of local crime, but less so for national crime:

- adults who lived in an urban area were more likely to think that crime had risen in their local area than those resident in a rural area (34% compared with 26%)
- those living in areas of high physical disorder<sup>2</sup> were more likely than those living in areas of low physical disorder, to believe local crime had risen (41% compared with 32%)

Figure 2.3 presents a more detailed analysis of people's views of crime in the context of their local area by using the observational data on the level of physical disorder in the immediate area around respondents' homes gathered by survey interviewers. This generally shows that, controlling for the level of crime in the area (as indicated by the crime domain of the English Indices of Deprivation), the higher the level of assessed physical disorder in an area, the more likely it was for people to say crime in their local area was "higher than" or "about the same" as crime in the country as a whole. This was true across all the deciles except in the 10% least deprived LSOA's (Figure 2.3).

**Figure 2.3: Perceptions of crime in the local area by level of physical disorder and Crime domain of the English Indices of Deprivation, 2013/14 CSEW**



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales - Office for National Statistics

**Notes:**

1. Interviewer rated incivility / physical disorder is a measure based on the interviewer's assessment of the level of (a) vandalism, graffiti and deliberate damage to property; (b) rubbish and litter; and (c) homes in poor condition in the area
2. There is more information in Section 7.1 of the User Guide to Crime Statistics for England and Wales on how the crime domain of the English Indices of Deprivation (2010) is calculated. Wales is excluded
3. The 10th decile has been removed from the chart due to small base sizes making estimates unreliable

**Notes for perceptions of changing crime levels by background characteristics**

1. Of course, a number of these measures will be inter-related and also associated with the actual level of crime in an area.
2. Physical disorder is a measure based on the interviewer's assessment of the level of (a) vandalism, graffiti and deliberate damage to property; (b) rubbish and litter; and (c) homes in poor condition in the area (Section 7.1, [User Guide](#)).

## 5 . Sources of information on crime

Following questions on their perceptions of crime over the past few years, respondents were asked what had informed their perception. In line with previous findings, the 2013/14 CSEW showed that adults most often cited news programmes on television or radio as the source that informed their impression of levels of crime in the country as a whole (67%). Other common sources mentioned were word of mouth or information from other people (32%), and newspapers ('tabloid' 31% and 'local' 31%), (Table 2.1).

**Table 2.1: Sources of perceptions of changes in crime in country as a whole over the past few years, 2013 /14 CSEW**

England and Wales

Adults, aged 16 and over

Source influenced perception of change in national crime level

	Percentages <sup>1</sup>
News programmes on TV/radio	67
Word of mouth/information from other people	32
Tabloid newspapers	31
Local newspapers	31
TV documentaries	26
Broadsheet newspapers	25
Internet/world-wide-web	24
Personal experience	22
Relatives' and/or friends' experiences	20
Radio programmes	19
Some other source	1
Unweighted base - number of adults	13,885

Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Figures do not total to 100 as respondents are able to select more than one source

**Table 2.2: Sources of perceptions of changes in crime in local area over the past few years, 2013/14 CSEW**

England and Wales	
Adults, aged 16 and over	
Source influenced perception of change in national crime level	
	Percentages <sup>1</sup>
Word of mouth/information from other people	54
Local newspapers	45
Personal experience	43
News programmes on TV/radio	31
Relatives' and/or friends' experiences	30
Internet/world-wide-web	14
Radio programmes	11
Tabloid newspapers	9
TV documentaries	9
Broadsheet newspapers	9
Some other source	2
Information from other organisations <sup>2</sup>	1
Information from the police <sup>3</sup>	1
Unweighted base - number of adults	12,437

Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Figures do not total to 100 as respondents are able to select more than one source
2. Other organisations could include local councils, Neighbourhood Watch, Residents Associations, community groups etc
3. Information from the police could include newsletters, leaflets, word of mouth, meetings etc

Table 2.1 shows that around a third of adults said that “tabloid” newspapers and, 1 in 4 that “broadsheet” newspapers, were a source that informed their perception of what was happening to crime across the country as a whole.

CSEW respondents were also asked questions about their use of newspapers<sup>1</sup>, including which newspaper they had read most often within the last 3 months. If an individual had read more than 1 newspaper they were asked which one they preferred. As seen in table 2.3, the 2013/14 CSEW showed that 70% of adults who preferred to read a “popular” newspaper thought crime in the country had risen in last few years, while only 10% thought it had fallen. A lower percentage of “broadsheet” readers believed crime had risen (43%) and twice as many thought it had gone down (21%).

**Table 2.3: Newspaper readership and perceptions of crime in country as a whole, 2013/14 CSEW**

England and Wales

	Adults aged 16 and over			
	Percentage saying crime has gone up	Percentage saying crime has stayed the same	Percentage saying crime has gone down	Unweighted base - number of adults <sup>1</sup>
'Popular' newspapers	70	21	10	11,649
The Daily Star	73	21	6	410
The Daily Mirror	73	18	9	1,856
The Sun	70	21	9	4,341
The Daily Express	69	20	11	824
The Daily Mail	67	22	11	4,218
'Broadsheet' newspapers	43	36	21	5,169
The Daily Telegraph	51	30	18	1,478
The Financial Times	50	31	19	217
The Independent	43	40	17	689
The Times	43	37	21	1,367
The Guardian	34	40	26	1,418
No newspaper	62	27	10	8,752
No one newspaper in particular	64	27	9	408

Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Unweighted bases are of those who responded positively to each newspaper brand

It is likely that part of the explanation for the better fit between subjective perceptions and objective levels of crime in the local area is because people are able to make judgements based on their own experience of their local area (Table 2.2). In contrast, when making judgements about the level of crime in the whole country, people rely much more heavily on the media. It has been suggested that reliance on the media for information, is linked to a misconception that crime is rising ([Pfeiffer et al., 2005](#)). Additionally, [Duffy et al., \(2008\)](#) found that when the public were asked why they think there is more crime than 2 years ago, almost half said it was because of what they read in the papers. Newspapers readership was predictive of feelings about crime in a regression analysis. This was the case, even after controlling for voting patterns and the authors suggest their analysis provides a strong case for the direct impact of newspaper content on views (Duffy et al., 2008).

**Notes for sources of information on crime**

1. These questions will also be asked in the 2014/15 survey but ONS plan to remove them from the 2015/16 survey to make space for new questions.

## 6 . Experience of victimisation

In line with previous surveys, perceptions of crime rates were also associated with personal experiences of crime. Previous analysis has shown that victims of crime were more likely to think that crime had increased locally over the last few years than those who were not victims ( [Flatley et al., 2010](#) ).

This analysis is supported by the 2013/14 CSEW which showed that adults who had been a victim of crime in the last year were more likely to view their local crime rates as having risen over the last few years (46% compared with 30% of non-victims), ( [Appendix Table, 2.02 \(733.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#) ). There was also a difference in perceptions of the national crime rate, albeit less pronounced (66% of victims believed crime had increased in the country as a whole, compared with 61% of non-victims). However, this general pattern masked the variation in perceptions by the location of victimisation.

Table 2.4 shows adults who had been victims of crime in their local area <sup>1</sup> were more than twice as likely as non-victims to say that the local crime rate was higher than the average for the country (19% compared with 8%). In contrast, for those who had been victims of crime elsewhere in England and Wales, there was no difference in the proportion of victims and non-victims, who said the local crime rate was above average (estimated to be 8% for both groups).

**Table 2.4: Perceptions of local crime rate compared to the country as a whole by experience of victimisation, 2013/14 CSEW**

England and Wales

	Adults aged 16 and over			
	All	Victim of crime in the local area <sup>2</sup>	Victim elsewhere in England and Wales <sup>1</sup>	Non-victim
Percentage saying crime in their local area, compared with nationally is:				
Higher than average	9	19	8	8
About average	36	41	34	36
Lower than average	55	40	58	57
Unweighted base - number of adults	17,707	2,270	646	14,789

Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. If a respondent was a victim of crime in the local area and elsewhere, victimisation in the local area takes priority

In addition, adults who had been victims of crime in their local area were less likely to say that the local crime rate was below average (40%) compared with those who had been victims elsewhere in England and Wales or non-victims (58% and 57% respectively; Table 2.4).

### Notes for experience of victimisation

1. Numbers for victims of crime in the local area are calculated from victims responding positively to a question asking if the incident took place in their resident area (within 15 minutes walk of their home address).

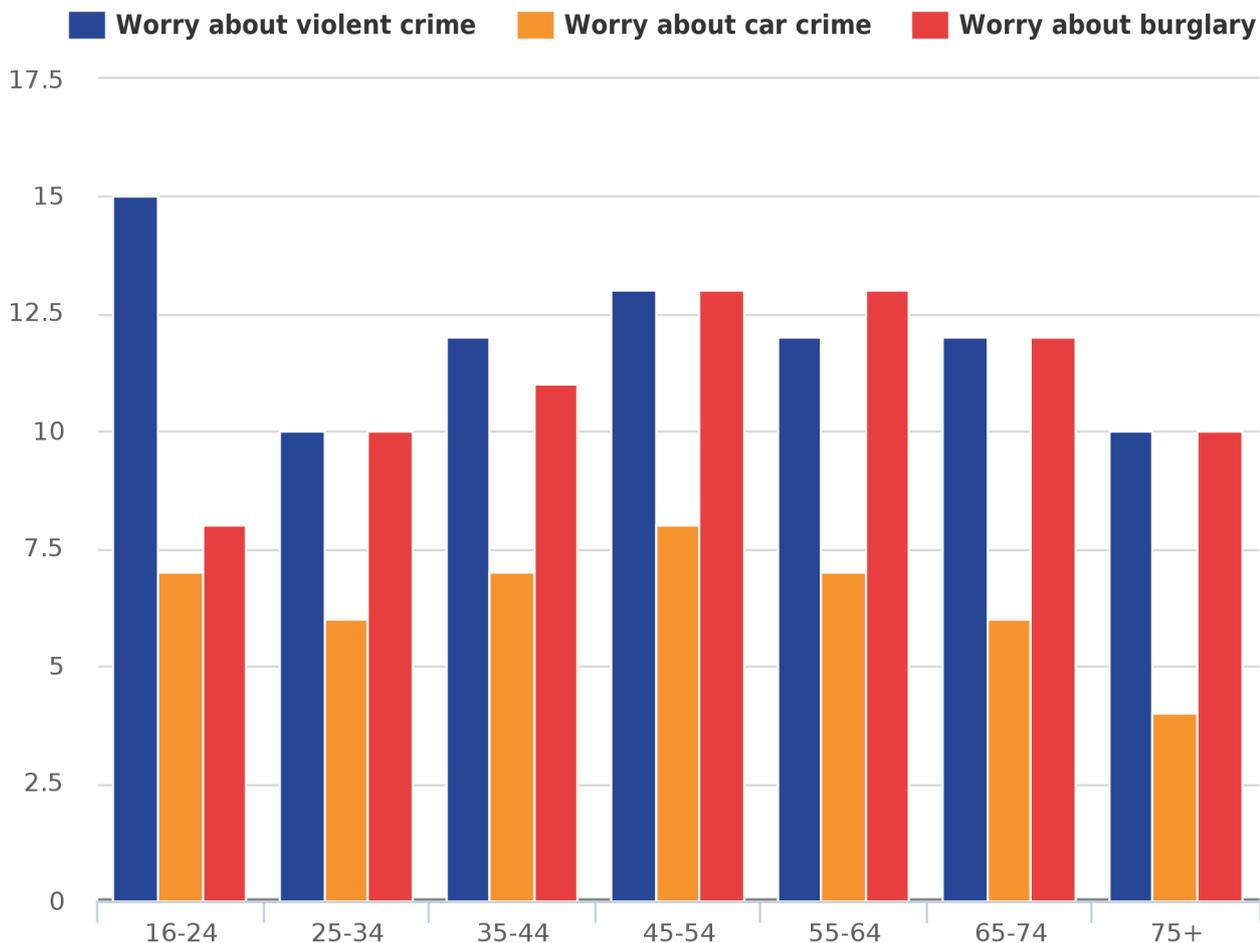
## 7 . Section 2 - Worry about crime and perceived likelihood of victimisation

### Worry about crime

The 2013/14 CSEW shows that 12% of adults were classified as having a high level of worry about violent crime, 11% about burglary, and 7% about car crime<sup>1</sup>. All of these measures were at a similar level to the previous year and the general trend has been flat for a number of years. However, all measures are significantly lower than in the mid-to-late 1990s when crime measured by the CSEW was at much higher levels than today ( [Appendix Table 2.06 \(733.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#) ).

Figure 2.4 shows the relationship between worry about crime and age. This age distribution was similar to that for perceptions of local crime levels (Figure 2.2). It seems that those aged between 45 and 64 were generally more worried about crime than other age groups. Aside from the notable exception being worry about violent crime, where those in the youngest age group (16 to 24) had the highest level of worry.

**Figure 2.4: Percentage of individuals with high levels of worry about crime by crime types and age, 2013 /14 CSEW**



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales - Office for National Statistics

It has been claimed that questions about worry tap into feelings of perceived vulnerability factors ( [Heath et al., 2001](#)). Therefore, variation between groups may reflect more differences in perceived vulnerability rather than the perceived risk of falling victim. [Rountree and Land \(1996\)](#) suggested that responses to questions about worry may encompass more than just worry about the crime being committed and, also include concerns about the consequences of different crime types.

A broader conceptualisation of worry, might partly explain why women had a higher level of worry about being a victim of violent crime than men (18% compared with 6%). The pattern was similar for worry about burglary where 14% of women had a high level of worry compared with only 8% of men. In contrast, there was no difference between the sexes in relation to worry about car crime, where 7% of both men and women had high levels of worry<sup>2</sup> ( [Appendix Table 2.07 \(733.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#) ).

Additional variations of interest in relation to worry about crime are listed here.

- Those with a long standing disability were more likely to have a high level of worry about burglary (15%) and violent crime (15%), compared with those without a longstanding disability (10% and 11% respectively).
- Social renters were more likely than those with other forms of tenure to be worried about all crime types (15% were worried about burglary, 12% about car crime and 18% about violent crime), particularly in comparison to levels of worry for owner occupiers (10% were worried about burglary, 6% about car crime and 10% about violent crime) ( [Appendix Table 2.08 \(733.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#) ).
- Residents in areas of high physical disorder were more likely to be worried about both burglary (17%) and violent crime (21%), than those who were not in an area of high physical disorder (11% and 12% respectively), although this is not true for worry about car crime.
- Residents in the 20% most deprived areas, were more worried about all crime types than individuals in all other areas, particularly for worry about violent crime, where 18% were “very” or “fairly” worried, as compared to only 7% of those in the 20% least deprived areas.
- Those living in urban areas were more likely to be worried about all crime types measured than those living in rural areas; with the greatest difference being recorded for worry about violent crime (13% compared with 7%).
- Victims were more likely to worry than non-victims about; burglary (16% compared with 10%), car crime (11% compared with 6%) and violent crime (15% compared with 11%, respectively).

Perception of changes in both national and local crime levels was generally associated with worry about crime. For example, those who thought local crime had increased over the past few years were much more likely to be worried about burglary (18%), than those who did not (8%). This association was also found in relation to both violent crime (17% and 9%, respectively) and car crime (10% and 5%, respectively) (Table 2.5).

**Table 2.5: Percentages "fairly" or "very worried" about crime by whether there is a perceived rise in local and national crime levels, 2013/14, CSEW**

England and Wales

	Adults, aged 16 and over		
	Worry about burglary	Worry about car crime	Worry about violent crime
Perceived a rise in local crime	18	10	17
Perceived no rise in local crime	8	5	9
Unweighted base - number of adults <sup>1</sup>	7,205	5,719	6,732
Perceived a rise in national crime	14	9	15
Perceived no rise in national crime	7	4	8
Unweighted base- number of adults	8,606	6,716	8,047

Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Unweighted bases relating to views on local crime are much lower, given that we are only able to reliably use data from adults resident in their local area for three years or more

## Notes for section 2 - Worry about crime and perceived likelihood of victimisation

1. Section 6.2 of the [User Guide \(1.59 Mb Pdf\)](#), provides further detail on how worry about violent crime, burglary and car crime is measured by the CSEW
2. Questions relating to the perceived likelihood of being a victim of vehicle crime are only asked of vehicle owners.

## 8 . Perceived likelihood of becoming a victim of crime

The CSEW also asks people about “how likely do you think you personally are to be a victim of crime in the next year”. It was believed by 19% of adults that it was either “very” or “fairly likely” that they would be a victim of crime within the next year ( [Appendix Table 2.04 \(733.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#) ).

Perceived likelihood of victimisation was associated more strongly with perceptions of local crime levels than national ones. Those that thought local crime had increased over the past few years felt more than twice as likely they would be a victim of crime in the next 12 months (33%), compared with 13% who did not. With regards to perceptions of crime in the country as a whole, those who perceived a rise over the past few years, were more likely to believe they would be a victim of crime than those that did not (23% and 13% respectively) (Table 2.6).

**Table 2.6: Percentages believing it "fairly" or "very likely" they will be a victim of crime in the next 12-months, by whether there is a perceived rise in local and national crime levels, 2013/14 CSEW**

England and Wales

Adults, aged 16 and over	
	"Fairly" or "very" likely to be a victim of crime
Perceived a rise in local crime	33
Perceived no rise in local crime	13
Unweighted base - number of adults	3,985
Perceived a rise in national crime	23
Perceived no rise in national crime	13
Unweighted base - number of adults	4,740

Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

The number of those who perceived it likely they would be victimised in the next year varied across different groups within the population in similar ways to those outlined for perception of and worry about crime ( [Appendix Table 2.04 and 2.05 \(733.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#) ). However, unlike worry about crime, there were no significant differences between the sexes in relation to perceived likelihood of victimisation.

These are some of the more notable variations:

- amongst those that had been a victim of crime in the last 12 months, 36% felt they were likely to be a victim again in the coming year compared with only 16% non victims
- those aged 65 and over, were less likely than all other age groups to expect to be a victim of crime in the next 12 months. It was estimated that, 15% of 65 to 74 year olds, and 10% of those aged 75 and above thought it "likely" they would be a victim of crime in the next year. This compared to 24% of 35 to 44 year olds
- those resident in an urban area were more likely to think they will be a victim of crime in the next year (21%), than those resident in a rural area (14%)
- residents in areas with high levels of physical disorder; were more likely to think they will be a victim of crime in the next 12 months (28%), than those living in areas with low physical disorder (19%)
- residents in the 20% most deprived areas were more likely (26%) than those resident in the 20% least deprived areas (15%), and those resident in all other areas (19%) to believe they will be a victim of crime in the next year.

## 9. References

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Pfeiffer, C., Windzio, M. and Kleimann, M., 2005, '[Media use and its impacts on crime perceptions, sentencing attitudes and crime policy](#)'. European Journal of Criminology, Volume 2 (3): 2005, 259-285.

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## 10. Background notes

1. Details of the policy governing the release of new data are available by visiting [www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/code-of-practice/index.html](http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/code-of-practice/index.html) or from the Media Relations Office email: [media.relations@ons.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:media.relations@ons.gsi.gov.uk)

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

Designation can be broadly interpreted to mean that the statistics:

- meet identified user needs;
- are well explained and readily accessible;
- are produced according to sound methods; and
- are managed impartially and objectively in the public interest.

Once statistics have been designated as National Statistics it is a statutory requirement that the Code of Practice shall continue to be observed.

Compendium

## Chapter 3: Personal well-being and crime

Crime statistics from the Crime Survey for England and Wales and police recorded crime.



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Release date:  
26 March 2015

Next release:  
To be announced

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# 1 . Summary

This chapter presents findings from the 2012/13 and 2013/14 Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) on personal well-being. It looks at how victims of crime rate their personal well-being and compares this with non-victims, including looking at different types of crime. As there is likely to be a complex relationship between personal well-being, demographic characteristics, and whether or not a person was victimised, the contributory effect of the victimisation is uncertain.

- Those who were victims of crime in the previous 12 months reported significantly lower personal well-being than non-victims for measures relating to “life satisfaction”, “life worthwhile”, and “happiness yesterday”. There was no significant difference for “anxious yesterday”
- When looking at demographic breakdowns, there was a strong association between young and single victims and low personal well-being. It is possible that this is due to differences in the profile of victimisation, where young people are more likely to be a victim of a violent crime
- Victims of violence with injury gave lower personal well-being ratings than victims of violence without injury. For both measures the differences between victims and non-victims was statistically significant for all personal well-being measures, with the exception of “low anxiety yesterday”
- Of the various theft offences, domestic burglary and theft from the person had the strongest association with a victim’s personal well-being
- Across all four measures, those that believe they are likely to be a victim of crime in the next 12 months had lower personal well-being than those who thought they were unlikely to be a victim

## 2 . Introduction

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) has developed a programme aiming to produce accepted and trusted measures of national well-being. This is part of a wider initiative in the UK and internationally to look beyond traditional measures such as Gross Domestic Product (GDP) with regards the state of a country, and consider what really matters to people. ONS regularly monitor 41 different headline measures in areas such as the natural environment, our relationships, health, what we do, where we live, personal finances, the economy, education and skills and governance to measure the progress and well-being of the nation. These measures include four standardised questions which measure personal well-being.

This chapter compares the personal well-being of victims and non-victims of crime, and how this varies by a range of demographic characteristics. It then examines variations by different crime types – for example, how do victims of burglary compare with non-victims? Additionally, the chapter draws on other CSEW measures to illustrate further the emotional impact a crime can have on a victim. It is also possible to look at the personal well-being of respondents who believe they are highly likely to be a victim of a crime over the next year, compared with those who think they are highly unlikely to be so.

## 3 . How personal well-being is measured

ONS began measuring personal well-being in April 2011, as part of the Annual Population Survey (APS). The APS is obtained by combining results from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) and data from the APS ‘boosts’ samples in England, Scotland and Wales<sup>1</sup>. These 4 questions have been developed:

1. Overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays?
2. Overall, to what extent do you feel the things you do in your life are worthwhile?
3. Overall, how happy did you feel yesterday?
4. Overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday?

People are asked to give their answers on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is “not at all” and 10 is “completely”. An aggregate score of 7 or more is described as high (score of 7 or 8) or very high (score of 9 or 10), except for the anxious yesterday question, which is an aggregate score of 3 or less (with a score of 2 or 3 meaning low or 0 or 1 meaning very low)<sup>2</sup>.

The results from the APS are published annually, as part of the Measuring National Well-being programme. The most recent one of these was for the 2013/14 year, and was published in [September 2014](#).

### Notes for how personal well-being is measured

1. The '[Labour Force Survey: User Guide, Volume 1 – LFS Background and Methodology](#)' has more information.
2. This question is referred to as “Low anxiety yesterday”, because an aggregate score of 3 or less represents those that reported low levels of anxiousness.

## 4 . Personal well-being questions in the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW)

The 4 questions relating to personal well-being have been asked in the self-completion section of the CSEW since 2012/13. They have been included to understand the association between personal well-being and experience of crime.

While the standard personal well-being questions from the APS have been used in the CSEW, there are some important differences in the way in which they are administered compared with the APS. Rather than asked as part of the face-to-face or telephone interview (as they are on the APS), the questions come at the beginning of the self-completion section of the survey, following the core questions on perceptions and experience of being a victim of crime, rather than early on in the interview (as they do on the APS). The different mode of interview, survey setting and ordering of questions is likely to have an effect on how respondents answer the well-being questions. Further details on the differences in the personal well-being data from the APS and the CSEW can be found in the 'Differences between published personal well-being figures and the CSEW' section.

The primary reason for including the questions in the CSEW was not to provide an estimate of personal well-being as the APS fulfils that duty; it was to explore associations between personal well-being and experience of crime. However, the well-being of respondents is measured at the time of the CSEW interview, and after having any experience of crime. There is not a measure of well-being prior to any such victimisation.

The self-completion section of the CSEW is restricted to 16 to 59 year olds. The personal well-being questions are only asked of a random sub-sample of 1 in 4 respondents. This means the overall number of respondents asked these questions is approximately 5,000 individuals per year.

To enable more detailed analysis, the latest two years data (2012/13 and 2013/14) have been combined to produce a final sample size of just over 10,000.

## 5 . Crime types used in analysis

Due to the relatively low number of respondents who report being a victim of any particular crime in the last 12 months, this analysis has been restricted to the highest volume crime types. Of the 4 overall crime types from the CSEW (violence, robbery, theft, and criminal damage), robbery is not included due to the very small number of victims. As a result, the offences available in this report and in the tables are:

### Violence

- Violence with injury
- Violence without injury
- Domestic violence (separate breakdown)<sup>1</sup>

### Theft offences

- Domestic burglary
- Theft involving vehicles
- Theft from the person
- Other personal theft
- Other household theft

### Bicycle theft

- Criminal damage

Looking at the wide range of offences provides an insight into how specific crimes affect people more or less than other types. More information on the crime types can be found in Chapter 5 in the [User Guide to Crime Statistics for England and Wales \(1.61 Mb Pdf\)](#).

### Notes for crime types used in analysis

1. Domestic violence offences are included within the offences of either violence with or without injury as appropriate. However violence can also be broken down according to the victim-offender relationship. This measure of domestic violence includes violence committed by partners, ex-partners, other relatives or household members (there is more information in Section 5.1 of the ( [User Guide to Crime Statistics for England and Wales \(1.59 Mb Pdf\)](#) ).

## 6 . Section 1 - Who are victims of crime?

Crime does not affect the population evenly. The CSEW shows certain types of people are more likely to be victims of crime than others. For example, data from 2013/14 showed those aged 16 to 24 and 25 to 34 were more likely to be victims than those aged 55 to 64, 65 to 74, or 75 and over, while those unemployed (as opposed to employed), living in urban areas (as opposed to living in a rural area), or living in the 20% most deprived areas were also more likely to be victims of crime. The [Annual Trend and Demographic tables](#) have more information.

Like crime victimisation, those who report having a high sense of personal well-being vary across the population. Data from the [2013/14 Personal Well-being in the UK](#) publication found those aged 40-54 were less likely to have high life satisfaction compared with those in both younger (aged 16-29) and older (aged 65-79) age-groups. There were also differences in other demographic characteristics, such as self-reported health, employment status, and marital status<sup>1</sup>. Additionally, the differences vary across the four personal well-being measures. The [Personal Well-being Estimates Personal Characteristics tables](#) have more information.

These variations mean that there is likely to be a complex relationship between being a victim of crime and personal well-being. Other factors, such as income, employment or marital status, and health will be inter-related with each other and with both levels of victimisation and personal well-being. For example, the personal well-being of a victim of crime living in a deprived area could be influenced by both their living situation and their victimisation. It should be noted that association does not mean causation, and this initial analysis does not attempt to fully explain this complex pattern. Further multivariate analysis would be required to do this.

### Notes for section 1 - Who are victims of crime?

1. The Personal Well-being in the UK publication covers the entire UK; while the CSEW data are only relevant for England and Wales. The [Geographic Breakdown tables](#) has country-specific well-being data.

## 7 . Section 2 - Victims of crime and personal well-being

This section looks at whether being a victim of crime is associated with someone's personal well-being<sup>1</sup>. The 4 personal well-being measures are all considered, broken down by those who were victimised and those who were not. It then goes on to look at demographic breakdowns, such as age, marital status, and household income.

### Notes for section 2 - Victims of crime and personal well-being

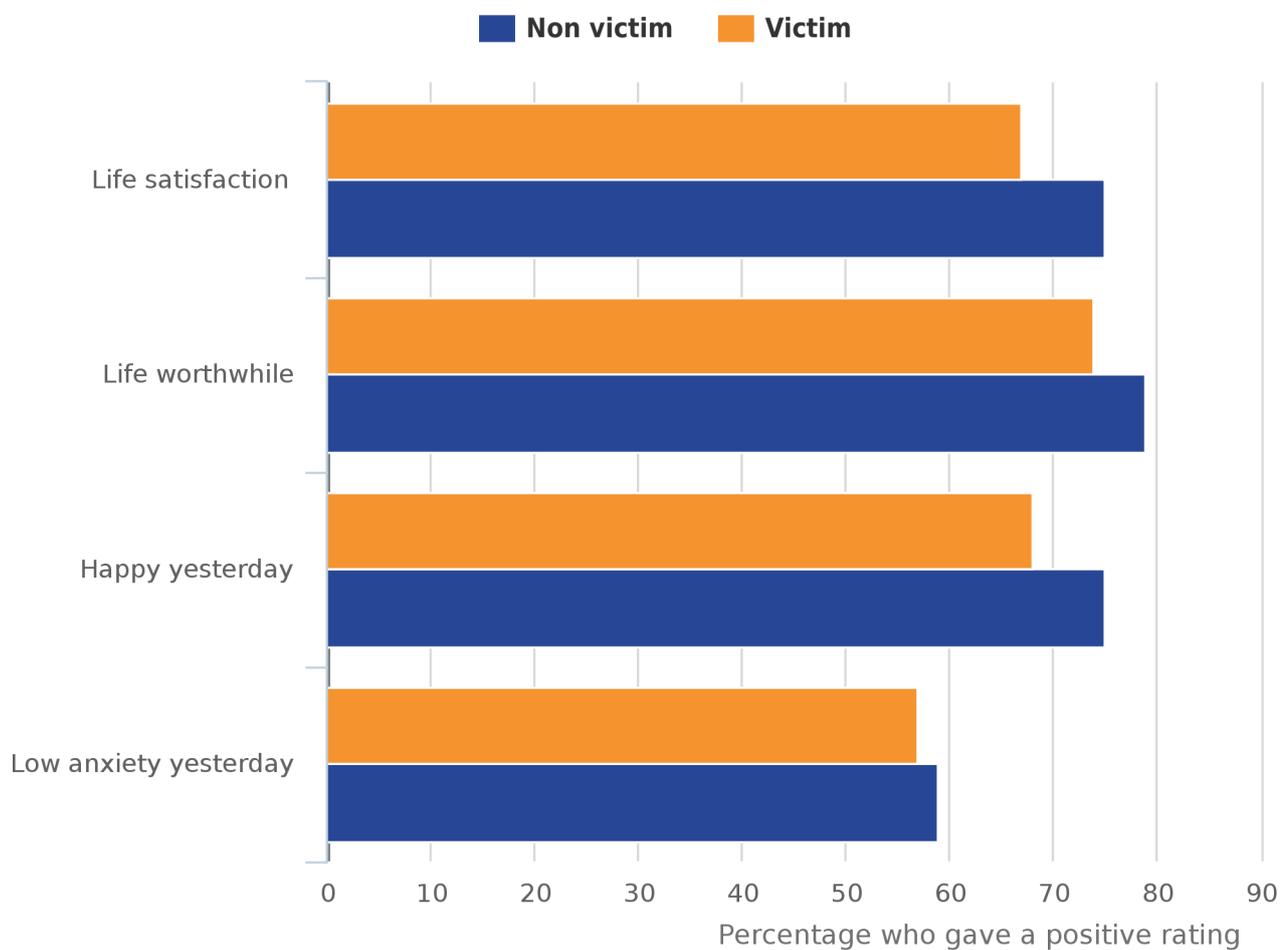
1. Though, as has already been touched upon, association does not mean causation.

## 8 . Overall victims of crime

This comparison is of an overall victim/non-victim breakdown<sup>1</sup>. While the severity and cost of a crime can vary markedly on the crime type suffered, previous international studies have found correlations between any experiences of being a victim of crime and both lower happiness and general life satisfaction ([Denkers and Winkel, 1998](#) and [Michalos and Zumbo, 2000](#)). Additionally, [Staubli et. al. \(2013\)](#) found evidence of time dependence; for property crimes (for example burglary, car theft, or criminal damage offences) the impact on life satisfaction was only short-term, whereas for personal crimes (such as violence or theft from the person) a negative influence was sustained if the incident took place at any point in the previous 2 years.

Figure 3.1 shows the percentage of those giving positive ratings across the 4 personal well-being measures, broken down by whether or not the respondent was a victim of any crime in the previous 12 months. It shows that for 3 of the 4 measures, non-victims were more likely to give a higher rating than victims (the 2 percentage point difference between victims and non-victims in relation to “low anxiety yesterday” was not statistically significant).

**Figure 3.1: Respondents giving a positive personal well-being rating, broken down by victim/non-victim of any crime, 2012/13 and 2013/14 CSEW**



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales - Office for National Statistics

**Notes:**

1. Those deemed to have a positive rating for "life satisfaction", "life worthwhile" and "happy yesterday" are those that gave a rating of 7 or more out of 10
2. Those deemed to have a positive rating for "low anxiety yesterday" are those that gave a rating of 3 or less out of 10

The gap was most noticeable for the “life satisfaction” and “happy yesterday” measures. 75% of non-victims for both measures gave positive ratings, while for victims it was 67% for “life satisfaction” and 68% for “happy yesterday”. The difference for “life worthwhile” was 5 percentage points (79% for non-victims and 74% for victims).

**Notes for overall victims of crime**

1. The victim measure is based on victimisation of any of the main CSEW crime types (including both personal and household). There is more information in the [User Guide to Crime Statistics for England and Wales \(1.59 Mb Pdf\)](#).

## 9 . Demographic breakdowns

Table 3.1 shows that generally across all age groups, the personal well-being of victims was lower than those of non-victims. However, this difference was less evident among the older age groups. For “life satisfaction” for example, in the 16 to 24 age group the difference in those giving a positive personal well-being score was 13 percentage points higher for non-victims than victims (78% and 66% respectively). In contrast, the difference for those aged 55 to 59 was just 4 percentage points (71% for victims and 75% for non-victims). This pattern of a lower association between well-being and experience of crime in the older age groups was apparent in the other personal well-being measures, although less marked.



**Table 3.1: Comparison of the level of positive ratings of personal well-being of victims and non-victims, by age group, 2012/13 and 2013/14 CSEW**

	Victim of crime (%)	Not a victim (%)	Percentage point difference <sup>2</sup> (%)	Unweighted base - number of adults
<b>Life satisfaction<sup>2</sup></b>				
16-24	66	78	13	1,247
25-34	67	76	8	2,261
35-44	68	74	7	2,607
45-54	66	72	5	2,715
55-59	71	75	4	1,234
All ages	67	75	8	10,064
<b>Life worthwhile<sup>2</sup></b>				
16-24	69	79	9	1,246
25-34	75	79	4	2,247
35-44	76	81	5	2,601
45-54	75	78	4	2,711
55-59	77	80	3	1,238
All ages	74	79	5	10,043
<b>Happy yesterday<sup>2</sup></b>				
16-24	65	74	9	1,259
25-34	68	76	8	2,279
35-44	72	76	4	2,624
45-54	66	74	7	2,747
55-59	77	76	-1	1,248
All ages	68	75	7	10,157
<b>Low anxiety yesterday<sup>3</sup></b>				
16-24	57	61	5	1,239
25-34	59	60	1	2,251
35-44	56	58	2	2,605
45-54	53	59	6	2,727
55-59	60	56	-4	1,246
All ages	57	59	2	10,068

Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Percentage point differences are calculated on unrounded numbers. '\*' denotes statistical significance
2. Those deemed to have a positive rating for "life satisfaction", "life worthwhile" and "happy yesterday" are those that gave a rating of 7 or more out of 10
3. Those deemed to have a positive rating for "low anxiety yesterday" are those that gave a rating of 3 or less out of 10

The stronger association between personal well-being and experience of crime for young people may reflect differences in the nature of such victimisation. The recently released [Focus On: Violence and Sexual Offences 2013/14](#) showed that, in the year to March 2014, adults aged 16 to 24 were more likely to be a victim of violent crime compared with any other age groups (5.0% of those aged 16 to 24 were victims, compared with 2.4% for 25 to 34 year olds, the second highest age group and 0.9% of those aged 55 to 64). The 'Victims of violent crime' section highlights the strong association between violent crime and low personal well-being.

Table 3.2 shows that the difference in personal well-being scores between victims and non-victims were more pronounced for single and separated people than for those who were married/civil partnered or cohabiting. For example, for "life satisfaction" the difference between victim and non-victim for those married/civil partnered (5 percentage points) and cohabiting (3 percentage points) was substantially smaller than those who were single (12 percentage points) and separated (17 percentage points).



**Table 3.2: Comparison of the personal well-being of victims and non-victims, by marital status, 2012/13 and 2013/14 CSEW**

	Victim of crime (%)	Not a victim (%)	Percentage point difference <sup>2</sup> (%)	Unweighted base - number of adults
<b>Life satisfaction<sup>2</sup></b>				
Married/civil partnered	74	79	5 *	4,305
Cohabiting	74	77	3	1,342
Single	59	71	12 *	3,082
Separated	43	60	17 *	385
Divorced/legally dissolved partnership	56	60	4	816
All marital status	67	75	8 *	10,046
<b>Life worthwhile<sup>2</sup></b>				
Married/civil partnered	81	84	3	4,301
Cohabiting	78	79	0	1,341
Single	66	75	9 *	3,073
Separated	59	72	13	385
Divorced/legally dissolved partnership	65	66	1	814
All marital status	74	79	5 *	10,026
<b>Happy yesterday<sup>2</sup></b>				
Married/civil partnered	74	80	6 *	4,355
Cohabiting	73	75	1	1,354
Single	62	70	8 *	3,101
Separated	58	66	8	390
Divorced/legally dissolved partnership	61	63	2	824
All marital status	68	75	7 *	10,140
<b>Low anxiety yesterday<sup>3</sup></b>				
Married/civil partnered	58	60	2	4,312
Cohabiting	60	62	2	1,348
Single	54	58	4	3,071
Separated	62	53	-9	384
Divorced/legally dissolved partnership	48	51	2	822
All marital status	57	59	2	10,051

Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Percentage point differences are calculated on unrounded numbers. '\*' denotes statistical significance
2. Those deemed to have a positive rating for "life satisfaction", "life worthwhile" and "happy yesterday" are those that gave a rating of 7 or more out of 10
3. Those deemed to have a positive rating for "low anxiety yesterday" are those that gave a rating of 3 or less out of 10

A similar relationship to that which exists between marital status and experience of crime is also evident in that of age and victimisation. Younger people (who are most likely to be a victim of a violent crime) are also more likely to be single, while older age groups are more likely to be in long-term relationships. This helps explain the variation in personal well-being scores across the different marital status categories.

[Appendix tables 3.05 and 3.06 \(733.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#) provides a fuller set of breakdowns for all 4 personal well-being measures (for both personal and household characteristics), with additional groupings for victims of any crime, as well as non-victims.

## **10 . Section 3 – Personal well-being and different crime types**

As well as overall crime, it is possible to look at different crime types and the relationship they have with personal well-being scores. In the analyses that follow, we define “victims” as being victims of the specific crime category presented and “non victims” as not having experienced that particular crime. This means that the “non victim” group will include some people who were victims of another crime type. So, for example a respondent who has experienced burglary but not violent crime will be defined as a victim in the burglary tables and a no victim in the violence tables.

## **11 . Victims of violent offences**

Violent crimes cover offence types from minor assaults, such as pushing and shoving that result in no physical harm, to much more serious violence where significant injuries are suffered. Violent crime can be broken down by whether or not the victim was injured, or by the relationship of the victim to the perpetrator. A common subset of violent crime is domestic violence, where the victim-offender relationship involves partners, ex-partners, other relatives or household members<sup>1</sup>.

Table 3.3 shows the personal well-being measures broken down by overall violence, while Table 3.4 has breakdowns for violence with injury, violence without injury, and domestic violence. There were statistically significant differences for 3 of the personal well-being measures across all offence groupings (“life satisfaction”, “life worthwhile” and “happy yesterday”), while “low anxiety yesterday” was also significant for the domestic violence breakdown.

**Table 3.3: Personal well-being breakdowns for violent offences, 2012/13 and 2013/14 CSEW**

England and Wales

Adults aged 16 to 59, Percentages

	Victims <sup>1</sup>	Non-victims	Statistical significance
All violence offences			
Life satisfaction <sup>2</sup>	54	74	*
Life worthwhile <sup>2</sup>	58	79	*
Happy yesterday <sup>2</sup>	57	74	*
Low anxiety yesterday <sup>3</sup>	53	59	
Unweighted base - number of adults	292	9,772	

Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

1. Victims are those who were victims of this particular crime category. Non-victims will include victims of other crime types
2. Those deemed to have a positive rating for "life satisfaction", "life worthwhile" and "happy yesterday" are those that gave a rating of 7 or more out of 10
3. Those deemed to have a positive rating for "low anxiety yesterday" are those that gave a rating of 3 or less out of 10

Of all offence types, victims of domestic violence gave the lowest positive ratings for all 4 personal well-being measures. Only 40% of those who were victims of domestic violence gave a positive rating for "low anxiety yesterday" compared with 53% for victims of the total violence category. For "life satisfaction" 41% of victims of domestic violence gave a positive rating (compared with 54% for victims of all violence), for "happy yesterday" it was 46% (compared with 57%), and for "life worthwhile" it was 49% (compared with 58%).

As might be expected, victims of violence with injury gave lower personal well-being ratings than victims of violence without injury. For both measures there were statistically significant differences between victims and non-victims for all personal well-being measures, with the exception of "low anxiety yesterday".

**Table 3.4: Personal well-being breakdowns for violence with injury, violence without injury and domestic violence, 2012/13 and 2013/14 CSEW**

England and Wales

Adults aged 16 to 59, Percentages

	Victims <sup>1</sup>	Non-victims	Statistical significance
<b>Violence with injury</b>			
Life satisfaction <sup>2</sup>	53	74	*
Life worthwhile <sup>2</sup>	57	79	*
Happy yesterday <sup>2</sup>	56	74	*
Low anxiety yesterday <sup>3</sup>	51	59	
Unweighted base - number of adults	164	9,900	
<b>Violence without injury</b>			
Life satisfaction <sup>2</sup>	54	74	*
Life worthwhile <sup>2</sup>	60	79	*
Happy yesterday <sup>2</sup>	58	74	*
Low anxiety yesterday <sup>3</sup>	56	59	
Unweighted base - number of adults	132	9,932	
<b>Domestic violence (separate breakdown)<sup>4</sup></b>			
Life satisfaction <sup>2</sup>	41	73	*
Life worthwhile <sup>2</sup>	49	78	*
Happy yesterday <sup>2</sup>	46	74	*
Low anxiety yesterday <sup>3</sup>	40	59	*
Unweighted base - number of adults	59	10,005	

Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Victims are those who were a victim of any given crime category. Non-victims will include victims of other crime types
2. Those deemed to have a positive rating for "life satisfaction", "life worthwhile" and "happy yesterday" are those that gave a rating of 7 or more out of 10
3. Those deemed to have a positive rating for "low anxiety yesterday" are those that gave a rating of 3 or less out of 10
4. Domestic violence offences are included within the offences of either violence with or without injury as appropriate. However violence can also be broken down according to the victim-offender relationship. This measure of domestic violence includes violence committed by partners, ex-partners, other relatives or household members (for more information see Section 5.1 of the User Guide to Crime Statistics for England and Wales)

International studies have seen similar results – both [Powdthavee \(2005\)](#) and [Davies and Hinks \(2010\)](#) found lower well-being in cases where a household had suffered a violent crime<sup>2</sup>. Being a victim of violent crime has been found to have a range of impacts on someone, from emotional reactions such as emptiness or grief, fear or anxiety, and feelings of helplessness or panic, to physical reactions such as aches and pains, nightmares, and changes in appetites<sup>3</sup>. More specifically, domestic violence has been widely acknowledged to be associated with an increased risk of negative outcomes, such as poor health, mental illness, increased anxiety and social dysfunction ([Coker et al. 2002](#) and [Ratner, 1993](#)).

The Nature of Crime tables, which are published alongside the other Focus On publications<sup>4</sup>, can provide further insight on the impact of a certain crime on the victim. These tables provide further information on the circumstances of crimes measured by the CSEW, such as location, offender, injury sustained, and emotional impact. This report will touch briefly on the statistics looking at the emotional impact of the crime, as there may be clear links between this and the victim's personal well-being.

The emotional impacts of crimes are analysed in [Appendix table 3.07 \(733.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#). As might be expected, the percentage of victims who were emotionally affected by a violent crime was high compared to the rest of the offence types. The percentage of victims who stated they were emotionally affected by the crime was highest for domestic violence and robbery (93% and 91%). The serious impact of violent crime is even more obvious when looking at those who were affected 'very much' by the crime; the top 5 categories overall were (in order of most serious) domestic violence (43%)<sup>5</sup>, robbery (27%), violence with injury (24%), burglary (the one theft offence – 21%), and violence without injury (20%). This evidence falls in line with the personal well-being figures in that of all CSEW crime types, violence has the biggest impact on victims.

## Notes for victims of violent offences

1. These domestic violence statistics are collected in face-to-face CSEW interviews. As a result, they should be treated with caution. Prevalence rates for domestic violence derived from the self-completion module are around 5 times higher for adults than those obtained from face-to-face interviews (Chapter 7 of [Walby and Allen, 2004](#)).
2. Powdthavee's study also included the impact of burglary on well-being.
3. For example, '[The Impact of Violent Crime on You and Your Family](#)', from Victim Assist Queensland, Australia.
4. The 2 most recent publications are [Focus On: Property Crime 2013/14](#), published 27 November 2014, and [Focus On: Violent Crime and Sexual Offences 2013/14](#), published 12 February 2015.
5. Domestic violence is a separate breakdown and is a subset of crimes from both violence with injury and violence without injury – they are not mutually exclusive.

## 12 . Victims of theft offences

The overall theft offence category covers any personal or household crime where an item has been stolen – domestic burglary, vehicle-related theft, theft from the person, other theft of personal property, other household theft, and bicycle theft.

The breadth of theft offences mean the potential impact on a victim may vary greatly. Table 3.5 shows the ratings for the 4 personal well-being measures across all theft offences. As well as the overall theft offences category, both domestic burglary and theft from the person had statistically significant differences between victims and non-victims for 2 of the personal well-being measures. For the overall category, the differences were for "life satisfaction" and "happy yesterday" (both had 69% for victims compared with 74% for non-victims).

**Table 3.5: Personal well-being breakdowns for theft offences, 2012/13 and 2013/14 CSEW**

England and Wales

Adults aged 16 to 59, Percentages

	Victims <sup>1</sup>	Non-victims	Statistical significance
All theft offences			
Life satisfaction <sup>2</sup>	69	74	*
Life worthwhile <sup>2</sup>	76	79	
Happy yesterday <sup>2</sup>	69	74	*
Low anxiety yesterday <sup>3</sup>	56	59	
Unweighted base - number of adults	1,422	8,642	

Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Victims are those who were victims of this particular crime category. Non-victims will include victims of other crime types
2. Those deemed to have a positive rating for "life satisfaction", "life worthwhile" and "happy yesterday" are those that gave a rating of 7 or more out of 10
3. Those deemed to have a positive rating for "low anxiety yesterday" are those that gave a rating of 3 or less out of 10

Table 3.6 provides the personal well-being for each of the different theft sub-categories. The table shows that there is a similar pattern across most of the theft offences, in that victims have lower personal well-being when compared with non-victims. However, due to the small number of victims for some of the theft offences (for example theft from the person and other household theft), only a few of them are statistically significant. Only vehicle-related theft, and a couple of personal well-being measures for other theft of personal property and bicycle theft, goes against this general trend.

Victims of domestic burglary were less likely to have positive ratings for "happy yesterday" (63% for victims compared to 74% for non-victims) and "low anxiety yesterday" (51% compared to 59%). These results fall in line with other research, which has found that burglary victims often experience emotions similar to those of victims of violent crime, including suffering mental health issues, with people worrying about protecting their homes and families in the future (there is research by [Safe Essentials](#) and [Victim Support](#)). Additionally, both [Cohen \(2008\)](#) and [Kuroki \(2012\)](#) found significant negative correlations between past burglary and happiness.

The differences in the personal well-being of victims and non-victims of theft from the person were largest for "life satisfaction" (58% for victims compared with 73% for non-victims), and "low anxiety yesterday" (44% for victims compared with 59% for non-victims). These are thefts where something has been taken directly from a victim, but without the threat or use of physical force. Examples include snatch theft, stealth theft (including pick-pocketing), and attempted thefts. Items stolen are often of high personal value to the victim (mobile phones or wallets and cash)<sup>1</sup>, the loss of which can lead to the victim reporting a lower personal well-being score. In addition to these differences, the "life satisfaction" of victims of bicycle theft was statistically significantly less than non-victims (63% compared to 73%).



**Table 3.6: Personal well-being breakdowns for the different theft categories, 2012/13 and 2013/14 CSEW**

	Victims <sup>1</sup>	Non-victims	Statistical significance
Domestic burglary			
Life satisfaction <sup>2</sup>	68	73	
Life worthwhile <sup>2</sup>	77	78	
Happy yesterday <sup>2</sup>	63	74	*
Low anxiety yesterday <sup>3</sup>	51	59	*
Unweighted base - number of adults	222	9,842	
Vehicle-related theft			
Life satisfaction <sup>2</sup>	73	73	
Life worthwhile <sup>2</sup>	79	78	
Happy yesterday <sup>2</sup>	74	74	
Low anxiety yesterday <sup>3</sup>	59	59	
Unweighted base - number of adults	399	9,665	
Theft from the person			
Life satisfaction <sup>2</sup>	58	73	*
Life worthwhile <sup>2</sup>	70	78	
Happy yesterday <sup>2</sup>	64	74	
Low anxiety yesterday <sup>3</sup>	44	59	*
Unweighted base - number of adults	108	9,956	
Other theft of personal property			
Life satisfaction <sup>2</sup>	68	73	
Life worthwhile <sup>2</sup>	79	78	
Happy yesterday <sup>2</sup>	70	74	
Low anxiety yesterday <sup>3</sup>	58	59	
Unweighted base - number of adults	237	9,827	
Other household theft			
Life satisfaction <sup>2</sup>	69	73	
Life worthwhile <sup>2</sup>	75	78	
Happy yesterday <sup>2</sup>	70	74	
Low anxiety yesterday <sup>3</sup>	54	59	
Unweighted base - number of adults	429	9,635	
Bicycle theft			
Life satisfaction <sup>2</sup>	63	73	*
Life worthwhile <sup>2</sup>	74	78	
Happy yesterday <sup>2</sup>	67	74	
Low anxiety yesterday <sup>3</sup>	57	59	

---

Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Victims are those who were a victim of any given crime category. Non-victims will include victims of other crime types
2. Those deemed to have a positive rating for "life satisfaction", "life worthwhile" and "happy yesterday" are those that gave a rating of 7 or more out of 10
3. Those deemed to have a positive rating for "low anxiety yesterday" are those that gave a rating of 3 or less out of 10

As mentioned in the 'Victims of violent offences' section, [Appendix Table 3.07 \(733.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#) looks at the emotional impact a crime had on a victim, as first reported in the Nature of Crime tables. Given the wide range of theft offences, it is not surprising that there is a range in those reporting they were emotionally affected. The range extends from theft from the person (85%) to other household theft (73%). With regards to those that were very much affected by the crime, burglary was the highest ranking theft offence, with 21% reporting they felt this way.

### Notes for victims of theft offences

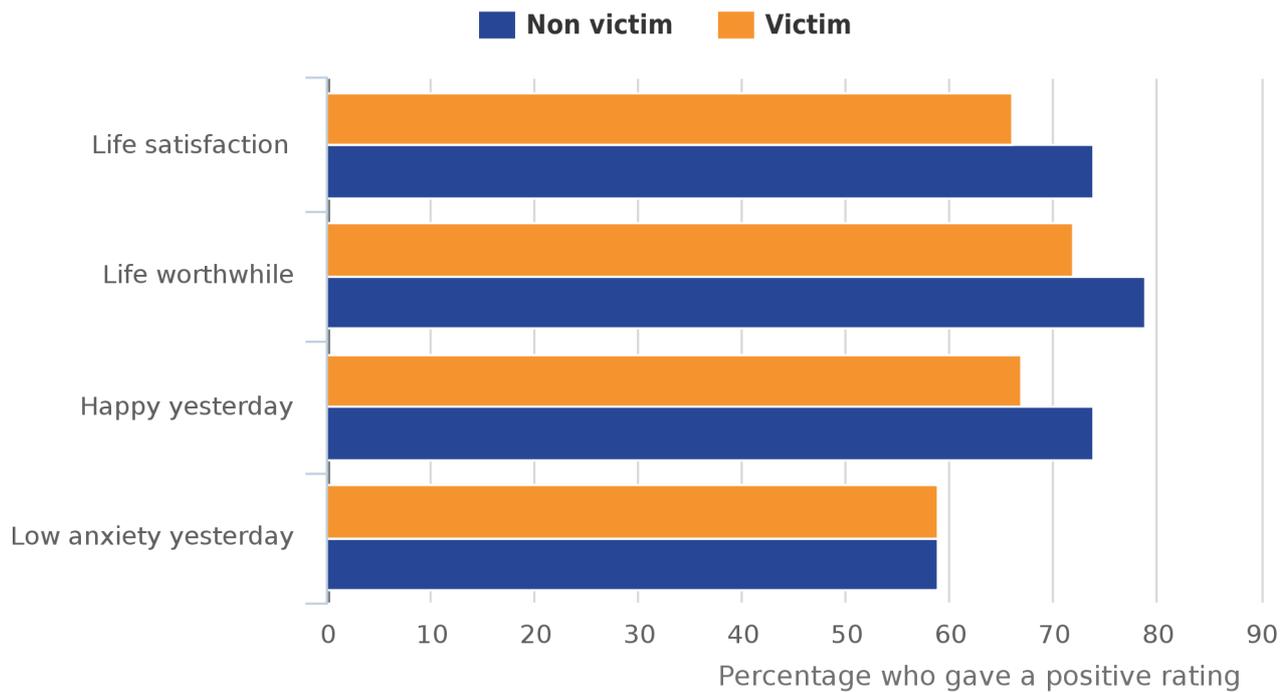
1. Table 7.3 of the 2013/14 Nature of Crime tables (published 27 November 2014), personal and other theft.

## 13 . Victims of criminal damage offences

In the CSEW, criminal damage is defined as the intentional and malicious damage to the home, other property or vehicles.

Figure 3.2 shows that for all measures other than "low anxiety yesterday", there were differences between victims and non-victims across the personal well-being measures. The difference was largest for "life satisfaction", with a difference of over 7 percentage points (66% compared with 74%), followed by "life worthwhile" and "happy yesterday", with a difference of 7 percentage points (72% compared to 79% for life worthwhile, and 67% compared to 74% for happy yesterday).

**Figure 3.2: Positive personal well-being rating, broken down by victim/non-victim of criminal damage, 2012/13 and 2013/14 CSEW**



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales - Office for National Statistics

**Notes:**

1. Those deemed to have a positive rating for "life satisfaction", "life worthwhile" and "happy yesterday" are those that gave a rating of 7 or more out of 10
2. Those deemed to have a positive rating for "low anxiety yesterday" are those that gave a rating of 3 or less out of 10
3. Victims are those who were victims of this particular crime category. Non-victims will include victims of other crime types

Previous analyses have identified links between “signs” of crime (like vandalism and litter) and increased anxiety about crime and the fear of such victimisation ([Kershaw et al, 2000](#)). This ties in with a wider theory, originally coined by [Wilson and Kelling \(1982\)](#), termed the ‘broken windows’ theory, where smaller crime types like broken windows, graffiti, or large amounts of littering in turn lead to more serious crimes occurring <sup>1</sup>.

**Notes for victims of criminal damage offences**

1. It should be noted that this theory has been debated heavily in the years since it was published; for example [Thacher \(2004\)](#) outlines studies which found only a modest relationship between disorder and serious crime (and even then, any relationship was likely due to wider social forces).

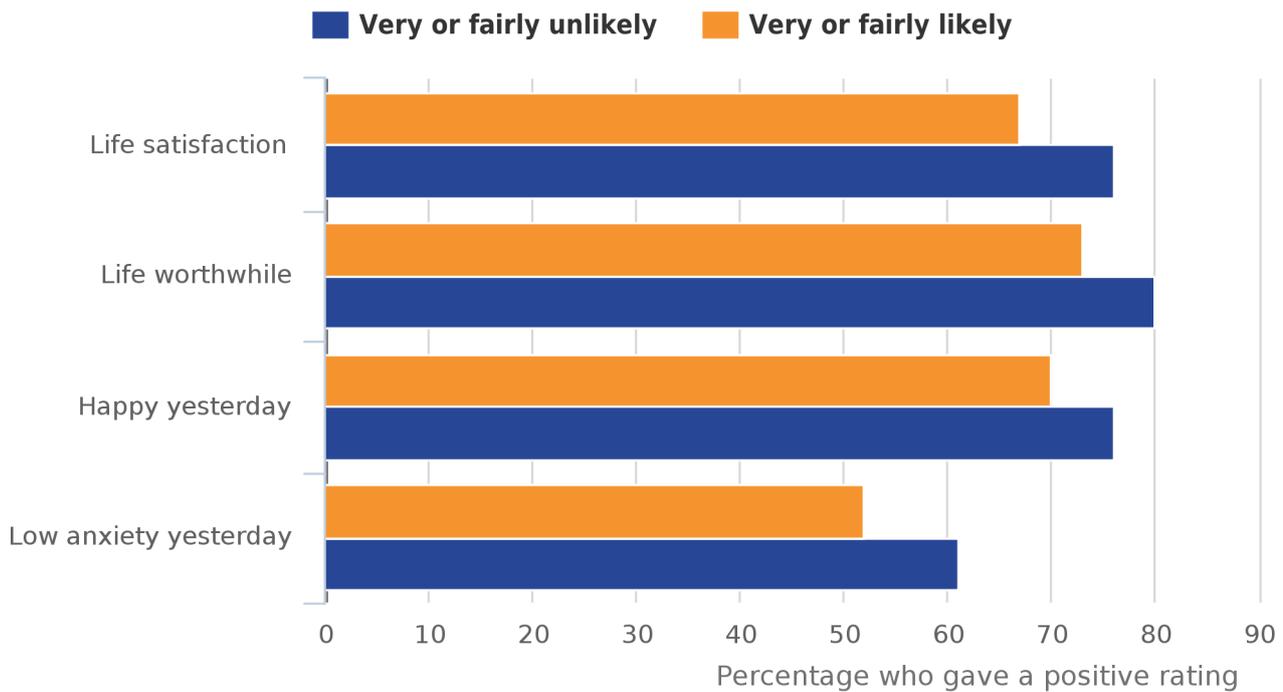
## 14 . Section 4 - Perceptions of likelihood of being a victim crime and personal well-being

International studies have found fear or worry about crime happening to someone can have a real impact on personal well-being (for example, in Germany [Hanslmaier, 2013](#) or South Africa, [Møller, 2004](#)). Due to the structure of the CSEW, respondents are asked either the personal well-being questions or many of the fear/worry of crime measures covered in Chapter One. This means it is not possible to look at the effect these measures might have on personal well-being. There is more information on the structure of the CSEW in the [User Guide to Crime Statistics for England and Wales](#).

The full CSEW sample is asked if they think they will be a victim of crime in the next year. This means it is possible to look at the personal well-being of people who think it is either likely or unlikely that they will be victimised. Figure 3.3 shows that there were statistically significant differences for all 4 personal well-being measures. The largest differences between those who thought they were very or fairly likely to be a victim compared with those who were very or fairly unlikely was for “life satisfaction” (67% and 76%) and “low anxiety yesterday” (52% and 61%).

The differences here are similar to those found in Figure 3.1, which looked at the personal well-being of victims of any crime compared to non-victims. As with Figure 3.1, there are statistically significant differences for “life satisfaction”, “life worthwhile”, and “happy yesterday”. Unlike victims of crime however, for those who thought it likely they would be a victim of crime in the next 12 months there was a statistically significant difference for “low anxiety yesterday” (the 2 percentage point difference between victim of any crime and non-victim was not statistically significant). See Chapter 2 for more information on the perceived likelihood of becoming a victim of crime.

**Figure 3.3: Positive personal well-being rating, broken down by likelihood of being a victim of crime, 2012 /13 and 2013/14 CSEW**



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales - Office for National Statistics

**Notes:**

1. Those deemed to have a positive rating for "life satisfaction", "life worthwhile" and "happy yesterday" are those that gave a rating of 7 or more out of 10
2. Those deemed to have a positive rating for "low anxiety yesterday" are those that gave a rating of 3 or less out of 10

## 15 . Section 5 - Differences between published personal well-being figures and the CSEW

This section compares 2 different sources – the CSEW personal well-being measures and the Annual Population Survey (APS) measures used in the Measuring National Well-being programme. As the largest survey of households in the UK, the APS includes responses from around 165,000 respondents (across all age bands). Even when constrained to the same parameters as the CSEW (16 to 59 year olds, England and Wales only), the sample size for 2013/14 is almost 90,000.

The demographic breakdowns from all CSEW respondents show similarities to those found in the personal well-being measures derived from the APS ('Who are victims of crime?' has more information). For example, both figures show an apparent dip in personal well-being scores for the 45 to 54 age-group, especially for "life satisfaction". Unemployed and single or divorced people also reported lower personal well-being scores in both series. The demographic breakdowns for the APS can be found as part of the [Personal Well-being in the UK, 2013/14](#) publication.

However, when directly comparing the 2 sources, as shown in Table 3.7, there is a statistically significant difference between all 4 personal well-being measures. For 3 of them, the CSEW total is lower than the official published measures; the exception is the "happy yesterday" measure, where the CSEW total is 3 percentage points higher (74% compared with 72%). For the other measures, the published figure is either 3 ("life worthwhile" and "low anxiety yesterday" or 4 (for "life satisfaction") percentage points larger than the CSEW figures.

**Table 3.7: Comparison of positive CSEW personal well-being measures with APS, for year to March 2014**

England and Wales

	Adults aged 16 to 59		
	CSEW	APS	Statistically significant
Life satisfaction <sup>2</sup>	74	77	*
Life worthwhile <sup>2</sup>	79	81	*
Happy yesterday <sup>2</sup>	74	72	*
Low anxiety yesterday <sup>3</sup>	59	62	*
Unweighted base - number of adults <sup>4</sup>	5,134	88,850	

Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Annual Population Survey Personal Well-being experimental dataset, Office for National Statistics

1. Those deemed to have a positive rating for "life satisfaction", "life worthwhile" and "happy yesterday" are those that gave a rating of 7 or more out of 10
2. Those deemed to have a positive rating for "low anxiety yesterday" are those that gave a rating of 3 or less out of 10
3. Unweighted bases refers to life worthwhile. Other bases will be similar

There are several possible reasons why these differences may exist. Research into survey methodology has shown that the context and order in which questions appear in a survey can lead respondents to answer the same questions differently (for example [Dillman et al. 2009](#)). These effects are particularly influential on questions about attitudes (like the well-being questions) than for questions about facts such as age or employment status.

The personal well-being questions in the CSEW are asked in the self-completion section of the survey. This comes after questions on a range of topics including perceptions of crime, experiences of the Criminal Justice System, and, if they were a victim in the previous 12 months, a range of questions on the nature of their victimisation.

The official well-being questions collected in the APS are found early on in the questionnaire, after the basic questions on household and individual demographics. [Tinkler and Hicks \(2011\) \(240.8 Kb Pdf\)](#) state this is to allow time to build rapport between the interviewer and respondent without allowing later questions to influence response to the subjective well-being questions.

Given the placement of the questions in the respective surveys, it is therefore unsurprising that for 3 of the well-being questions, the totals recorded in the CSEW are lower than the official measures. [Schwarz et al. \(1987\)](#) found that responses to evaluative questions can be determined in part by the respondent's current mood and by the immediate context. After speaking (often at length) about experiences and thoughts on crime, it is not surprising that CSEW personal well-being measures are, in general, lower than the APS figures.

An additional point is that the Drug Use and Drinking module is carried out via self-completion. [Pudney \(2010\)](#) found that, on average, lower scores to personal well-being questions are received if the interview is carried out via self-completion rather than administered by an interviewer<sup>1</sup>. Again, these different collection methods appear to affect how people respond.

## Notes for Section 5 - Differences between published personal well-being figures and the CSEW

1. There is more information on how the APS in '[APS design and its implications for the personal well-being statistics](#)' as part of the '[2013/14 Personal Well-being in the UK](#)' publication.

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Victim Assist Queensland, 2015, '[The impact of violent crime on you and your family](#)'

Victim Support, 2 June 2014, '[One in four burglary victims say it affected their mental health](#)'

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Wilson, James Q. and George L. Kelling, 1982, '[Broken windows: The police and neighbourhood safety](#)', The Atlantic Monthly

## 17. Background notes

1. Details of the policy governing the release of new data are available by visiting [www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/code-of-practice/index.html](http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/code-of-practice/index.html) or from the Media Relations Office email: [media.relations@ons.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:media.relations@ons.gsi.gov.uk)

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

Designation can be broadly interpreted to mean that the statistics:

- meet identified user needs;
- are well explained and readily accessible;
- are produced according to sound methods; and
- are managed impartially and objectively in the public interest.

Once statistics have been designated as National Statistics it is a statutory requirement that the Code of Practice shall continue to be observed.

Compendium

## Data sources

Crime statistics from the Crime Survey for England and Wales and police recorded crime.



Contact:  
John Flatley  
[crimestatistics@ons.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:crimestatistics@ons.gsi.gov.uk)

Release date:  
26 March 2015

Next release:  
To be announced

## Table of contents

1. [Data sources – further information](#)

2. [The Crime Survey for England and Wales](#)

3. [List of products](#)

4. [Background notes](#)

# 1 . Data sources – further information

For detailed information about the statistical sources used here, refer to the [User Guide to Crime Statistics for England and Wales](#) (ONS, 2015<sup>1</sup>).

Note: This User Guide is the standard source of information on both police recorded crime figures and the CSEW.

## 2 . The Crime Survey for England and Wales

Data from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) continue to be badged as National Statistics.

The CSEW is a face-to-face survey in which people resident in households in England and Wales are asked about their experiences of crime in the 12 months prior to the interview. The overall target sample size for the survey in the year ending March 2014 was 35,000 households.

In the year ending March 2014, the CSEW had achieved a nationally representative sample of 34,906 adults and 2,902 children with response rates of 75% and 68% respectively. The survey is weighted to adjust for possible non-response bias and to ensure the sample reflects the profile of the general population. Being based on a sample survey, CSEW estimates are subject to a margin of error. Unless stated otherwise, all changes in CSEW estimates described in the main text are statistically significant at the 95 per cent level. For more information on statistical significance and confidence intervals for CSEW data, see Section 8 of the [User Guide to Crime Statistics for England and Wales](#) (ONS, 2015).

There have been some minor changes to the classifications of CSEW offences, in order to improve coherence of categories and to more closely align them with the presentation of police crime recorded offences. A programme of work to implement these has now been completed and bulletins referring to the year ending March 2014 onwards include these revised CSEW classifications (including a full reclassified back series to 1981).

These new CSEW classifications do not change the overall number of offences estimated by the survey, just the categories in which they are presented. As part of these the offence category of robbery has been moved out of CSEW 'Violence' into a separate standalone category. Further detail on the changes made to the presentation of CSEW statistics can be found in the methodological note '[Presentational and methodological improvements to National Statistics on the Crime Survey for England and Wales](#)' (176.2 Kb Pdf).

Alongside these classification changes, an additional piece of survey development work was also implemented to produce revised survey weights and a back-series following the release of the 2011 Census-based population estimates. The programme of work to produce the revised weights and key estimates for all survey years back to 2001/02 is now complete and both CSEW and police recorded crime use post 2011 Census population figures. See the methodological note '[Presentational and methodological improvements to National Statistics on the Crime Survey for England and Wales](#)' (176.2 Kb Pdf).

### Police workforce, England and Wales, 31 March 2014

In January 2015, police workforce figures as at 30 September 2014 were published by the Home Office. However, to be consistent with the 2013/14 CSEW used in this publication, figures as at 31 March 2014 have been used in this publication.

### 3 . List of products

Release tables published alongside this commentary include a set of bulletin tables containing the data tables and numbers appearing behind graphs in this publication, and more detailed estimates and counts of crime levels as set out in the table below.

The following are URL links associated with the production of Crime Statistics.

1. [Crime statistics publications on the Home Office website](#)
2. [Historic police recorded crime](#)
3. [Previous quarterly publication](#)
4. [User Guide to Crime Statistics for England and Wales](#)
5. [The 2013/14 Crime Survey for England and Wales Technical Report Volume 1](#)
6. [Analysis of Variation in Crime Trends](#) (methodological note)
7. [Future Dissemination Strategy – Summary of Responses](#)
8. [Presentational changes to National Statistics on police recorded crime in England and Wales](#) (methodological note)
9. [Presentational and methodological improvements to National Statistics on the Crime Survey for England and Wales](#) (methodological note)
10. '[Focus on Victimisation and Public Perceptions 2012/13](#)'. Published 30 May 2014
11. '[Focus on Property Crime, 2013/14](#)'. Published 27 November 2014
12. '[Focus on: Violent Crime and Sexual Offences, 2013/14](#)'. Published 12 February 2015
13. [National Statistician's Review of Crime Statistics](#)

Anonymised datasets from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (in SPSS format) currently are available on:

- The [UK Data Service](#) and the ONS Virtual Micro data Laboratory ([VML](#))

In addition to these Official Statistics releases, provisional police recorded crime data drawn from local management information systems sit behind, street level figures released each month, via:

[Police recorded crime, street level mapping tool](#)

Crime Statistics for Scotland are available from the [Scottish Government](#)

Crime Statistics for Northern Ireland are available from the [Police Service of Northern Ireland](#)

## 4. Background notes

1. The Focus On releases are produced in partnership with the Home Office.
2. National Statistics are produced to high professional standards set out in the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure that they meet customer needs. They are produced free from any political interference.
3. Next quarterly publication: 23 April 2015.

Future thematic report due to be published: Focus on Property Crime 2014/15: November 2015

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5. Details of the policy governing the release of new data are available by visiting [www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/code-of-practice/index.html](http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/code-of-practice/index.html) or from the Media Relations Office email: [media.relations@ons.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:media.relations@ons.gsi.gov.uk)

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