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An Overview of Sexual Offending in England and Wales

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Foreword

**Jil Matheson,
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I welcome this report produced by analysts in the Ministry of Justice, Home Office and the Office for National Statistics, which provides an overview of the available statistics on sexual offending.

Past reviews of crime and criminal justice statistics have identified the need for official statistics to provide a fuller picture of offences and offenders through the criminal justice system. Publication of separate statistical releases on different elements of the crime and criminal justice system can make it difficult for users to find linkages between the statistics, and to understand the relationship between crimes recorded by the police and offenders dealt with by the courts.

One of the recommendations of the UK Statistics Authority's report on Overcoming Barriers to Trust in Crime Statistics was to call for a more joined-up approach to provide the public with a better understanding of the treatment of offences and offenders through the criminal justice system.

Providing such an overview can be technically demanding, with data coming from a number of sources and requiring careful interpretation. I am pleased that the analysts have been able to overcome these challenges to provide this overview of this very important topic.

I hope it will be first of a number of ad hoc reports that will examine different aspects of crime and offending, thus presenting users with a more joined-up and insightful narrative on issues of public policy concern.



January 2013

Introduction

This report brings together, for the first time, a range of official statistics from across the crime and criminal justice system, providing an overview of sexual offending in England and Wales. Most of the information presented in this report has been previously published in other official statistics bulletins.

The report is structured to highlight: the victim experience; the police role in recording and detecting the crimes; how the various criminal justice agencies deal with an offender once identified; and the criminal histories of sex offenders.

Providing such an overview presents a number of challenges, not least that the available information comes from different sources that do not necessarily cover the same period, the same people (victims or offenders) or the same offences. For example, the results from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) are based on self completed questions from a representative sample of adults (aged 16 to 59), asking about an individual's experiences of sexual offences in the last 12 months. The police recorded and court information cover all sexual offences, as legislated for in law, committed against any individual irrespective of age or when the crime took place, but exclude the large volume of crimes not reported to the police..

Other issues that prevent direct comparisons include:

- the CSEW focusing on the most recent experience of adults as a victim of sexual offence in the previous 12 months (thus, for example, does not include sexual offences experienced by children or those aged 60 or over);
- police recorded crime figures being based on offences per victim (i.e. for each victim in a given incident, a crime is recorded) in the year the crime was reported, irrespective of when the offence took place;
- the criminal justice outcome information (e.g. cautions and convictions) being on an offender basis at the date of the final outcome, again irrespective of when the crime took place.

The latter two points mean that figures between the police and court sources will differ, as there will be crimes involving more than one victim or more than one offender, or possibly multiple victims and offenders relating to a single crime. It is not currently feasible to track individual cases from initial recording by the police through the CJS.

When interpreting the flows of offences and offenders through the CJS, it is important to note the various stages of attrition and the inherent challenges associated with detection and prosecution of crime, in particular with sexual offences. Second, the issue of 'downgrading' of offences (when a decision is made by the Crown Prosecution Service, between the initial hearing at the magistrates' court and the first hearing at the Crown Court, that the initial charge is incorrect and should be changed to another offence) as they move through the system presents analytical challenges and requires careful consideration when interpreting the statistics.

For example, one method of calculating rape conviction rates often used by commentators shows the number of people convicted of rape as a proportion of all rape crimes recorded. Given the different currencies of the two number and the effect

of downgrading of offences through the CJS mentioned above, this method is incorrect and misleading in terms of presenting evidence on convictions for rape.

For the purposes of this report, the results from the last three years' CSEW have been combined to provide a large enough sample to enable more reliable findings to be presented. Elsewhere, the report mainly covers the period 2005 to 2011 (for police recorded crime 2005/06 to 2011/12), as 2005 was the first full year following the introduction of the Sexual Offences Act 2003. Where readily available, longer time series have been provided.

Detailed statistical tables are provided in the spreadsheets alongside this bulletin. Tables referenced in the text are included within the bulletin, whereas others referenced are found only within the spreadsheets.

It is acknowledged that any sexual offence will be a traumatic experience for the victim. For ease of reference however, throughout the report, sexual offences have been referred to as falling into two groups:

- “Most serious sexual offences”, covering all rape, attempted rape and sexual assault offences; and
- “Other sexual offences”, which includes sexual activity with minors (excluding rape and sexual assaults), exposure, voyeurism etc.

A full description of the offence types included, with reference to the relevant legislation, is included in the glossary in the spreadsheet tables accompanying Chapters 3 and 4. A number of summary sexual offences, such as kerb crawling and letting premises for use as a brothel, have been considered outside the scope of the publication.

Within each chapter, introductory information is provided (in *italics*) to give a overview of the chapter content, the basis of the statistics included, and the relevant data sources. Further background information can be found in the ‘Background to the criminal justice system’ and ‘Data sources and quality’ sections of this bulletin.

Chapter 1: Executive Summary

Victimisation through to police recording of crimes

Based on aggregated data from the 'Crime Survey for England and Wales' in 2009/10, 2010/11 and 2011/12, on average, 2.5 per cent of females and 0.4 per cent of males said that they had been a victim of a sexual offence (including attempts) in the previous 12 months. This represents around 473,000 adults being victims of sexual offences (around 404,000 females and 72,000 males) on average per year. These experiences span the full spectrum of sexual offences, ranging from the most serious offences of rape and sexual assault, to other sexual offences like indecent exposure and unwanted touching. The vast majority of incidents reported by respondents to the survey fell into the other sexual offences category.

It is estimated that 0.5 per cent of females report being a victim of the most serious offences of rape or sexual assault by penetration in the previous 12 months, equivalent to around 85,000 victims on average per year. Among males, less than 0.1 per cent (around 12,000) report being a victim of the same types of offences in the previous 12 months.

Around one in twenty females (aged 16 to 59) reported being a victim of a most serious sexual offence since the age of 16. Extending this to include other sexual offences such as sexual threats, unwanted touching or indecent exposure, this increased to one in five females reporting being a victim since the age of 16.

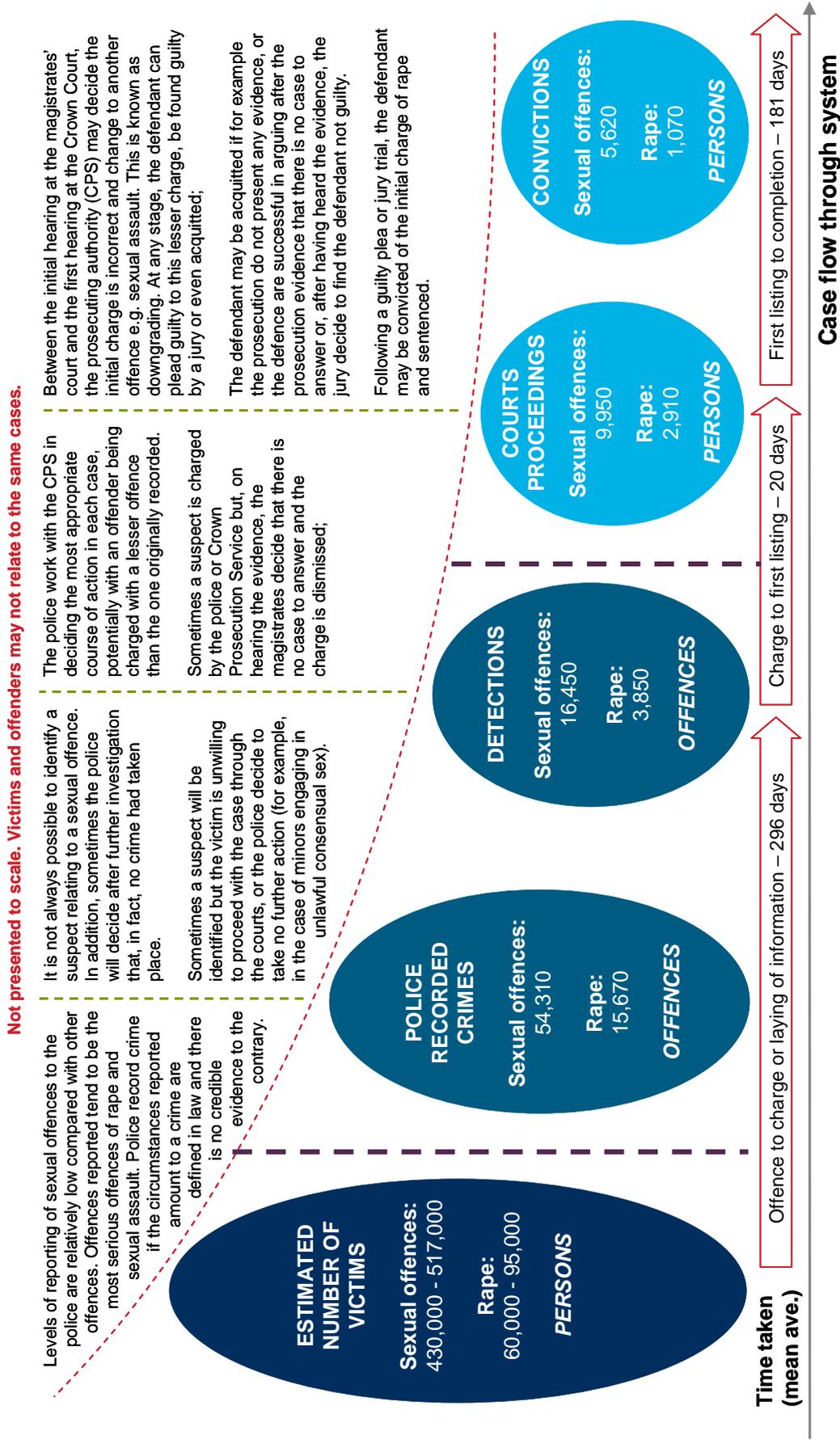
Around 90 per cent of victims of the most serious sexual offences in the previous year knew the perpetrator, compared with less than half for other sexual offences.

Females who had reported being victims of the most serious sexual offences in the last year were asked, regarding the most recent incident, whether or not they had reported the incident to the police. Only 15 per cent of victims of such offences said that they had done so. Frequently cited reasons for not reporting the crime were that it was 'embarrassing', they 'didn't think the police could do much to help', that the incident was 'too trivial or not worth reporting', or that they saw it as a 'private/family matter and not police business'

In 2011/12, the police recorded a total of 53,700 sexual offences across England and Wales. The most serious sexual offences of 'rape' (16,000 offences) and 'sexual assault' (22,100 offences) accounted for 71 per cent of sexual offences recorded by the police. This differs markedly from victims responding to the CSEW in 2011/12, the majority of whom were reporting being victims of other sexual offences outside the most serious category.

This reflects the fact that victims are more likely to report the most serious sexual offences to the police and, as such, the police and broader criminal justice system (CJS) tend to deal largely with the most serious end of the spectrum of sexual offending. The majority of the other sexual crimes recorded by the police related to 'exposure or voyeurism' (7,000) and 'sexual activity with minors' (5,800).

Figure 1.1 – Flow of sexual offence cases from victimisation to conviction (figures displayed are 3 year averages)



Trends in recorded crime statistics can be influenced by whether victims feel able to and decide to report such offences to the police, and by changes in police recording practices. For example, while there was a 17 per cent decrease in recorded sexual offences between 2005/06 and 2008/09, there was a seven per cent increase between 2008/09 and 2010/11. The latter increase may in part be due to greater encouragement by the police to victims to come forward and improvements in police recording, rather than an increase in the level of victimisation.

After the initial recording of a crime, the police may later decide that no crime took place as more details about the case emerge. In 2011/12, there were 4,155 offences initially recorded as sexual offences that the police later decided were not crimes. There are strict guidelines that set out circumstances under which a crime report may be 'no-crime'. The 'no-crime' rate for sexual offences (7.2 per cent) compares with a 'no-crime' rate for overall police recorded crime of 3.4 per cent. The 'no-crime' rate for rape was 10.8 per cent.

Sexual offences detected by the police

If the police 'clear up' the crime, then this is called a detection. There are a number of ways that the police can detect a crime, including by charging a suspect, issuing a summons, or administering a caution. Sanction detections are where offences cleared up by the police result in a formal sanction issued to an offender. These can take the form of a charge or summons, a caution, a Penalty Notice for Disorder (PNDs), or offences that are asked to be taken into consideration by a court (TICs).

The sanction detection rate for all recorded crime was 27 per cent in 2011/12. Around 16,100 sexual offences were detected by sanction detection, equivalent to a sanction detection rate of 30 per cent. In the vast majority of cases (86 per cent of the total), the method of detection for sexual offences was by charge or summons (13,800 offences).

While the sanction detection rate for sexual offences was higher than for a number of other offences, such as robbery (21 per cent) and burglary (13 per cent), it was lower than other contact crimes such as violence against the person (44 per cent). This may in part reflect the greater challenges associated with investigating sexual offences and the reluctance of some victims to proceed with prosecutions.

The police work with the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) in deciding the most appropriate course of action in each case. The CPS may decide that the police should charge an offender with a lesser offence than the one originally recorded. This does not mean that the police have incorrectly recorded the crime but rather that the CPS have applied their own charging standard which takes into account additional factors, such as whether there is a realistic chance of obtaining a conviction on the basis of the admissible evidence. Once a suspect has been identified, arrested and charged, they can either be cautioned¹ by the police or prosecuted at court.

In 2011, there were 1,500 offenders cautioned having admitted committing a sexual offence. The most common offence for which a caution is given is sexual assault on a female², which covers offences involving touching in a sexual manner without consent. 19 offenders were cautioned for rape, almost half that of the previous year when 35 were administered. Of the 19 administered in 2011, the majority, 16, were for offenders under the age of 18.

¹ Includes reprimands and warnings in the case of juvenile offenders.

² Offences under [Section 3 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003](#)

Court proceedings and convictions for sexual offences

Virtually all criminal cases start in magistrates' courts – in 2011, 9,900 defendants were proceeded against at the magistrates' court accused of sexual offences.

Of those individuals prosecuted, three quarters were committed for trial at the Crown Court, reflecting the serious nature of the offences each was accused of. This proportion has ranged from 69 to 77 per cent over the last six years. Rape accounts for around three in ten defendants prosecuted for sexual offences each year. In 2011 the 2,900 defendants prosecuted for rape were prosecuted, on average, for 2.3 rape offences each.

Of those cases that completed to the point of guilty or acquittal at the magistrates' court or Crown Court in 2011, just under two thirds were convicted. This is eight percentage points higher than 2005. Over the same period the most common sentence was immediate custody with around three in five offenders sent to prison.

Reflecting the seriousness of the offence, nearly every convicted rapist received a custodial sentence. In 2011, only 40 such offenders out of 1,200 received a non-custodial sentence for rape. The average custodial sentence length (ACSL) for those offenders convicted of rape in 2011 was in excess of eight and a half years, an increase of nearly 21 months since 2005. The ACSL across all sexual offences was just under four and a half years, an increase of almost a year since 2005.

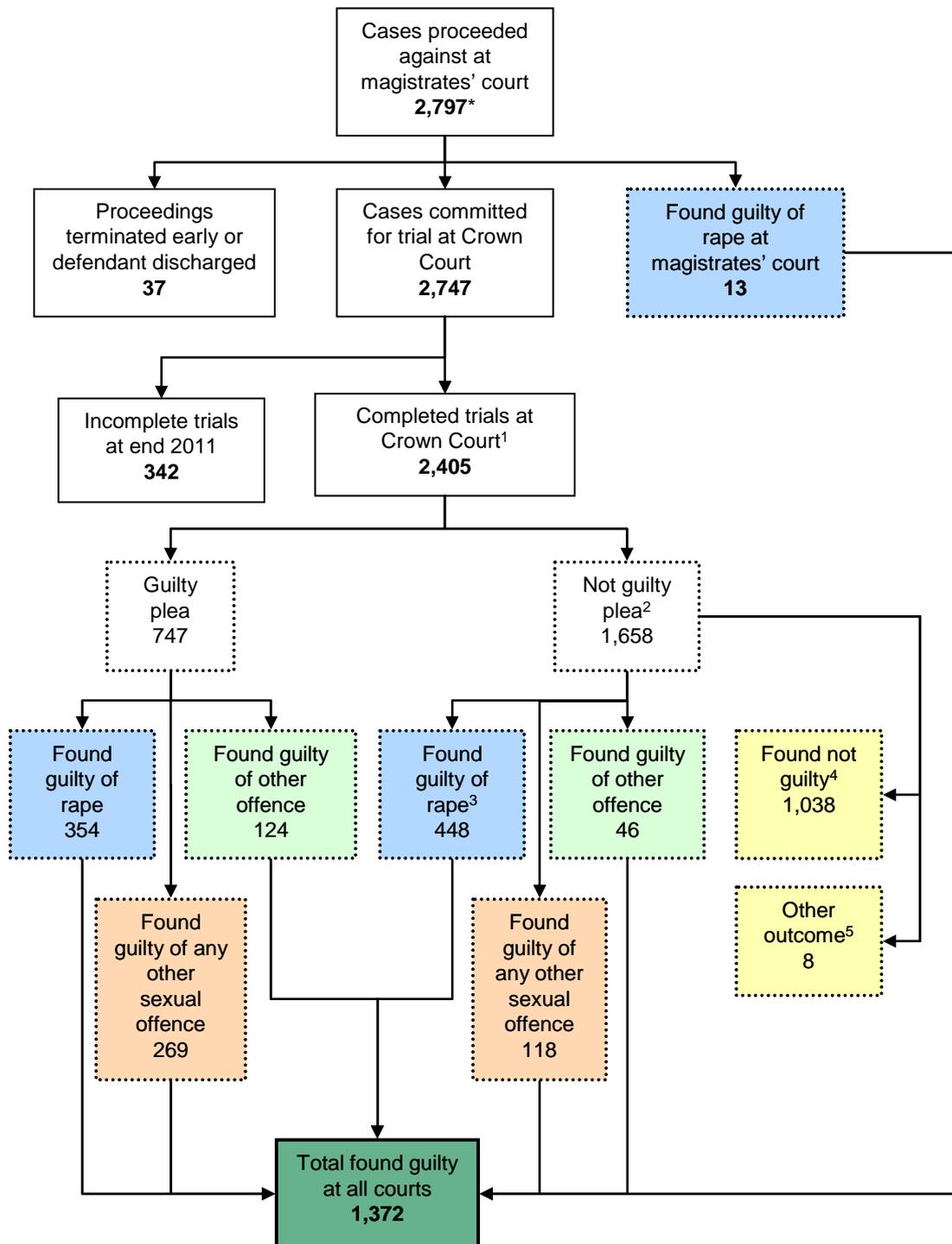
Aside from fraud and forgery cases, sexual offences take on average longer to complete in court than any other offence type, from the time the offence was committed to the final outcome at court. This reflects the complexities in these types of cases. In 2011, both offence types took on average more than one year and four months to reach their conclusion. However, at least half of the sexual offence cases took less than ten months from offence to completion at court. For rape cases, it can take even longer, with at least half taking more than one year to complete, and on average cases taking around one year and ten months.

Specifically for those defendants initially proceeded against for rape (2,800) in 2009, nearly all (2,700) were committed to the Crown Court for trial. Over the following three years, 49 per cent of those proceeded against were convicted and sentenced at the Crown Court, and just over 12 per cent of cases had yet to reach a final conclusion. Of those offenders convicted at all courts, six in ten were convicted of rape and three in ten were convicted of another sexual offence – see Figure 1.2 below.

Offenders in prison for sexual offences tend to spend more time in prison than for other offence groups. In 2011, sex offenders spent on average 32 months in prison, including time spent on remand, compared with an average of 10 months for all other offences.

A large majority of offenders sentenced for sexual offences each year had not previously been cautioned or convicted of a sexual offence – over 80 per cent in each of the last seven years. Around four per cent of those convicted had five or more previous cautions or convictions for a sexual offence and, in 2011, just under 80 per cent of those people received a custodial sentence. Of those convicted of rape in 2011 who had five or more previous cautions or convictions for a sexual offence, nearly all (97 per cent) received a custodial sentence.

Figure 1.2 – Outcomes of prosecutions for defendants proceeded against for rape offence in 2009, by end of 2011



¹ Those cases where an outcome could be identified at Crown Court in 2009, 2010, 2011.

² Includes where no plea is entered.

³ Includes those found guilty by a jury and those who pleaded guilty during the trial process.

⁴ Includes all cases where the CPS offered no evidence after a not guilty plea so the case was completed before a full trial took place.

⁵ Defendants who died before sentence was passed.

Chapter 2: Crime Survey for England and Wales: Sexual offence victimisation

This chapter presents key findings from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW). The figures relate to self-completion questions asked of males and females aged 16 to 59, resident in households in England and Wales, about their experiences as victims of sexual offences³ in the last year. Findings from the CSEW provide estimates of the extent of sexual offence victimisation, including offences that do not come to the attention of the police.

Due to the relatively low number of respondents that have been a victim of a sexual offence, the three most recent available survey years have been combined and averaged to improve the accuracy of figures. In most cases this is 2009/10, 2010/11 and 2011/12. However, certain questions are only included in the CSEW every other year and in these cases data have been combined from the 2007/08, 2009/10 and 2011/12 surveys. In some tables there are insufficient data to draw reliable conclusions about male victims, where this is the case only offences committed against females are presented.

CSEW uses two measures of sexual offences. One relates to experiences since the age of 16 and the other is limited to those experiences in the last 12 months. To allow for better comparison with the rest of this report, the 12 month measure is used for the majority of the chapter. To help put these figures into context, a short section at the end of the chapter discusses respondent's experiences as victims of sexual offences since the age of 16.

More background information on the CSEW can be found in the 'Data sources and quality' section of this bulletin.

Prevalence of sexual offences

Based on data from the 2009/10, 2010/11, and 2011/12 CSEW, females were much more likely than males to have reported being a victim of a sexual offence; this was the case across all sexual offence categories. Overall 2.5 per cent of females and 0.4 per cent of males had reported experiencing some form of sexual offence in the last 12 months (Table 2.1). For both sexes, the vast majority of incidents are accounted for by "other sexual offences", which include offences relating to indecent exposure, sexual threats and unwanted touching.

Focusing on the most serious sexual offences (including attempts), 0.5 per cent of female respondents had reported being a victim in the last year. Of these, the majority had been a victim of rape and two fifths a victim of assault by penetration. Males were much less likely than females to report being a victim of a most serious sexual offence (0.1 per cent). To put these figures into context, over the same period, 2.2 per cent of adults had been a victim of a violent crime resulting in injury in the last 12 months.

Based on these prevalence rates, it is estimated that there were between 430,000 and 517,000 adult victims of sexual offences in the last year over these three survey

³ For the benefit of continuity throughout the report, the term 'sexual offences' is used. Other published reports on findings from the CSEW refer to these incidents as 'sexual assaults'. Other CSEW reports refer to 'most serious sexual offences' and 'other sexual offences' as 'serious sexual offences' and 'less serious sexual offences'.

periods (Table 2.2). Of these, it is estimated that there were between 366,000 and 442,000 female victims and between 54,000 and 90,000 male victims. With regard to the most serious sexual offences, the survey estimated the number of females who were victims ranged between 68,000 and 103,000 and male victims between 5,000 and 19,000 per year.⁴

Table 2.1 – Prevalence of being a victim of a sexual offence in the last 12 months among adults aged 16 to 59, average of 2009/10, 2010/11 and 2011/12 CSEW

Persons aged 16 to 59		Percentage who were victims once or more		
England and Wales				
Offence		Males	Females	All
Any sexual offence (including attempts) ⁽¹⁾		0.4	2.5	1.5
Most serious sexual offences (including attempts)		0.1	0.5	0.3
Rape (including attempts)		0.1	0.4	0.2
Assault by penetration (including attempts)		0.0	0.2	0.1
Most serious sexual offences (excluding attempts)		0.1	0.4	0.2
Rape (excluding attempts)		0.0	0.3	0.2
Assault by penetration (excluding attempts)		0.0	0.1	0.1
Other sexual offences		0.4	2.3	1.3
<i>Unweighted base⁽²⁾</i>		<i>20,692</i>	<i>24,203</i>	<i>44,895</i>

(1) Subcategory figures will not add up to the figures above them because respondents may have been victims of separate incidents of different types of sexual offence.

(2) The bases given are for any sexual offence, the bases for the other measures presented will be similar.

⁴ More information about the ONS method for calculating these ranges can be found in [ONS's User Guide to Crime Statistics for England and Wales](#).

Table 2.2 – Estimated numbers of victims of sexual offences in the last 12 months among adults aged 16 to 59, average of 2009/10, 2010/11 and 2011/12 CSEW

Persons aged 16 to 59 England and Wales		Number of victims per year (thousands) ⁽¹⁾					
Offence	Males		Females		All		
	Estimate	Range ⁽²⁾	Estimate	Range ⁽²⁾	Estimate	Range ⁽²⁾	
Any sexual offence (including attempts) ⁽¹⁾	72	54 - 90	404	366 - 442	473	430 - 517	
Most serious sexual offences (including attempts)	12	5 - 19	85	68 - 103	97	77 - 116	
Rape (including attempts)	9	3 - 15	69	54 - 85	78	60 - 95	
Assault by penetration (including attempts)	4	0 - 8	31	20 - 41	34	23 - 46	
Most serious sexual offences (excluding attempt:	9	3 - 15	62	47 - 77	70	54 - 87	
Rape (excluding attempts)	6	1 - 11	52	39 - 66	58	43 - 73	
Assault by penetration (excluding attempts)	4	0 - 8	21	12 - 30	25	15 - 34	
Other sexual offences	68	51 - 85	369	333 - 406	436	395 - 477	
<i>Unweighted base⁽³⁾</i>	20,692		24,203		44,895		

(1) Subcategory figures will not add up to the figures above them because respondents may have been victims of separate incidents of different types of sexual offence.

(2) The ranges presented in this table have been calculated using a 95 per cent confidence interval.

(3) The bases given are for any sexual offence the bases for the other measures presented will be similar.

Trends in victimisation

Since the inclusion of this type of question in the 2004/05 CSEW, the prevalence of sexual offences committed against females has ranged between 2.3 and 3.3 per cent (Table 2.3) with few statistically significant year-on-year changes. Prevalence rates for male victims over the same period ranged from 0.3 and 0.6 per cent per year with no statistically significant changes during this period.

Table 2.3 – Prevalence of any sexual offence (including attempts) among males and females aged 16 to 59, 2004/05 to 2011/12¹ CSEW

Persons aged 16 to 59 England and Wales		Percentage who were victims once or more							
Sex	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	
Males	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.3	
Females	2.8	3.3	3.1	3.0	2.5	2.3	2.5	3.0	
Total	1.7	1.9	1.8	1.7	1.4	1.3	1.5	1.6	
<i>Unweighted base⁽¹⁾</i>	22,939	24,582	24,000	23,220	23,830	21,844	11,041	11,015	

(1) The sample size is lower from 2010/11 onwards compared to previous years due to use of a split-sample experimental test. For further information, see Hall, 2011.

Characteristics of female victims

As earlier sections of this chapter have shown, gender is a key factor related to the risk of sexual offence victimisation, with the majority of victims being female. In addition to this, risk of victimisation for females varied by other personal and

household characteristics⁵. Analysis of the three most recent survey years indicates that:

- Females aged between 16 and 19 were at the highest risk of being a victim of a sexual offence (8.2 per cent) and as age increased the risk of victimisation reduced.
- Single females⁶ and those who were separated⁷ were more at risk than other females (5.3 per cent and 3.7 per cent respectively).
- Females from households in the lowest income bracket (under £10,000 per year) showed an increased risk of victimisation (3.8 per cent) as did full time students (6.8 per cent), and the unemployed (3.8 per cent).
- An increased risk of victimisation was apparent for females with limiting disabilities or illnesses (3.4 per cent) and those who were economically inactive at the time of interview due to long term illness (4.9 per cent).
- Factors relating to household location, and housing tenure were also related to risk of victimisation. For example, prevalence rates were higher among females in the 'City Living' Output Area Classification category⁸ (5.5 per cent), people living in flats or maisonettes (3.9 per cent), those living in an urban area (2.6 per cent) and in rented accommodation (3.4 per cent for social rented accommodation and 4.6 for private rented).
- Sexual victimisation rates were higher for females who reported visiting a pub at least once a week (4.3 per cent) or a night club one to three times a month (5.6 per cent). Those who visited a night club at least four times a month had the highest victimisation rate of any characteristic covered by the CSEW (9.2 per cent).

Many of these characteristics will be closely associated, so care should be taken not to view the categories in isolation. Particular attention should be paid to the relationship between age and characteristics such as marital status, full-time student status and use of nightclubs and pubs; as should the relationship between household income and economic status, output area classification, tenure, occupation and residential characteristics.

Previous reports in this area have used logistic regression to help identify factors which are independently associated with increased risk of victimisation. Previous analysis by the Home Office⁹ found that the characteristics which contributed most to explaining the risk of sexual offence were the respondent's sex, use of any drugs in the last year and age. However, other variables such as marital status, having a long-term illness or disability and frequency of visits to a nightclub were also important.

⁵ Demographic characteristics deemed to be of greater risk of victimisation are ones with a statistically higher prevalence rate than the remainder of the female population (determined using a T-Test for statistical significance).

⁶ 'Single females' includes those in a relationship who are not cohabiting.

⁷ 'Separated females' are those who are married, but not living with their spouse.

⁸ The Output Area Classification method uses 2001 Census data to place an address one of seven categories based on the socio-economic attributes of the residents of each area. More information can be found at <http://areaclassification.org.uk/>.

⁹ www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/science-research-statistics/research-statistics/crime-research/hosb0212/hosb0212?view=Binary

The report also noted that although people who had used any drug in the last year were found to have higher odds of being a victim of sexual offence compared with those who hadn't, they could not conclude that there was a causal relationship between the two. Nor could they exclude the possibility that other lifestyle factors related to both drug use and victimisation, which were not included in the model, may be related.

A full breakdown of the risk of sexual offence victimisation by personal, household and area characteristics is shown in Table 2.7 in the accompanying set of reference tables.

Nature of sexual offences against females

The CSEW self-completion module asks victims for further details about the nature of incidents they experienced, including the characteristics of the offender(s) and whether the victim reported the incidents to the police or others. These questions are included in the CSEW biennially and, as such, analysis presented in this section uses data from the 2007/08, 2009/10 and 2011/12 surveys.

Despite combining data from multiple survey years, the available data yields a relatively low number of victims for analysis. As such, the figures presented here should be interpreted with caution.

Offender characteristics for offences against females

Female respondents who had been a victim of a most serious sexual offence reported that offenders were most likely to be young males, with 47 per cent of offenders being males aged between 20 and 39 (Table 2.4).

Table 2.4 – Reported sex and age of offender⁽¹⁾ characteristics for female victims of a most serious sexual offence, 2009/10 and 2011/12 combined⁽²⁾

Females aged 16 to 59		
Age group	Percentage	
	Sex	
	Male	Female
Under 16	1	-
16-19	29	-
20-39	47	-
40-59	20	-
60 or over	2	-
Total	100.0	-
<i>Base</i>	62	

'-' = Nil

Note: Some figures may not sum due to rounding.

1. These figures are taken from incidents where there was only one person involved with the sexual offence. Figures for incidents involving more than once offender may differ.

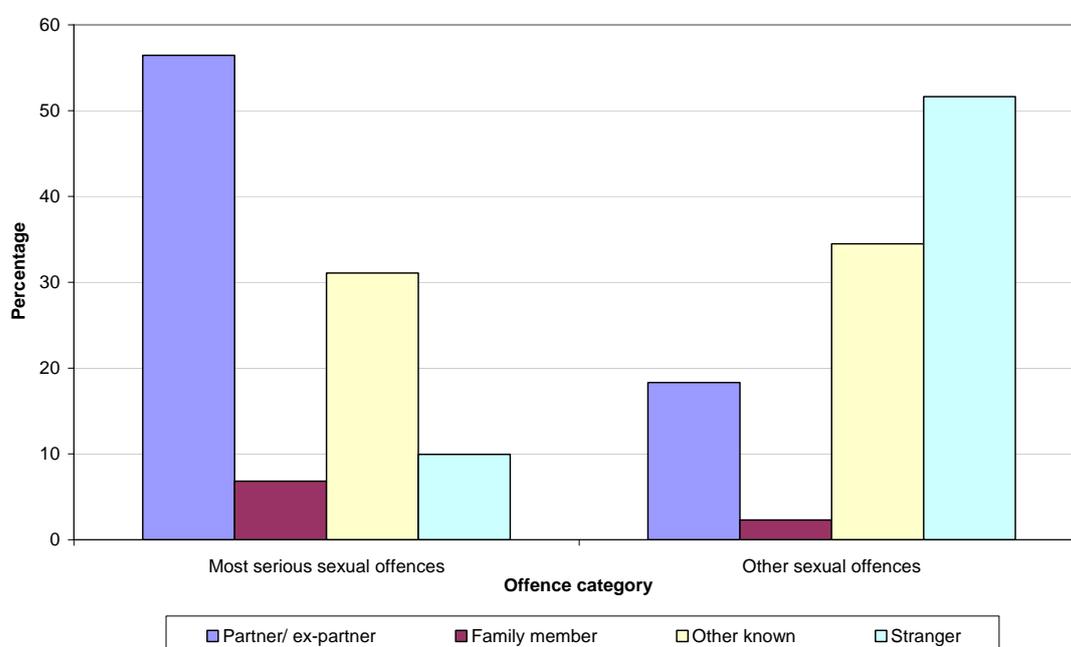
2. It was not possible to combine three years of data for this table, because the question was not asked until 09/10.

Victim-offender relationship among female victims

When asked about their most recent incident, the victim-offender relationship was found to vary considerably between different types of sexual offence (Figure 2.2).

- The most commonly reported victim-offender relationship among victims of the most serious offence types was a partner¹⁰ (56 per cent).
- Among females who had been victims of other sexual offences, the offender was most likely to be a stranger (52 per cent).
- In around a third of both the most serious and other sexual offences, the offender was found to be somebody known to the victim, other than a partner or family member¹¹.

Figure 2.1 – Victim-offender relationship for serious sexual offences and less serious sexual offences experienced by females in the last year, 2009/10, 2010/11 and 2011/12 CSEW combined



Reporting of the most serious sexual offences among female victims

Further questions, related to the most recent incident, were asked of victims of offences in the most serious sexual offence category. Around a quarter (28 per cent, Table 2.5) of females had not told anyone about the incident. One in seven had told the police about the incident (15 per cent), and all of these respondents had had also told somebody else. Fifty-seven per cent of females told someone about the incident, but did not tell the police. For those who did tell someone about their experience, the

¹⁰ Includes current partner and former partner.

¹¹ The 'other known' category includes: a date, friend, neighbour, an acquaintance (outside work or school/college/university), colleague/peer from work or school/college/university, or a person in a position of trust or authority.

main group that victims confided in were friends, relatives or neighbours (65 per cent).

Respondents who had not reported the incident to the police were asked why they did not report it. Due to the low numbers of victims, it is difficult to draw firm conclusions from these findings. However, data from responses to these questions do provide a broad indication of the most commonly cited reasons for not reporting a sexual offence to the police. Based on the responses of females victims in the 2011/12 survey, the most frequently cited were that it would be 'embarrassing', they 'didn't think the police could do much to help', that the incident was 'too trivial/ not worth reporting', or that they saw it as a 'private/family matter and not police business'.

Table 2.5 – Who female victims of most serious sexual offences told about the most recent incident (where the incident had occurred in the last year)⁽¹⁾, combined 2007/08, 2009/10 and 2011/12 CSEW

Females aged 16 to 59	
England and Wales	Percentage
Told someone	72
Told someone, but did not tell police ⁽²⁾	57
Told police	15
Told police, but did not tell someone else	-
Told no one	28
<i>Base</i>	<i>136</i>

'-' = Nil

(1) Unlike other statistics in this chapter (such as offender characteristics or victimisation) reporting behaviour is subject to external influences, such as the media, government/police initiatives and public opinion. This is particularly pertinent for reporting to the police. As such, caution should be exercised when interpreting these figures.

(2) The figure presented is a proportion of all respondents, not just of those who told someone.

Victimisation since the age of 16

Other information collected by the CSEW questionnaire can provide a fuller understanding of the broader picture of sexual offence victimisation. While the findings reported in this chapter focus on CSEW respondents' experience of sexual offences in the last year, the self-completion module of the questionnaire also asks respondents about their experiences of sexual offences since the age of 16. According to the 2011/12 CSEW:

- 19.6 per cent of females had been a victim of a sexual offence since the age of 16, compared with 2.7 per cent of males (Table 2.6)
- less serious sexual offences accounted for the majority of victimisation experience for both males and females
- 5.3 per cent of females had been the victim of a serious sexual offence (including attempts) compared to 0.5 per cent of males

Table 2.6 – Prevalence of being a victim of a sexual offence since the age of 16 among adults aged 16 to 59, 2011/12 CSEW

Persons aged 16 to 59		Percentage who were victims once or more ⁽¹⁾		
England and Wales				
Offence		Males	Females	All
Any sexual offence (including attempts)		2.7	19.6	11.1
Most serious sexual offence (including attempts)		0.5	5.3	2.9
Rape (including attempts)		0.3	4.6	2.5
Assault by penetration (including attempts)		0.3	2.1	1.2
Most serious sexual offence (excluding attempts)		0.4	4.3	2.3
Rape (excluding attempts)		0.2	3.8	2.0
Assault by penetration (excluding attempts)		0.2	1.6	0.9
Other sexual offence		2.4	18.8	10.5
<i>Unweighted base⁽²⁾</i>		<i>5,272</i>	<i>6,055</i>	<i>11,327</i>

(1) Subcategory figures will not add up to the totals above them because respondents may have been victims of separate incidents of different types of crime.

(2) The bases given are for any sexual offence, the bases for the other measures presented will be similar.

Chapter 3: Police activity relating to sexual offences

The previous chapter looked at the extent and trends of sexual offences as measured by the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW). This chapter presents statistics from the police forces of England and Wales, including how many sexual offences the police record, the number of offences that the police detect, and how many cases are dealt with by an out of court disposal, namely cautions. The police recording of an offence is the first stage of a crime entering the crime and criminal justice system.

More background information on police recorded crime can be found in the 'Data sources and quality' section of this bulletin. Later in this chapter, the quality of police recorded crime data for sexual offences is discussed.

Trends in recorded crimes for sexual offences

The police are responsible for the recording of crime committed in England and Wales. When the police become aware of an incident that might be a crime, they register it as an incident. Subsequently, the police record a crime if, on the balance of probability, the circumstances as reported amount to a crime defined by law and if there is no credible evidence to the contrary. Further information on how the police record crime can be found in the 'Data sources and quality' section of this bulletin.

In 2011/12, the police recorded 53,665 sexual offences, accounting for around one per cent of all police recorded crime. This equates to around one offence per year for every thousand people in England and Wales.

The most commonly recorded sexual offence was sexual assault (including attempts), accounting for 41 per cent of the sexual offences recorded in 2011/12 (22,053 offences). A further 30 per cent were for rape (16,041 offences, including attempts). This compares with the estimate of 69,000 rapes (including attempts) per year on average as measured by the CSEW (see previous chapter). In line with the findings from the CSEW, levels of rape and sexual assault against females are higher than for males.

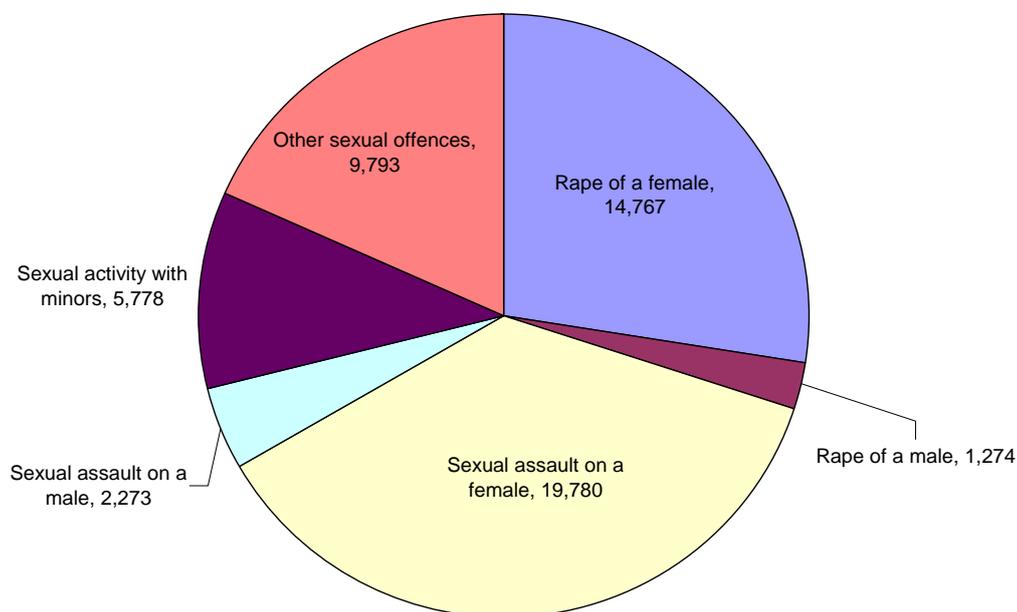
The proportion of recorded sexual crimes in the most serious sexual offence category of rape or sexual assault (71 per cent) differs markedly from profile of crimes experienced by victims responding to the CSEW, of whom 20 per cent reported being victim of the most serious sexual offences. This reflects the fact that victims are more likely to report the most serious sexual offences to the police and, as such, the police and broader criminal justice system (CJS) tend to deal largely with the most serious end of the spectrum of sexual offending.

The majority of the remaining police recorded sexual crimes were for exposure or voyeurism (7,007 offences), and sexual activity with minors¹² (5,778 offences).

¹² 'Sexual activity with minors' includes Home Office offences of sexual activity involving children under 16 and sexual activity involving children under 13, and excludes rapes and sexual assaults on minors. For more information see the Home Office Counting Rules for sexual offences: www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/science-research-statistics/research-statistics/crime-research/counting-rules/count-sexual?view=Binary

A more detailed breakdown of police recorded sexual offences by offence type for 2011/12 can be found in Table 3.2 in the spreadsheet tables which accompany this bulletin.

Figure 3.1 – Number of sexual offences recorded by the police, 2011/12



The number of police recorded sexual offences fell from 62,080 in 2005/06 to 51,429 in 2008/09, before increasing to 54,919 in 2010/11. It is likely that the increases in recorded sexual offences since 2008/09 were largely due to greater encouragement by the police to victims to come forward and improvements in police recording, rather than an increase in the level of victimisation. These changes particularly affected the number of rape offences recorded by the police, which increased from 13,096 in 2008/09 to 16,041 in 2011/12, an increase of 22 per cent. However, there is no evidence from the Crime Survey to suggest that an actual increase occurred in the number of rapes in England and Wales over this time period.

Over the period 2008/09 to 2011/12, the number of offences for sexual assault (on males and on females) has been relatively stable (with some year-on-year fluctuation). This followed a fall of 16 per cent in police recorded sexual assaults between 2005/06 and 2008/09. The number of offences of sexual activity with minors recorded by the police in the last three years is, on average, around ten per cent higher per year than in the 2005/06 to 2008/09 period. In contrast, there has been a general downward trend in the number of 'other sexual offences' recorded over the seven year period presented (a decrease of 39 per cent between 2005/06 and 2011/12).

Table 3.1 – Police recorded sexual offences by sexual offence group, 2005/06 to 2011/12

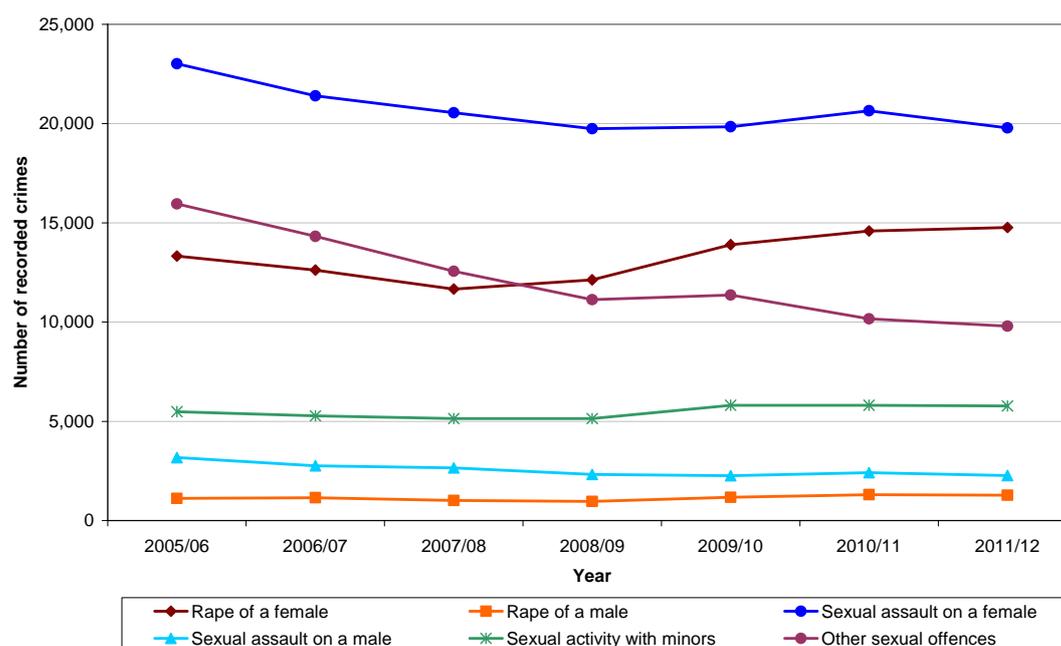
England and Wales		Number of recorded crimes ⁽¹⁾					
Offence group ⁽²⁾	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Rape of a Female	13,327	12,624	11,664	12,133	13,902	14,589	14,767
Rape of a Male	1,116	1,150	1,009	963	1,172	1,303	1,274
Sexual Assault on a Female	23,020	21,395	20,545	19,740	19,841	20,644	19,780
Sexual Assault on a Male	3,169	2,763	2,653	2,323	2,262	2,411	2,273
Sexual Activity with Minors	5,491	5,275	5,141	5,140	5,809	5,808	5,778
Other sexual offences ⁽³⁾	15,957	14,315	12,554	11,130	11,358	10,164	9,793
Total sexual offences	62,080	57,522	53,566	51,429	54,344	54,919	53,665

(1) Caution should be taken in analysing trends in the number of sexual offences recorded by the police due to changes in recording practices over the period and due to possible changes in reporting rates.

(2) The offence groups presented here have been created to match Ministry of Justice's categorisation of sexual offences, to aid comparison of data.

(3) The 'Other sexual offences' presented here is wider than (and hence incomparable with) the category of 'Other sexual offences' routinely published in recorded crime statistics.

Figure 3.2 – Number of sexual offences recorded by the police, 2005/06 to 2011/12



Quality of police recorded crime data for sexual offences

Police recorded crime statistics provide a partial picture of the extent of sexual offences in England and Wales. This is largely because a high proportion of such offences is not reported to the police and therefore not recorded. Estimates from the CSEW presented in Chapter 2 give a better estimate of the prevalence of sexual offences experienced by people resident in households in England and Wales. Changes in recorded crime figures also reflect changes in reporting rates (with criminal justice agencies encouraging victims to come forward and report offences) and changes in recording practices, rather than number of sexual offences actually taking place. For these reasons, caution should be used when interpreting trends in these offences.

Furthermore, in recent years, police forces have been taking steps to improve the reporting and recording of rape and other sexual offences. Extra guidance for the recording of sexual offences was incorporated into the Home Office Counting Rules (HOCR) from 1 April 2010 and this reflected good practice guidance issued by the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO). This is likely to have been a factor driving year-on-year increases in the number of sexual offences recorded in 2009/10 and 2010/11.

However, the strength of the police recorded crime statistics are that they provide a measure of the number of offences that come to the attention and are recorded by the police and therefore the number of cases that could potentially flow through the criminal justice system. Further information on the quality of police recorded crime can be found in the 'Data sources and quality' section of this bulletin.

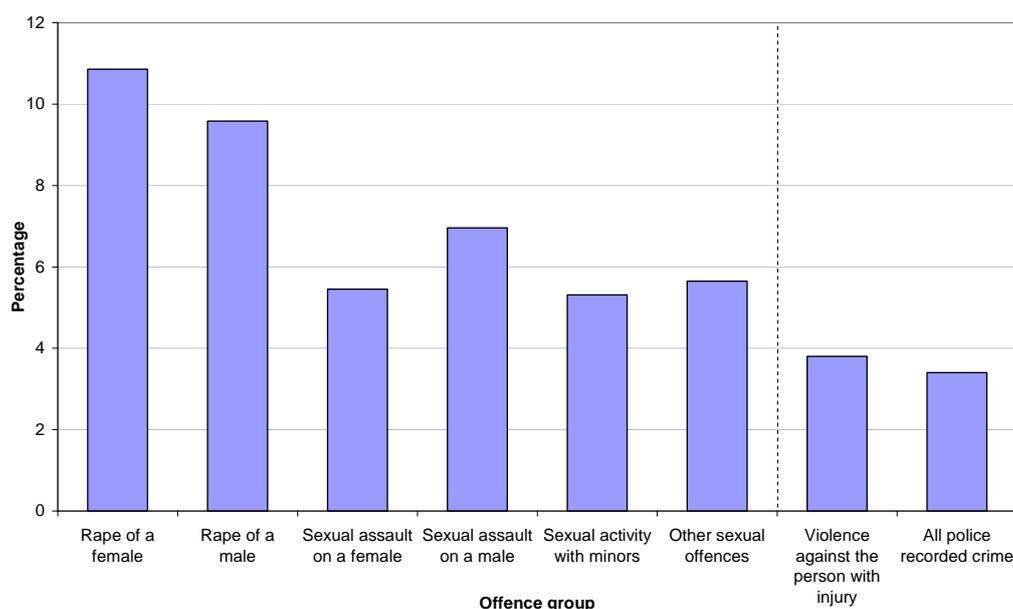
'No crimes'

Sometimes, after the initial recording of an offence, the police will decide that in fact no crime took place. There may be a number of reasons for this including cases where the original offence had been recorded in error, where additional information following investigation emerges (including cases where the victim later retracts the allegation) or where the offence actually took place under the jurisdiction of another force¹³. When this happens, the original offence is 'no-crimed' and therefore removed from that force's police recorded crime statistics. 'No crimes' are the first stage where a criminal offence can drop out of the criminal justice system once a crime has been initially recorded by the police. Further information on 'no-crimes' can be found in the 'Data sources and quality' section of this bulletin.

In 2011/12, 4,155 sexual offences that were initially recorded by the police were later 'no-crimed'. This equates to 7.2 per cent of initially recorded crimes. The percentage of sexual offences 'no-crimed' is higher than for overall crime recorded by the police, which stood at 3.4 per cent in 2011/12. 'No crime' levels for rape are higher than for other sexual offences, at 10.8 per cent. 'No crime' rates for violence against the person with injury are slightly higher than police recorded crime overall, at 3.8 per cent.

¹³ When a recorded offence is found to have occurred under the jurisdiction of another force, the offence will be 'no-crimed' by the force that originally recorded and then recorded as an offence by the force where the crime took place.

Figure 3.3 – Percentage of initially recorded offences that were subsequently ‘no-crimed’, by offence group, 2011/12



‘No crimes’ and retractions of rape allegations

Between 2008/09 and 2010/11, the Home Office collected data on a voluntary basis from police forces on the number of individuals who, having made or confirmed a complaint regarding a rape, subsequently retracted their allegations (on the basis that the crime did not take place or that the report was fabricated). For 2008/09 and 2009/10, 21 police forces sent data to the Home Office. While these data are not complete, it does give an indication of the proportion of offences that were ‘no-crimed’ because an individual reporting the crime later retracted the allegation.

Combined data from 2008/09 and 2009/10 for the forces that supplied data showed that around 45 per cent of ‘no crimes’ were due to the individual reporting the crime later retracting the allegation. Females were more likely to retract an allegation (45 per cent) than males (39 per cent). Retractions of allegations were more likely to be made by adults (49 per cent) than children (under 13s – 24 per cent; under 16s – 36 per cent).

Quality of ‘no crime’ decisions

In a joint investigative report published in February 2012, Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) and Her Majesty’s Inspectorate for the Crown Prosecution Service (HMCPSP) examined ‘no crime’ reports in their report *Forging the Links: Rape investigation and prosecution*¹⁴. They compared ‘no crime’ rates for rape with offences of grievous bodily harm with intent, on the basis that a similar number of offences were recorded for each crime and because both can attract a sentence of life imprisonment.

Although recognising that these are very different crimes, they found, for 2010/11, the ‘no crime’ rates for rape (11.8 per cent) were around four times higher than for GBH with intent offences (3.0 per cent). The corresponding figures for 2011/12 are

¹⁴ www.hmic.gov.uk/publication/forging-the-links-rape-investigation-and-prosecution/

similar; 10.8 per cent of rape offences were 'no crimed' compared with 2.5 per cent for GBH with intent. There are legitimate reasons why a rape offence could be 'no-crimed', including when the report of the rape came via a third party or a Sexual Assault Referral Centre but the victim does not want a police investigation to take place or in cases of a rape retraction. However, the report did note that they considered the relatively high level of 'no-criming' to be a 'considerable' problem.

Cases where the victim declines to support the investigation or prosecution

As part of the same data collection exercise to identify the number of individuals who subsequently retracted their allegations of a rape offence, the Home Office also collected data on the number of offences where the victim declined to complete the initial process or chose to withdraw support for the investigation or prosecution. If this happens but the victim maintains that the crime took place, then unless there is additional verifiable information available which determines that no notifiable crime took place, the rape offence remains recorded as such. However, in these cases it is likely that the police will be unable to take any further action or be able to detect the crime.

Data from the voluntary collection show that, for 21 police forces in 2008/09 and 2009/10, in around eight per cent of cases where a rape has been recorded, the victim decided not to complete the initial process or later decided to withdraw their support for the investigation or prosecution. Females were more likely to withdraw from the process (nine per cent) than males (six per cent). Victims were more likely to withdraw from the process if they were an adult (10 per cent) than victims who were children (under 13s – 4 per cent; under 16s – 7 per cent).

Detections

The Home Office collates information on whether the crimes that the police record are detected, and if so, how they are detected. Detected crime is a term that describes notifiable offences that have been detected by the police.

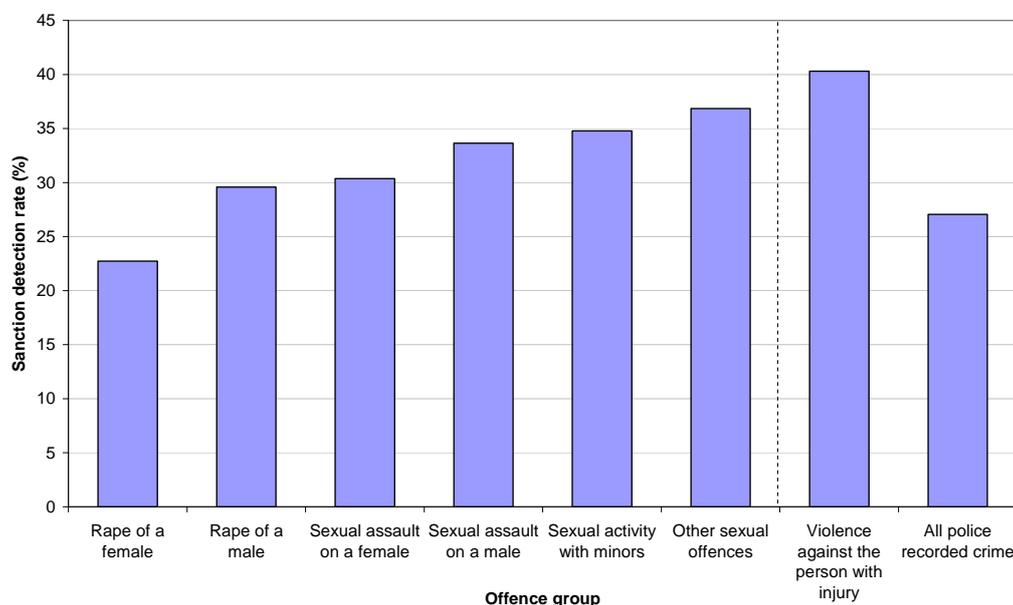
Detections can be divided into two categories: sanction and non-sanction detections. Sanction detections are where a formal sanction is issued to an offender and can be in the form of a charge or summons, a caution, Penalty Notices for Disorder (PNDs) and offences that are asked to be taken into consideration by a court (TICs). In the vast majority of cases where a sexual offence has been detected, the method of detection is by charge or summons.

Non-sanction detections are where the offence was cleared up but either no further action was taken against an offender, for example, where the alleged offender has died, where the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) by virtue of their powers under the Criminal Justice Act 2003 decided not to prosecute or in certain cases the offence was cleared up by the use of a form of locally based community resolution.¹⁵

Sanction detections

In 2011/12, 16,124 sexual offences were detected by means of a sanction compared with 53,665 recorded sexual offences in the same period¹⁶. This gives a sanction detection rate of 30.0 per cent for sexual offences. This is higher than the rate for police recorded crime overall, which was 27.1 per cent in the same period. Violence against the person with injury offences have a higher sanction detection rate (40.3 per cent) than both sexual offences and police recorded crime overall.

Figure 3.4 – Sanction detection rates for selected offences, 2011/12



¹⁵ From April 2011, the Home Office has collected data (supplied on a voluntary basis by 22 police forces) on crimes 'cleared up' by the application of locally based community resolutions or by the application of Restorative Justice (RJ) techniques. For more information see Detections in England and Wales 2011/12: www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/science-research-statistics/research-statistics/crime-research/hosb0812/

¹⁶ Sanction detections relate to those crimes cleared up in 2011/12, these are not necessarily the same offences recorded in 2011/12 although in many cases these will be the same offences.

Of the 16,124 sanction detections for sexual offences, 13,817 were a charge or summons, accounting for 86 per cent of the total (Table 3.3). Most of the other sanction detections for sexual offences were by the issuing of a caution¹⁷ (2,210 issued, 14 per cent). Further information on cautions is presented later in this chapter and presents statistics from the Police National Computer (a different source than the detections figures presented in this paragraph).

Table 3.3 shows a very small number of sexual offences detected by means of a Penalty Notice for Disorder (PND), despite the fact there are no sexual offences that can be detected by this method. While the police follow the HOCR to record crime, the CPS work to their own charging standard which takes into account additional factors, such as whether there is a realistic chance of obtaining a conviction, or whether it is appropriate to issue a caution or PND for an alternative offence to the one the police recorded. The information that the Home Office currently collects from forces links detections with the initially recorded offence, even if the CPS have decided that the appropriate course of action should be to prosecute, caution or issue a PND for an alternative offence. This explains why it appears that a small number of PNDs have been issued for sexual offences.

Table 3.3 – Detections by sexual offence group and method of detection, 2011/12

England and Wales		Number and percentages of detections					
Method of detection	Rape of a Female	Rape of a Male	Sexual Assault of a Female	Sexual Assault of a Male	Sexual Activity with Minors	Other sexual offences	All sexual offences
Charge/summons	3,303	362	5,337	695	1,571	2,549	13,817
Cautions	54	14	651	68	416	1,007	2,210
TICs ⁽¹⁾	0	1	19	2	23	37	82
PNDs ⁽²⁾	0	0	0	0	0	15	15
Total sanction detections	3,357	377	6,007	765	2,010	3,608	16,124
Non-sanction detections ^{(3) (4) (5)}	27	17	120	15	49	62	290
All detections	3,384	394	6,127	780	2,059	3,670	16,414
Total recorded offences	16,414						
	<i>Detection rate (%)</i>						
Charge/summons	22.4	28.4	27.0	30.6	27.2	26.0	25.7
Cautions	0.4	1.1	3.3	3.0	7.2	10.3	4.1
TICs ⁽¹⁾	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.4	0.4	0.2
PNDs ⁽²⁾	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.0
Total sanction detections	22.7	29.6	30.4	33.7	34.8	36.8	30.0
Non-sanction detections ^{(3) (4) (5)}	0.2	1.3	0.6	0.7	0.8	0.6	0.5
All detections	22.9	30.9	31.0	34.3	35.6	37.5	30.6

'-' = Nil

(1) Offences asked to be taken into consideration by a court.

(2) Penalty Notices for Disorder (formerly known as fixed penalty notices) were introduced in several forces in 2003/04 and nationally in 2004/05.

(3) From 1 April 2007, new rules governing non-sanction detections significantly limited the occasions for which such administrative disposals can be applied.

(4) Includes data on Youth Restorative Disposals (YRDs) submitted to the Home Office as non-sanction detections from pilots in eight police force areas (Avon and Somerset, Cumbria, Greater Manchester, Lancashire, Metropolitan, Norfolk, North Wales, Nottinghamshire). The pilot was introduced in 2008/09.

(5) Includes Restorative Justice and community resolution data submitted on a voluntary basis by 22 forces in 2011/12.

The sanction detection rate for rape of a female in 2011/12 was 22.7 per cent and 29.6 per cent for rape of a male. Where rape offences were detected by sanction

¹⁷ There are two measures of the number of cautions issued; see section on Cautions later in this chapter for more details.

detection, the vast majority of cases (over 98 per cent) resulted in a charge or summons. Apart from one TIC, the few remaining sanction detections were cautions. These are covered in more detail later in this chapter.

Sanction detection rates for sexual offences have been relatively stable since 2005/06, fluctuating between 29.7 per cent and 31.4 per cent (Table 3.4). In recent years, there has been a slight fall in the number of sexual offences detected by means of a caution.

Table 3.4 – Detections for sexual offences and method of detection, 2005/06 to 2011/12

England and Wales		Number and rates of detections						
Method of detection	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	
<i>Number of detections</i>								
Charge/summons	15,453	13,863	13,136	13,254	13,688	14,101	13,817	
Cautions	2,872	2,985	2,972	2,743	2,455	2,264	2,210	
TICs ⁽¹⁾	740	172	163	146	82	90	82	
PNDs ⁽²⁾	66	47	19	16	11	8	15	
Total sanction detections	19,131	17,067	16,290	16,159	16,236	16,463	16,124	
Non-sanction detections ^{(3) (4) (5)}	2,411	1,299	110	86	107	121	290	
All detections	21,542	18,366	16,400	16,245	16,343	16,584	16,414	
Total recorded offences	62,080	57,522	53,566	51,429	54,344	54,919	53,665	
<i>Detection rate (%)</i>								
Charge/summons	24.9	24.1	24.5	25.8	25.2	25.7	25.7	
Cautions	4.6	5.2	5.5	5.3	4.5	4.1	4.1	
TICs ⁽¹⁾	1.2	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2	
PNDs ⁽²⁾	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	
Total sanction detections	30.8	29.7	30.4	31.4	29.9	30.0	30.0	
Non-sanction detections ^{(3) (4) (5)}	3.9	2.3	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.5	
All detections	34.7	31.9	30.6	31.6	30.1	30.2	30.6	

(1) Offences asked to be taken into consideration by a court.

(2) There are no sexual offences for which a PND can be issued. The small number of offences shown detected by a PND in this table are where the police have issued a PND for an alternative offence to the one initially recorded.

(3) From 1 April 2007, new rules governing non-sanction detections significantly limited the occasions for which such administrative disposals can be applied.

(4) Includes data on Youth Restorative Disposals (YRDs) submitted to the Home Office as non-sanction detections from pilots in eight police force areas (Avon and Somerset, Cumbria, Greater Manchester, Lancashire, Metropolitan, Norfolk, North Wales, Nottinghamshire). The pilot was introduced in 2008/09.

(5) Includes Restorative Justice and community resolution data submitted on a voluntary basis by 22 forces in 2011/12.

Non-sanction detections

In 2007/08, new rules were introduced limiting to two circumstances in which a non-sanction detection could be used. These are where the offender dies before proceedings could be initiated or completed; and where the CPS decides not to prosecute (by virtue of its powers under the Criminal Justice Act 2003). The effect of the change to these rules can be seen in Table 3.4, where the non-sanction detection rate fell from 3.9 per cent in 2005/06 to 0.2 per cent in 2007/08.¹⁸

There was an increase in the non-sanction detection rate for sexual offences between 2010/11 and 2011/12, from 0.2 per cent to 0.5 per cent. This reflects the uptake of the new locally based community resolution and Restorative Justice

¹⁸ For more information on non-sanction detections, see Detections in England and Wales 2011/12: www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/science-research-statistics/research-statistics/crime-research/hosb0812/

outcomes. However, given the serious nature of many sexual offences, it is not surprising that the use of these non-sanction detections are lower than for recorded crime overall. Where non-sanction detections have been used, these will tend to have been offences within the 'other sexual offences' category, such as exposure and voyeurism. For overall recorded crime, 1.4 per cent of recorded crimes were detected by a non-sanction detection in 2011/12, an increase from 0.2 per cent in 2010/11.

Cautions

Cautions¹⁹ are issued by the police and aim to deal with low risk, low-level and mostly first-time offenders outside of the court system. In the case of sexual offences, cautions are the only available out of court disposal. Guidance exists to help police forces and the CPS make their decision to issue a caution, and is clear that simple cautions should not normally be used for serious offences or persistent offenders.

Cautions are used only where the specific circumstances of the case make it appropriate. There may be cases in which the particular circumstances of the offence or offender mean that it is not in the public interest to prosecute – for example, where the age, welfare or mental well-being of the victim or offender argues against a trial.

There are two data sources for the number of cautions issued by the police: those sent to the Home Office as part of the detections statistical return; and data taken from the Police National Computer (PNC) which are routinely published by the Ministry of Justice in 'Criminal Justice System Quarterly Bulletin' publications. Although both data sources cover cautions issued by the police, there are differences between the datasets – the main reason being that the Home Office data are counted on a per victim basis, while Ministry of Justice data are on an offender basis. Further explanation can be found in the 'Data sources and quality' section.

All the data on offenders cautioned below are from the PNC and relate to the offence that the caution was ultimately issued for. The data are presented on a calendar year basis, based on the date of caution. The Sexual Offences Act 2003, which came into force on 1st May 2004, introduced a large number of new categories of sexual offences. As such, figures are presented back to 2005, for ease of comparison.

Cautions for sexual offences peaked over the last seven years in 2007, when 1,947 cautions were issued, and have fallen by 21.3 per cent since. This broadly matches the trend in the overall use of cautions, which has hit a peak over the last decade of 362,900 issued in 2007 and has declined since, by over a third (36.0 per cent) to 232,200 cautions issued in 2011. The decline in the use of cautions coincided with the replacement in April 2008 of a target to increase offences brought to justice, with one placing more emphasis on bringing serious crime to justice. The latter target was subsequently removed in May 2010.

In 2011, there were 1,532 offenders cautioned for sexual offences, including juveniles given a reprimand or final warning, representing a 12.3 per cent increase from 1,364 in 2010.

The increase in the numbers of cautions between 2010 and 2011 was chiefly driven by three sexual offence types in particular which reported large increases: *exposure* (up from 208 to 283 cautions), *sexual activity with child under 13* (up from 67 to 100

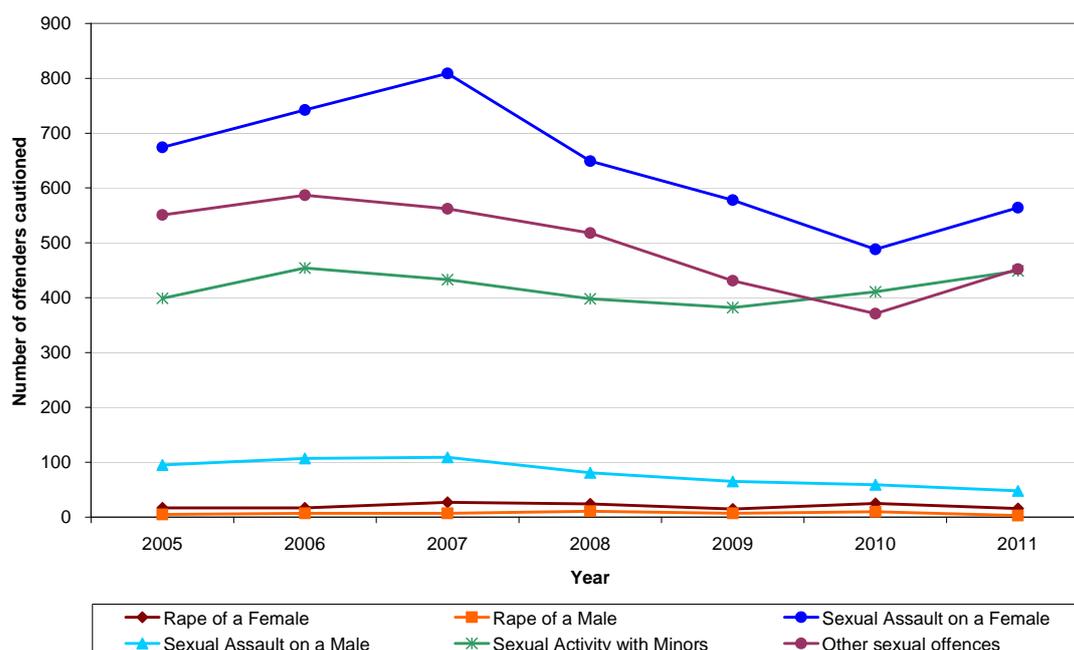
¹⁹ Including reprimands and warnings for juveniles.

cautions), and *sexual assault on a female* (up from 373 to 441 cautions) – all three of which had been decreasing since 2007 before the increase in the last year.

In 2011, 39.9 per cent of cautions issued for sexual offences were for *sexual assault*, with 29.3 per cent for *sexual activity with minors*. There were 19 cautions issued for *rape*²⁰, 1.2 per cent of all cautions for sexual offences.

Cautions for *sexual assault*, *rape* and *other sexual offences* have all decreased since 2007 (by 33.3 per cent, 44.1 per cent and 19.6 per cent respectively), whereas cautions for *sexual activity with minors* have increased by 3.7 per cent over the period.

Figure 3.5 – Offenders cautioned by sexual offence group, 2005 to 2011



Demographic breakdowns of offenders cautioned for sexual offences

In 2011, the vast majority of cautions issued for sexual offences were to males (96.7 per cent) (see Table 3.6).

Males aged 18 or over accounted for around two thirds of cautions for *sexual assaults on a female*, half of cautions for *sexual assaults on a male* and around two thirds of cautions for *sexual activity with minors*.

Of the 19 cautions issued for *rape* in 2011:

- 11 were for males aged under 15 where the victim (males and females) was aged under 13;
- Five were for males aged 15-17;
- The remaining three were for males aged 21 and over.

²⁰ Including attempted rape.

In 2011, 1,487 (97.1 per cent) offenders cautioned for sexual offences were of a known ethnicity (see Table 3.8). Of these persons:

- 87.8 per cent were White (compared with 85.8 per cent of offenders of a known ethnicity for *all* cautions);
- 4.7 per cent were Black (compared with 7.5 per cent of all cautions);
- 6.1 per cent were Asian (compared with 5.2 per cent of all cautions);
- The remaining 1.4 per cent were of 'other' ethnicity.

Chapter 4: Court proceedings & sentencing

If there is sufficient evidence against the defendant and none of the out of court disposals are appropriate, the police or Crown Prosecution Service will formally charge the suspect. The law then requires the defendant to be brought before a magistrates' court as soon as possible. On hearing the evidence, the magistrates will decide whether there is a case to answer (if not, the charge is dismissed) or whether there is enough evidence to proceed, and whether or not to commit the defendant to the Crown Court for trial.

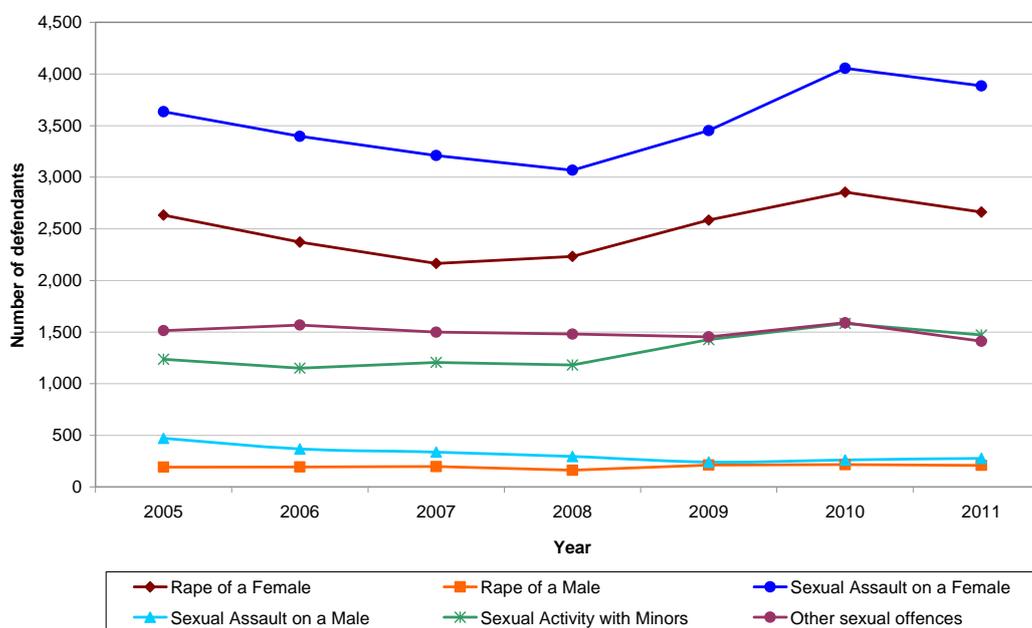
The data presented are on a calendar year basis and refer to persons proceeded against in the courts, as reported by the Ministry of Justice in 'Criminal Justice System Quarterly Bulletin' publications. The Sexual Offences Act 2003, which came into force on 1st May 2004, introduced a large number of new categories of sexual offences. As such, figures are presented back to 2005, for ease of comparison.

Proceedings at magistrates' courts

Virtually all criminal court cases start in a magistrates' court and less serious offences can be handled entirely within this court.

In 2011, there were 9,919 defendants proceeded against at magistrates' courts for sexual offences. This represented a 6.1 per cent decrease in proceedings compared with a peak over the last seven years in 2010, but a 2.4 per cent increase compared with 2005 volumes.

Figure 4.1 – Defendants proceeded against at magistrates' courts by sexual offence group, 2005 to 2011



29 per cent of defendants proceeded against for sexual offences in 2011 were for *rape* offences, and 42 per cent were for *sexual assault*. These proportions have been stable over the last seven years. In 2011, 2,873 defendants were proceeded against for *rape* offences²¹, a decrease of 6.4 per cent from 2010. *Sexual assault* proceedings also declined, by 3.6 per cent from 4,318 in 2010 to 4,162 in 2011.

Demographic breakdowns of defendants prosecuted for sexual offences

In 2011, males accounted for the vast majority of prosecutions for sexual offences (98.2 per cent). More specifically, males aged 18 and over accounted for 89.7 per cent of proceedings for sexual offences, with similar proportions for *rape* (89.6 per cent) and *sexual assault* (89.2 per cent) proceedings (see Table 4.2).

9,042 defendants proceeded against for sexual offences in 2011 (91.2 per cent of total) were of a known ethnicity (see Table 4.4). Of these persons:

- 78.0 per cent were White;
- 9.9 per cent were Black;
- 9.7 per cent were Asian;
- The remaining 2.4 per cent were of 'other' ethnicity.

Outcomes of proceedings at magistrates' courts

Of the 9,919 defendants proceeded against at magistrates' courts for sexual offences in 2011:

- 820 (8.3 per cent) saw their proceedings terminated early²², were discharged at committal proceedings, or saw their case dismissed (i.e. the defendant was found not guilty after a summary trial);
- 1,625 (16.4 per cent) were found guilty at the magistrates' court;
- the remaining 7,474 (75.4 per cent) were committed for trial at the Crown Court.

Outcomes of proceedings at magistrates' courts vary greatly by sexual offence group, reflecting the relative seriousness of the offences covered. For defendants accused of *rape* offences in 2011, 97.7 per cent were committed for trial at the Crown Court, with only 0.7 per cent found guilty at the magistrates' court. In comparison, 67.7 per cent of defendants proceeded against for *sexual assault* offences were committed for trial at the Crown Court, with 21.1 per cent found guilty by magistrates (see Table 4.5).

²¹ Including attempted rape.

²² Includes proceedings discontinued under s.23(3) of the Prosecution of Offences Act 1985, charges withdrawn and cases "written off" (e.g. bench warrant unexecuted, adjourned sine die, defendant cannot be traced etc.).

Offenders found guilty

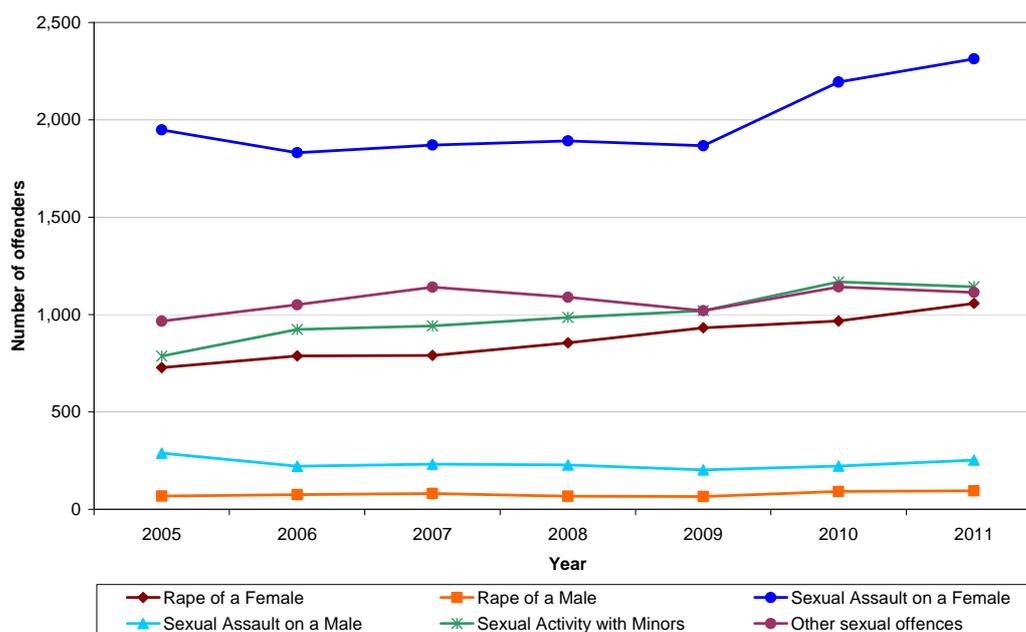
A conviction is where a person or a company is found guilty of a criminal offence at either the magistrates' courts or the Crown Court.

Convictions trends – by offence group

There were 5,977 offenders found guilty of sexual offences in 2011, compared with 5,784 in 2010 – an increase of 3.3 per cent. This continues an increasing trend over the past seven years, up 24.9 per cent since 2005. In 2011, there were 1,058 offenders found guilty of *rape of a female*, and 95 offenders found guilty of *rape of a male*.

The largest increases in the number of offenders found guilty over the past seven years have occurred for the offences of *rape of a female* and *sexual activity with minors*, with increases of 45.3 and 45.2 per cent respectively. *Rape of a male* has also seen an increase in convictions, of 39.7 per cent since 2005. *Sexual assault on a female* and *other sexual offences* have seen smaller increases of 18.7 and 15.3 per cent, whilst convictions for *sexual assault on a male* have decreased by 12.5 per cent over the period.

Figure 4.2 - Offenders found guilty at all courts by sexual offence type, 2005 to 2011



Demographic breakdowns of offenders convicted for sexual offences

In 2011, males accounted for the vast majority of offenders found guilty for sexual offences (99.0 per cent). More specifically, males aged 18 and over accounted for 91.8 per cent of offenders found guilty for sexual offences, with similar proportions for *rape* (94.0 per cent) and *sexual assault* (90.3 per cent) proceedings (see Table 4.8).

5,497 offenders found guilty of sexual offences in 2011 (92.0 per cent) were of a known ethnicity (see Table 4.10). Of these persons:

- 80.9 per cent were White;
- 7.6 per cent were Black;
- 8.7 per cent were Asian;
- The remaining 2.8 per cent were of 'other' ethnicity.

Outcomes of trials at the Crown Court

There were 7,061 defendants tried at the Crown Court for sexual offences in 2011 (see Table 4.6), of which:

- 2,592 (36.7 per cent) pleaded not guilty and were acquitted;
- 1,639 (23.2 per cent) pleaded not guilty and were found guilty;
- 2,713 (38.4 per cent) pleaded guilty;
- the remaining 117 were not actually tried – on the grounds that they were unfit for plea due to disability, unfit for trial due to mental health considerations, died before the completion of the trial, or the case was adjourned and the court ordered the offence to remain on file.

This gives a total of 4,352 offenders convicted of sexual offences at the Crown Court in 2011, 72.8 per cent of the total convictions for sexual offences. As discussed in the previous section, the remaining 1,625 were convicted at magistrates' courts.

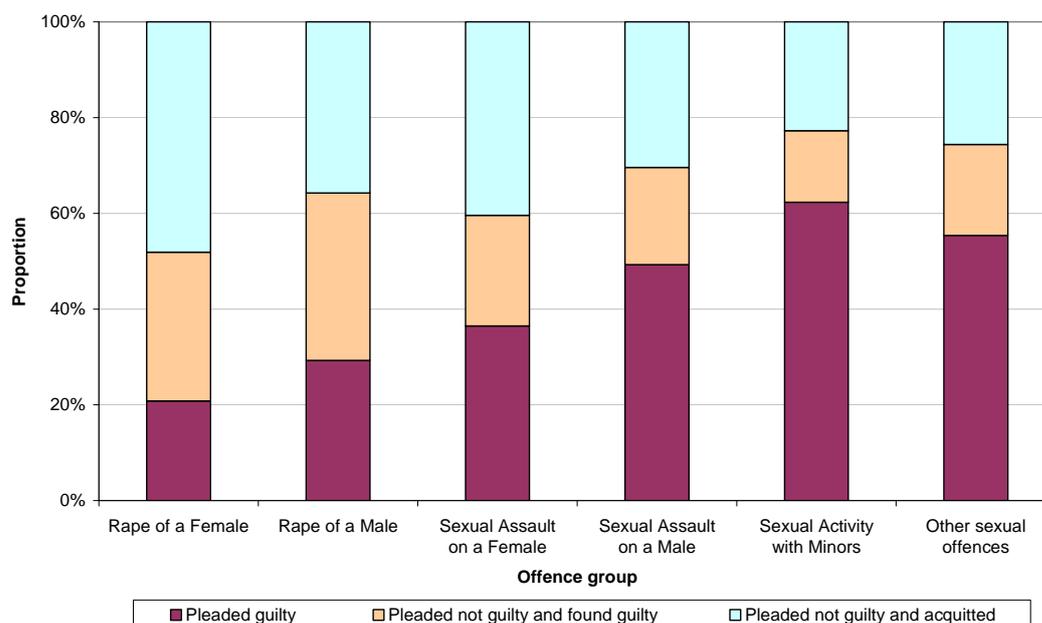
In 2011, the conviction rate for completed trials at the Crown Court for sexual offences was 61.6 per cent, which has increased by 7.1 percentage points since 2005. Conviction rates for completed trials at the Crown Court have increased across all sexual offence groups, with the highest increases for *rape of a female* (51.1 per cent in 2011, an increase of 9.9 percentage points since 2005) and *rape of a male* (62.5 per cent in 2011, an increase of 9.7 percentage points since 2005). The combined rape conviction rate for completed trials at the Crown Court in 2011 was 51.8 per cent, a 9.9 percentage point increase since 2005.

Plea at the Crown Court

In 2011, 38.4 per cent of defendants tried at the Crown Court for sexual offences pleaded guilty. However, plea varied by sexual offence group, with defendants tried for *rape of a female* having the lowest proportion of guilty pleas at 20.8 per cent. The proportion of those trialled for sexual offences who pleaded guilty has increased over the last seven years, up from 34.6 per cent in 2005.

Of defendants who pleaded not guilty at the Crown Court in 2011, 38.7 per cent were subsequently found guilty of the offence. This proportion does not vary greatly by offence group. However, the proportion of defendants found guilty following a not guilty plea has increased over the last seven years, up from 32.5 per cent in 2005.

Figure 4.3 – Outcomes for offenders tried at the Crown Court, by plea and sexual offence group, 2011



Conviction ratios

Conviction ratios are calculated as the number of convictions as a proportion of the number of proceedings. This gives a measure of the relative number of defendants who are found guilty within a given year for a certain offence, when compared with the number who are prosecuted that year for the same offence.

It is worth noting that, given the time taken to complete criminal proceedings (covered in Chapter 5), offenders found guilty in a given year may well have been proceeded against in a previous year. Similarly, defendants proceeded against in one year may not have received their final case outcome (i.e. found guilty or acquitted) in the same year. Further, defendants may be found guilty of a different offence to that for which they were originally proceeded against.

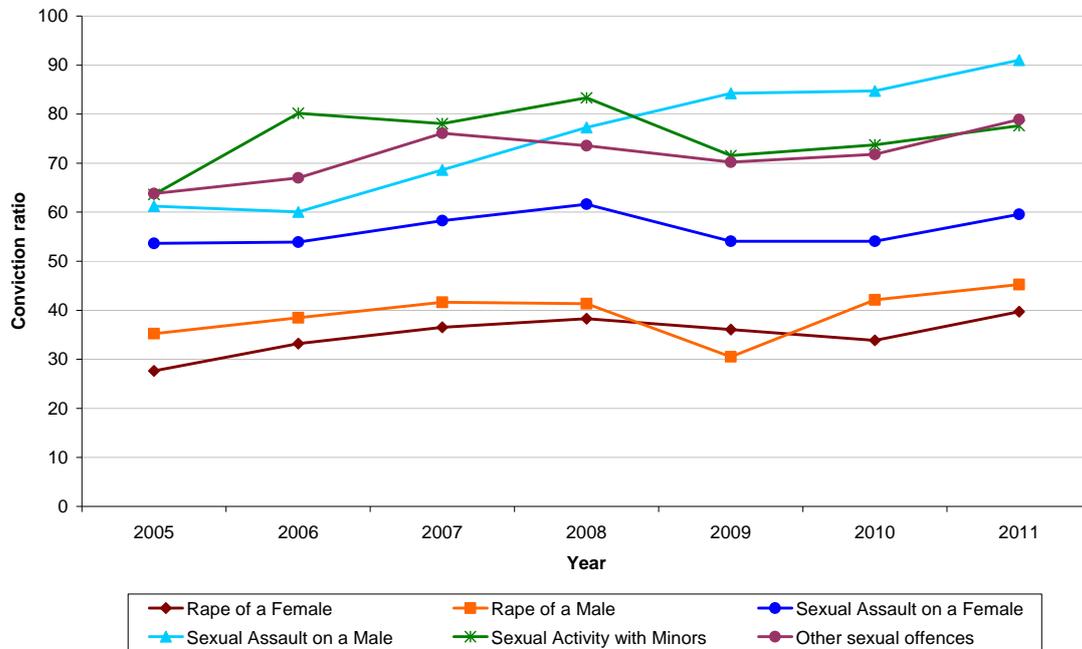
Alongside the increase in the number of convictions for sexual offences over the past seven years, the overall conviction ratio has also increased, from 49.4 per cent in 2005 to 60.3 per cent in 2011 (see Table 4.11).

Comparing across sexual offence groups, *rape of a female* has the lowest conviction ratio – 39.7 per cent in 2011 – but it has increased from 27.6 per cent in 2005. In 2011, *sexual assault on a male* had the highest conviction ratio of 91.0 per cent.

For certain offence types, such as *meeting a child under 16 following sexual grooming* and *gross indecency with a child*, we see conviction ratios of greater than 100, specifically 103.7 and 295.2 for these offence types in 2011. This shows that more defendants are being found guilty of that offence in that year than were proceeded against in that year. This is likely to be because the offender was initially proceeded against at the magistrates' court for a different sexual offence. In addition, as with any conviction, the defendant may have been found guilty following a prosecution that commenced in a previous year.

Between the initial hearing at the magistrates' court and the first hearing at the Crown Court, the prosecuting authority the CPS can decide the initial charge is incorrect and change to another offence, known as 'downgrading'. For example, a rape charge could be downgraded to one of sexual assault, to increase the chances of a conviction. This makes the simple comparison of prosecutions and conviction for an individual offence group such as rape potentially misleading.

Figure 4.4 - Conviction ratio by sexual offence group, 2005 to 2011



Outcomes of prosecutions

The following section considers rape cases which were proceeded against in 2009 and matches the cases through to their outcomes (if reached) up to the end of 2011. In doing so, it provides an insight into the ultimate outcomes of rape proceedings, the majority of which are completed at the Crown Court. Similar analyses of the outcomes of murder proceedings are provided for comparative purposes.

Of the rape proceedings commencing in 2009 which have been matched to an outcome at magistrates' courts or the Crown Court in 2009, 2010 or 2011 (i.e. completed cases²³):

- 55.9 per cent were found guilty of an offence, with:
 - 33.2 per cent being found guilty of a rape offence;
 - 7.9 per cent being found guilty of sexual assault;
 - 7.9 per cent being found guilty of another sexual offence (neither rape nor sexual assault); and
 - a further 3.6 per cent being found guilty of a violent offence, 2.6 per cent of another indictable offence and 0.7 per cent of a summary offence.
- 42.3 per cent were found not guilty.
- the remaining 1.8 per cent were discharged, had their proceedings ended early, or had another outcome, e.g. the defendants died before sentence was passed.

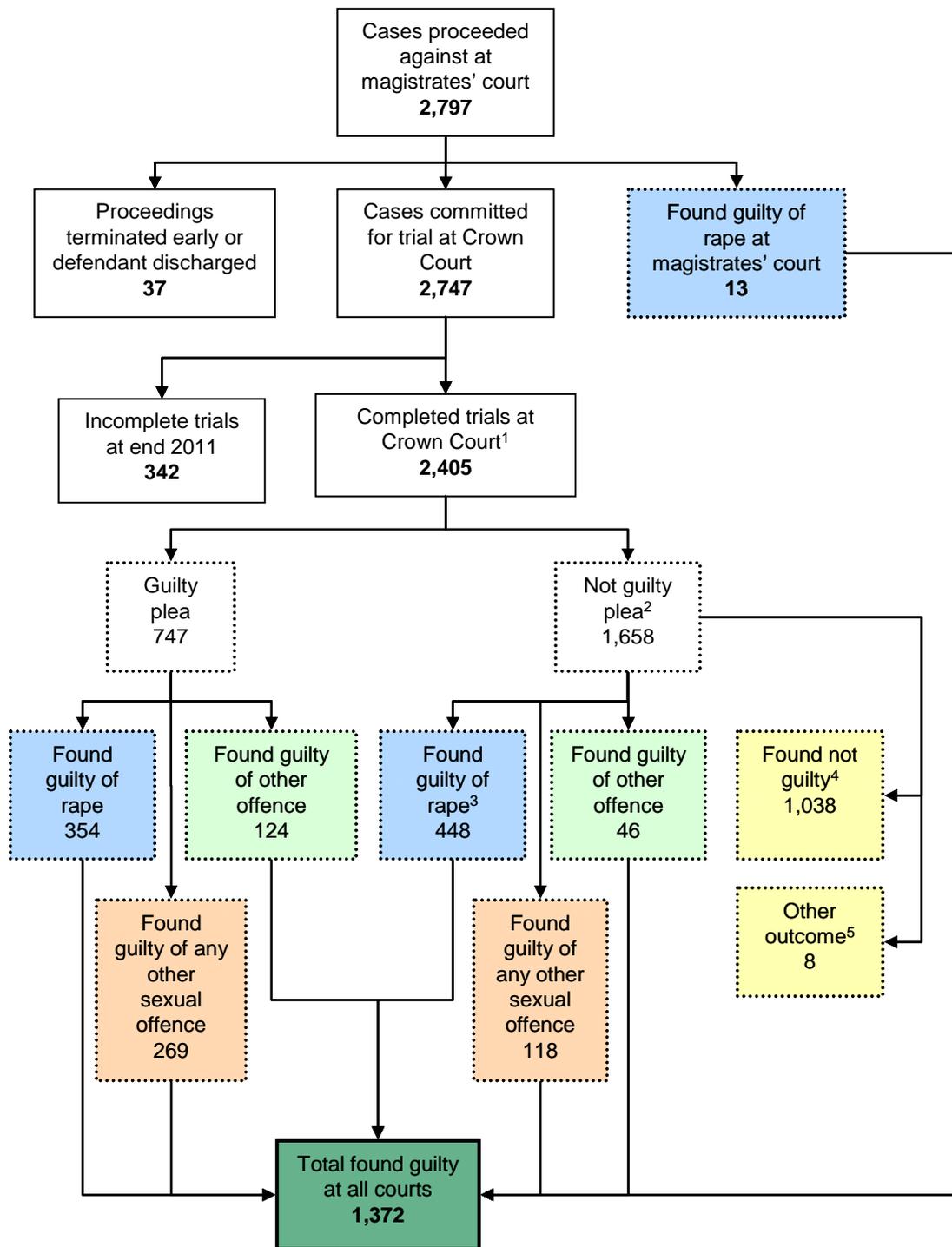
Figure 4.5 shows the flow of these matched cases through the Criminal Justice System. A total of 1,372 defendants prosecuted for rape in 2009, whose case was matched to an outcome by the end of 2011, were found guilty. Of these, a total of 815 were found guilty of rape, 194 were found guilty of sexual assault, and 193 were found guilty of another sexual offence; the remaining 170 were found guilty of another offence.

The increase in the conviction rate for rape when including other offences reflects the complex relationship that can sometimes exist between prosecutions and outcomes at the Crown Court – namely the extent to which particular types of offences can be subject to downgrading. Further, in some instances, cases are combined and the offender is convicted of a more serious offence, such as murder, with the rape charge ordered to remain on file.

Figure 4.5 also illustrates the relationship between plea and outcome of cases completed at the Crown Court. The defendant pleaded not guilty in 69 per cent of completed rape cases at the Crown Court, and 63 per cent of those pleading not guilty were subsequently found not guilty.

²³ 342 cases could not be matched to an outcome in 2009, 2010 or 2011. Please note this could reflect that the case is still outstanding, or could be due to data quality issues that prevented the proceeding being matched to the outcome.

Figure 4.5 – Outcomes of prosecutions for defendants proceeded against for rape offences in 2009, by end of 2011



¹ Those cases where an outcome could be identified at Crown Court in 2009, 2010, 2011.

² Includes where no plea is entered.

³ Includes those found guilty by a jury and those who pleaded guilty during the trial process.

⁴ Includes all cases where the CPS offered no evidence after a not guilty plea so the case was completed before a full trial took place.

⁵ Defendants who died before sentence was passed.

Of the murder proceedings commencing in 2009 which have been matched to an outcome at magistrates' courts or the Crown Court in 2009, 2010 or 2011 (i.e. completed cases²⁴):

- 81.0 per cent were found guilty of an offence, with:
 - 48.2 per cent being found guilty for murder;
 - 21.9 per cent being found guilty of another homicide related offence²⁵; and
 - a further 4.1 per cent being found guilty of another violent offence and 6.8 per cent of another indictable offence.
- 18.0 per cent were found not guilty.
- the remaining 1.0 per cent were discharged, had their proceedings ended early, or had another outcome, e.g. the defendants died before sentence was passed.

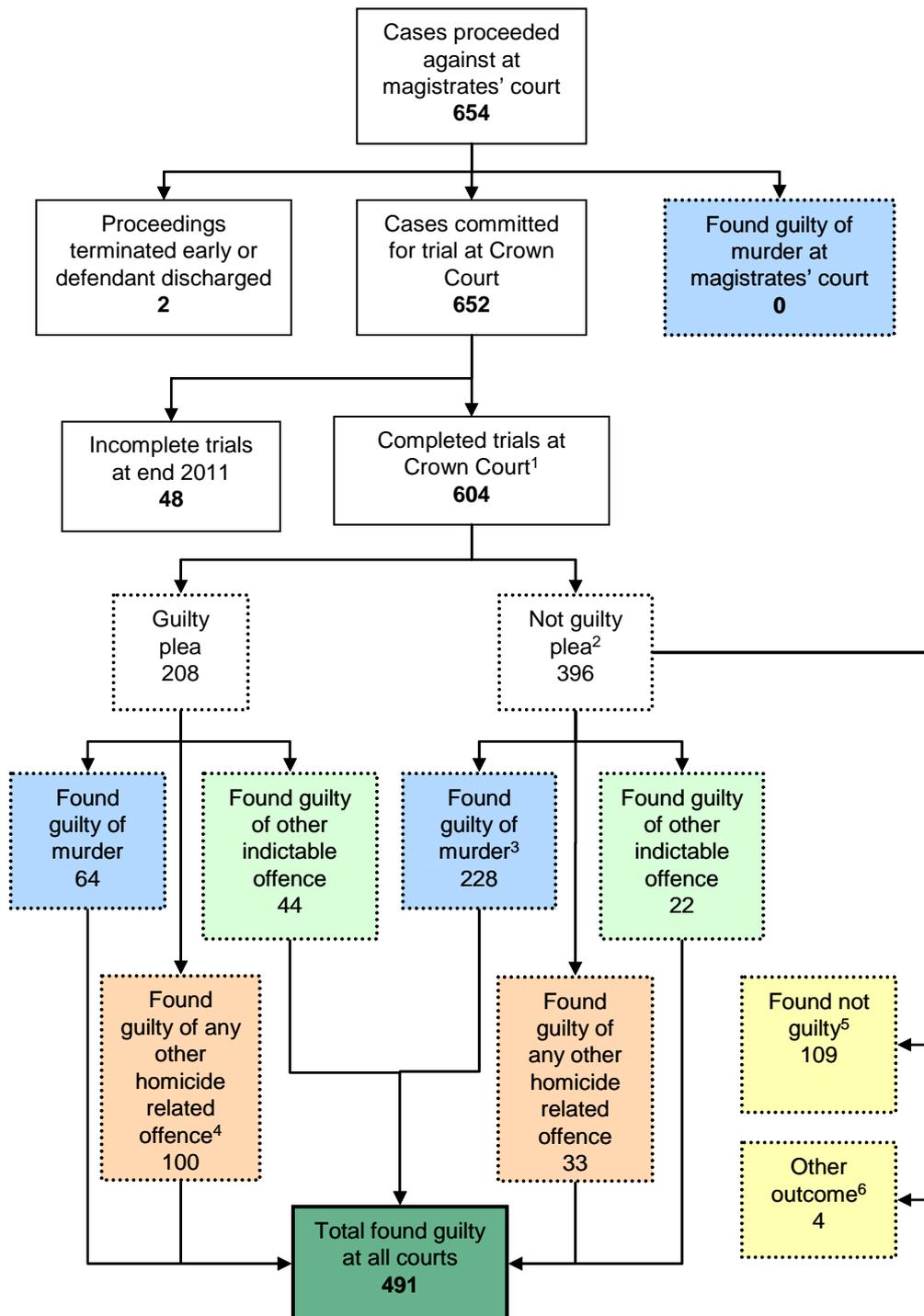
Figure 4.6 shows the flow of these matched cases through the Criminal Justice System. This further illustrates how downgrading happens – of those initially charged with murder and who subsequently pleaded guilty, nearly half pled guilty to another homicide related offence, e.g. manslaughter.

Looking again at the relationship between plea and outcome of cases, the defendant pleaded not guilty in 66 per cent of completed murder cases at the Crown Court, but only 28 per cent of those pleading not guilty were subsequently found not guilty.

²⁴ 48 cases could not be matched to an outcome in 2009, 2010 or 2011. Please note this could reflect that the case is still outstanding, or could be due to data quality issues that prevented the proceeding being matched to the outcome.

²⁵ Includes attempted murder, threats, conspiracy or incitement to murder and manslaughter.

Figure 4.6 – Outcomes of prosecutions for defendants proceeded against for murder offences in 2009, by end of 2011



¹ Those cases where an outcome could be identified at Crown Court in 2009, 2010, 2011.

² Includes where no plea is entered.

³ Includes those found guilty by a jury and those who pleaded guilty during the trial process.

⁴ Includes attempted murder, threats, conspiracy or incitement to murder and manslaughter.

⁵ Includes all cases where the CPS offered no evidence after a not guilty plea so the case was completed before a full trial took place.

⁶ Defendants who died before sentence was passed.

Sentencing

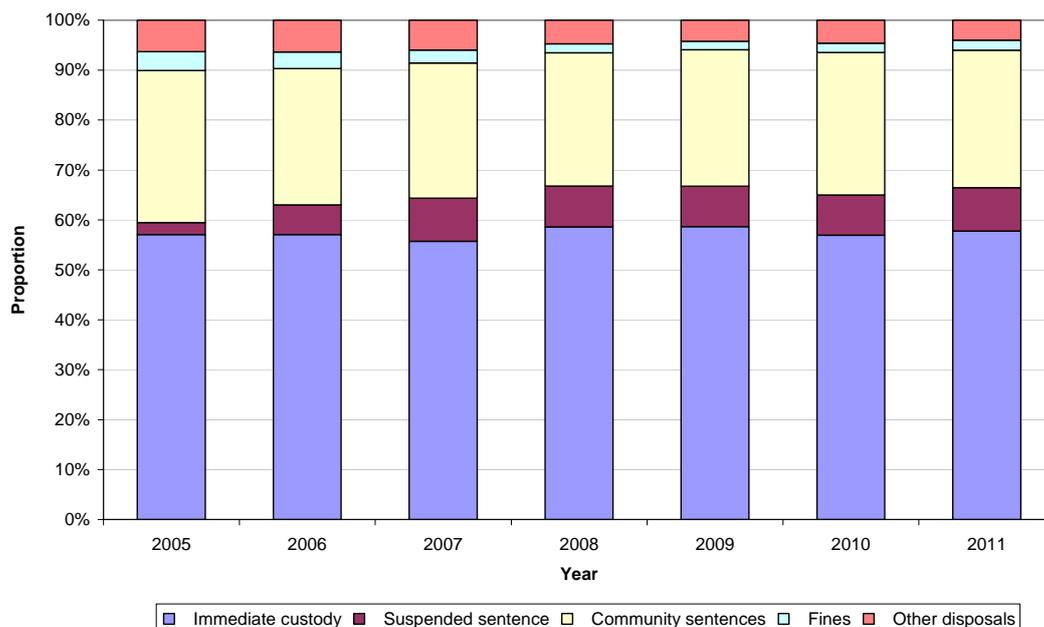
When someone is convicted of a crime, they will be given a sentence by a court which reflects the seriousness of the offence or offences committed by the offender. Sentences are generally time spent in prison, a community sentence, a fine or discharge.

To determine the appropriate sentence in a particular case, courts will assess the seriousness of the offence. For example, a court cannot impose a custodial sentence unless the offence is so serious that neither a fine alone nor a community sentence can be justified. In assessing the seriousness of an offence, courts are required by law take into account the culpability of the offender and the harm the offence caused or might foreseeably have caused. Courts will also take into account other aggravating and mitigating factors relevant to the offender or the offence – for example, whether the offender has relevant and recent previous convictions, or whether the offence was aggravated by virtue of hostility to the victim's race, religion, disability, sexuality or gender identity.

While the number of offenders sentenced for sexual offences has been increasing over time, from 4,729 in 2005 (of which 98.8 per cent were male) to 5,955 in 2011 (of which 98.6 per cent were male), the way in which offenders are dealt with by the courts has seen little variation.

The proportion of offenders receiving immediate custody has varied little between 2005 and 2011, remaining within a range of 55 to 59 per cent. The proportion of offenders receiving a suspended sentence initially increased in 2006 from 2005 but has remained with 8 to 9 per cent between 2007 and 2011. The proportion of offenders receiving a community sentence decreased slightly in 2006 but has since remained between 26 per cent and 29 per cent between 2006 and 2011. The use of fines and other disposals has decreased slightly over time, from 3.8 per cent in 2005 to 2.0 per cent in 2011 and 6.3 per cent in 2005 to 4.0 per cent in 2011, respectively.

Figure 4.7 – Offenders sentenced for sexual offences by outcome, 2005 to 2011



Sentence outcomes by offence group

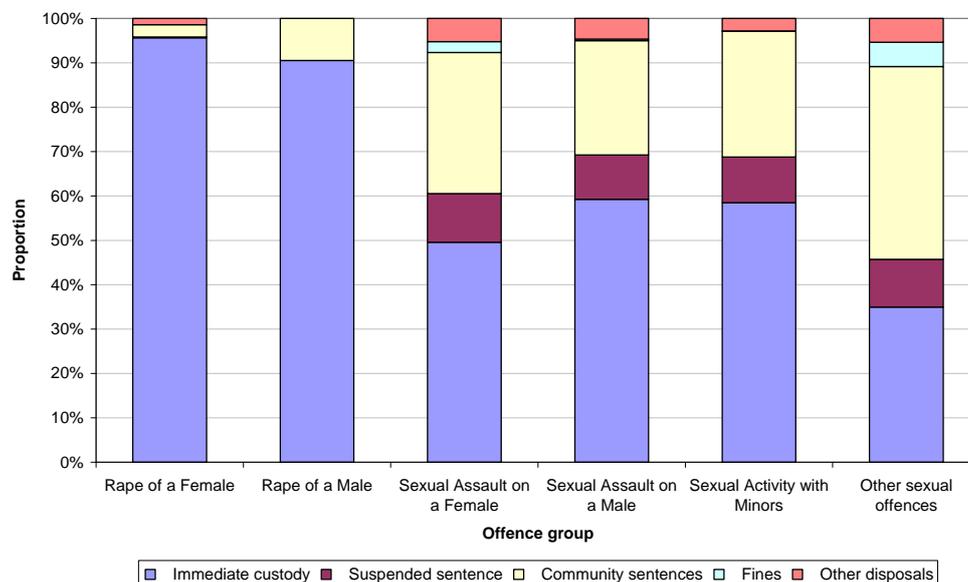
Sentencing outcomes differed across sexual offence groups. In 2011, immediate custody accounted for 95.7 per cent of outcomes for *rape of a female*, compared to 90.5 per cent for *rape of a male*. The proportion of offenders sentenced to immediate custody for *sexual assault* was lower than for *rape* at 50.5 per cent. *Sexual assault of a male* saw a higher proportion sentenced for immediate custody (59.2 per cent) than for *sexual assault of a female* (49.6 per cent).

Since 2005, there have been fewer than seven Suspended Sentences Orders (SSOs) given each year for *rape of a female* and none have been given for *rape of a male*. Suspended sentences have been used more for offences of *sexual assault*, *sexual activity with minors* and *other sexual offences*, accounting for between 10 and 11 per cent of all sentence outcomes for each of these offence groups. For these offences, the number of SSOs has been increasing over time, reflecting the change in legislation since it was introduced on 4 April 2005. Although a SSO should only be used where the court is minded to pass a custodial sentence of less than 12 months, the increase in offenders sentenced with a SSO has generally not been offset by a similar decrease in offenders sentenced with a custodial sentence of less than 12 months. The exception to this is *sexual activity with minors*, which has seen custodial sentences of less than 12 months fall from 96 in 2005 to 45 in 2011.

In 2011, community sentences made up only 2.7 per cent of outcomes for *rape of a female*, and 9.5 per cent for *rape of a male*. The lower proportion of offenders sentenced to immediate custody for *sexual assault on a female* referred to above coincides with a higher proportion being sentenced to community sentences. Likewise, fewer offenders had been sentenced to a community sentence for *sexual assault on a male* which corresponds to a higher proportion being sentenced to immediate custody. The highest proportion of community sentences across offence groups, 43.5 per cent, was used for *other sexual offences*.

In 2011, offenders sentenced to a fine accounted for the lowest proportion of outcomes for sexual offences. The use of fines is highest for the offence group of *other sexual offences*, accounting for 5.5 per cent of all sentences.

Figure 4.8 – Offenders sentenced for sexual offences, by offence group and outcome, 2011



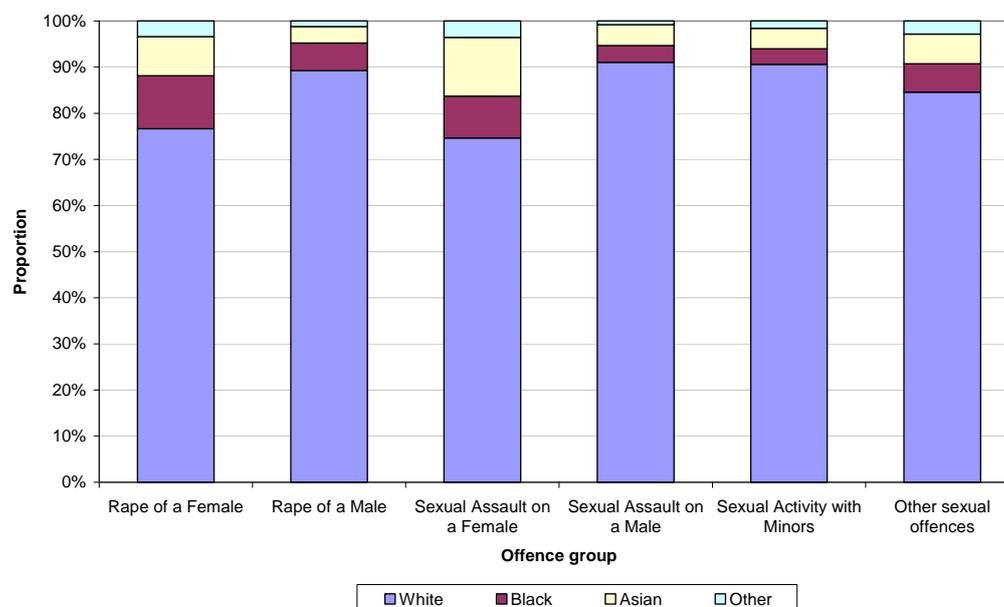
Sentence outcomes by ethnicity

In 2011, 5,476 (92.0 per cent) of offenders sentenced for sexual offences were of a known ethnicity (see Table 4.18). Of these persons:

- 80.9 per cent were White;
- 7.6 per cent were Black;
- 8.7 per cent were Asian;
- The remaining 2.9 per cent were of 'other' ethnicity.

Sentencing volumes across sexual offence groups varied by ethnicity. Compared with the overall proportions above, the offences of *rape of a female* and *sexual assault on a female* had proportionally less White offenders and more Black and Asian offenders sentenced. Conversely, the offences of *rape of a male*, *sexual assault on a male*, and *sexual activity with minors* had proportionally more White offenders and less Black and Asian offenders sentenced.

Figure 4.9 – Offenders sentenced for sexual offences by offence group and ethnicity, 2011



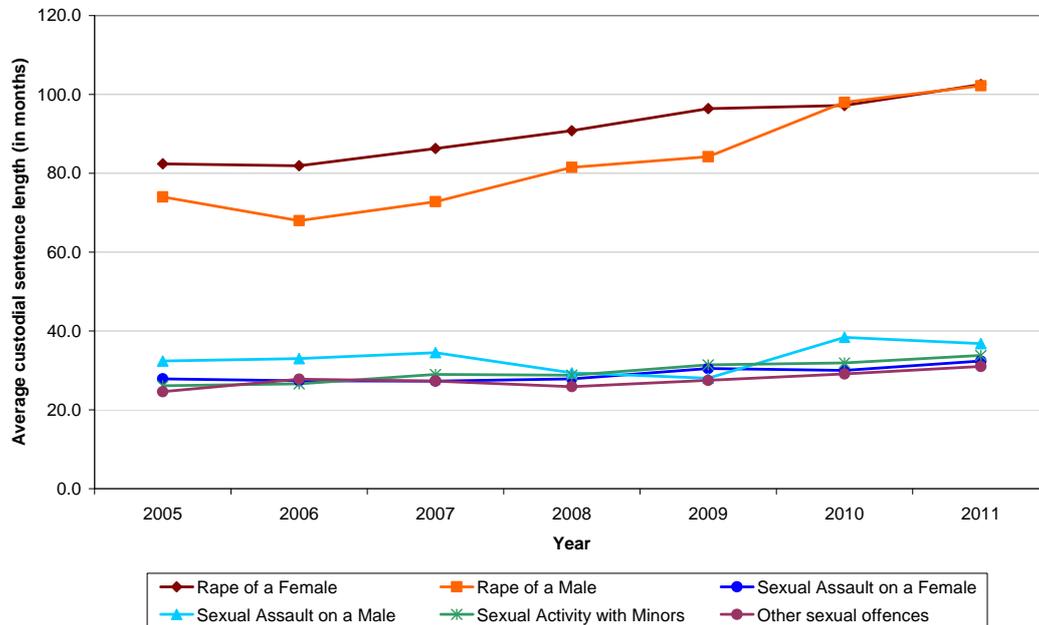
Average custodial sentence lengths

The number of life sentences for sexual offences has been decreasing over time, from 65 in 2005 to 23 in 2011. However, with the introduction of imprisonment for public protection introduced by the Criminal Justice Act 2003 on 4 April 2005, the number of offenders given an indeterminate sentence increased from 48 in 2005 to a peak of 400 in 2007. This was followed by a fall in the number of indeterminate sentences to 300 in 2011, following the introduction of the Criminal Justice and Immigration Act (CJIA) 2008, which restricted the use of imprisonment for public protection.

In 2011, for all sexual offences, the average custodial sentence length (ACSL), calculated from determinate sentences only, was 53.2 months, an increase of 11.6 months compared with 2005. ACSL rose across all sexual offence groups between 2005 and 2011, with the largest increases for *rape of a male* (28.2 month increase)

and *rape of a female* (20.1 month increase). In 2011, the ACSLs for the two offence groups were almost identical – 102.5 months for *rape of a female* and 102.2 months for *rape of a male*.

Figure 4.10 – Average custodial sentence length (ACSL) for offenders sentenced for sexual offences, by offence group, 2005 to 2011

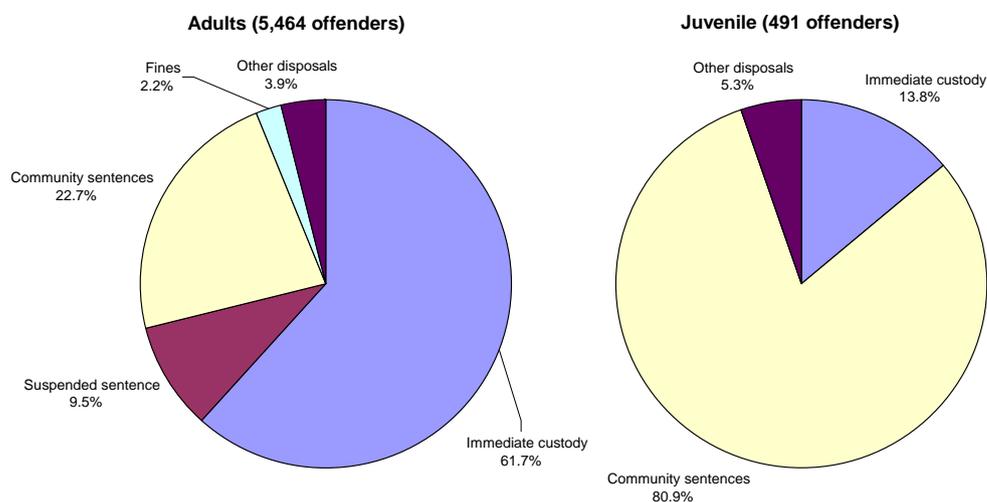


Sentence outcomes by age band

The number of adults sentenced for sexual offences has increased by 30.9 per cent between 2005 and 2011, from 4,173 to 5,464. This rise has not been mirrored by the number of juveniles (those aged under 18) sentenced for sexual offences, which has seen a decrease of 11.9 per cent from 556 in 2005 to 491 in 2011.

The type of sentence handed down by courts varied depending on whether the offender was an adult or a juvenile. In 2011, 61.7 per cent of adults were sentenced to immediate custody, compared to 13.8 per cent of juveniles. In contrast, 80.9 per cent of juveniles were sentenced to community sentences, compared to 22.7 per cent of adults.

Figure 4.11 – Sentence outcomes by age band (adults and juveniles), 2011



Chapter 5: Duration from offence to completion in criminal courts

This section of the report contains statistics on the average duration of sexual offence cases, from offence to completion (i.e. sentencing or acquittal), across both magistrates' and Crown tiers of the criminal courts, including the intermediate stages in that process.

The majority of sexual offences will be serious offences which will be dealt with at the Crown Court. For those defendants whose case is sent or committed to the Crown Court, these statistics measure the entire duration from offence to completion in the Crown Court, including the time the case was initially dealt with in the magistrates' courts before being passed to the Crown Court.

Statistics in this publication relate to cases completed in either the magistrates' or the Crown Court during the calendar year 2011. Statistics of this type for all offences are usually referred to as "timeliness statistics", and are published on a quarterly basis in the Court Statistics Quarterly²⁶ publication.

Duration of sexual offence cases from offence to completion

It is worth noting that in police recorded crime statistics an offence is recorded as taking place on the day that it is recorded by the police, regardless of the actual date the offence took place. However, the offence to charge or summons to court part of the analysis presented here is based on the actual (or estimated) date the offence took place, which is recorded on the court case management system at the point of charge or laying of information.

It is not possible, from the information held on the court case management system, to split for each case the time taken between the date of the offence and the date the defendant was charged or summonsed to court into the time taken before and after the offences was recorded by the police.

On average, the duration of a case from offence to completion varies substantially based on the offence committed. Criminal proceedings involving sexual or fraud and forgery offences, on average, take the longest time to conclude.

Looking at all sexual offence cases, for defendants whose case completed during 2011, the average offence to completion time was 496 days. This can be divided into:

- 295 days between the date of the offence and the date the defendant was charged or summonsed to court;
- 20 days between the date the defendant was charged or summonsed to court and the first listing of the case in a magistrates' court;
- 181 days between the first listing of the case in a magistrates' court to completion (i.e. sentencing or acquittal).

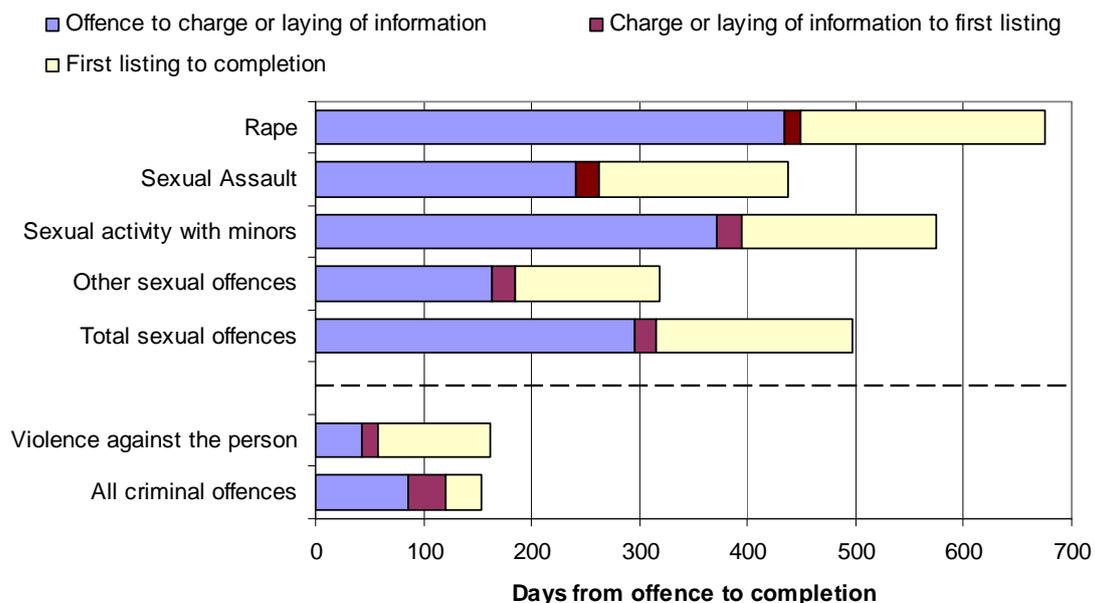
²⁶ www.justice.gov.uk/statistics/courts-and-sentencing/judicial-quarterly

The majority of the time in sexual offence cases is spent between the date of the offence and the date the defendant was charged or summonsed to court. This is likely to be caused by a number of reasons, one being that these offences are often being reported to the police some time after the actual offence took place or take some time to detect.

Fraud and forgery cases are similar in duration, taking 511 days on average from offence to completion in 2011, with the majority of time spent between the date of the offence and the date the defendant was charged or summonsed to court. In contrast, cases involving offences such as theft and handling stolen goods and violence against the person were completed much more quickly on average (82 days and 162 days, respectively).

As shown in Figure 5.1 below, there are also variations in the average time taken for different types of sexual offence case. For comparison, the chart also includes the average time taken to complete all criminal cases and those cases involving violence against the person. A more detailed breakdown of the average time taken for the completion of sexual offence cases is shown in Table 5.2.

Figure 5.1 – Average number of days taken from offence to completion for sexual offences compared to all criminal offences, England and Wales, 2011



The overall offence to completion time for rape cases in 2011 was 675 days. Almost two-thirds of this time is taken to reach the point where the case is charged. On average, around a third of the time is court time, from the point where the case is first listed to the conclusion in the Crown Court.

Sexual assault cases take less time on average, with 438 days from offence to completion in 2011. Offences involving sexual activity with minors take 575 days from offence to completion on average. As with rape cases, a similar proportion of the time taken is from offence to charge and from first listing to completion.

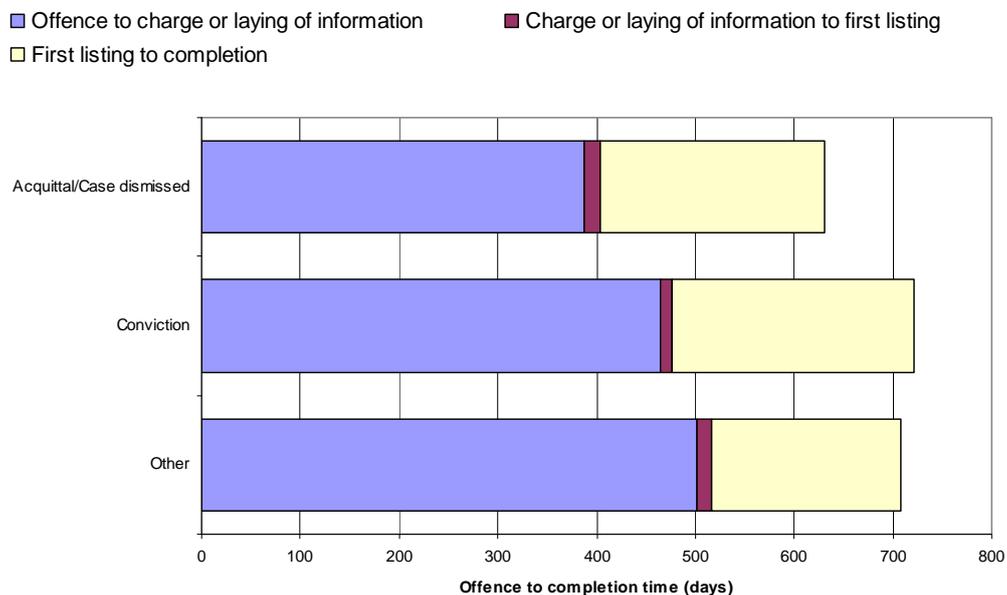
In comparison, the average offence to completion time for cases involving violence against the person was 162 days, of which almost two-thirds of this time is court time. For all criminal cases, the average offence to complete time was 154 days and over half of this time is taken to reach the point where the case is charged.

Duration of rape offence cases from offence to completion by case conclusion and plea type

Looking specifically at rape cases, there are other factors which may influence the time a case takes to complete, including the type of disposal and whether the defendant pleads guilty or not guilty.

Figure 5.2 shows the average duration of rape cases, split by the type of disposal. In cases where there has been a conviction for rape, the average time from offence to completion is 722 days. In cases where the result has been an acquittal or the case has been dismissed, the average duration is around 90 days quicker at 630 days.

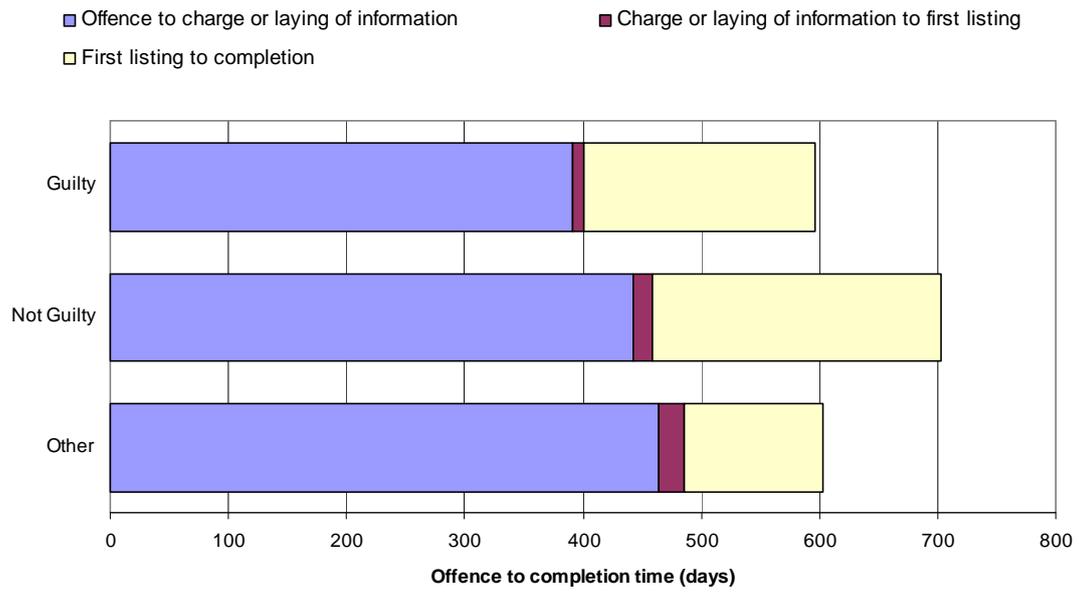
Figure 5.2 – Average number of days taken from offence to completion for rape cases by type of disposal, England & Wales, 2011



Note: 'Other' category includes death of defendant, case withdrawn, etc.

The type of plea a defendant enters can also make a difference to the time a case takes to conclude. Figure 5.3 shows that, on average, a rape case in which the defendant pleads guilty at the Crown Court takes 596 days to complete, which is over 100 days less than if the defendant pleads not guilty (702 days). In terms of court time (the time from first listing to completion), the difference between a guilty and not guilty plea is just under 50 days on average.

Figure 5.3 – Average number of days taken from offence to completion for rape cases by type of plea, England & Wales, 2011



Note: 'Other' category includes unfit to plea, no plea taken, etc.

Chapter 6: Offender management

This chapter provides key statistics relating to offenders who are in prison or under Probation Service supervision for sexual offences. It covers the caseload of both services at specific points in time.

The offence categories available in the prison population data are rape, gross indecency with children and other sexual offences. Sexual assault is not available as an offence category in the prison population dataset.

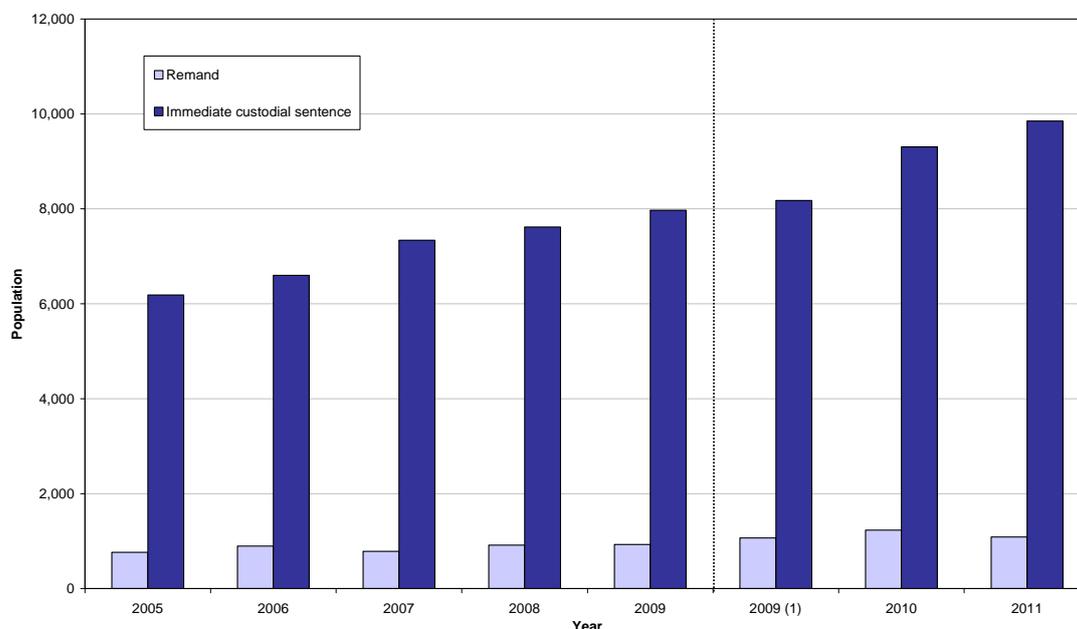
Prison population²⁷

On 30th June 2011, there were 10,935 prisoners in custody for sexual offences, an increase of 3,984 (57 per cent) compared to 30th June 2005 when the population was 6,951 and an increase of 4 per cent since 30th June 2010 when the population was 10,536. This coincides with the trend of an increasing number of offenders being sentenced to immediate custody for sexual offences over the period.

The overall prison population has risen consistently over the same time period but the number of prisoners in custody for sexual offences has been increasing at a faster rate and now comprises 14 per cent of the overall prison population compared with 9 per cent in 2005.

Figure 6.1 shows that the rise in the number of prisoners in custody for sexual offences since 2005 comprised of increases in both the immediate custodial sentenced population and the remand population. However, the one year increase from 2010 has been driven wholly by an increase in the immediate custodial sentence population whilst the remand population saw a decrease.

Figure 6.1 – Population in prison for sexual offences, 2005 to 2011



(1) Due to the introduction of a new prison IT system, the prison population data from 2010 is now taken from a different source and recalls are shown separately (they were previously included in the relevant sentence length band). The 2009 figures from both the old and new systems have been presented to aid comparison.

²⁷ As at 30 June in each reporting period.

The number of prisoners on remand for sexual offences rose by 319 (42 per cent) between 2005 and 2011 from 766 to 1,085. However, between 2010 and 2011, the remand population fell by 147 (12 per cent) from 1,232 to 1,085.

The sentenced population rose by 3,665 (59 per cent) from 6,185 in 2005 to 9,850 in 2011. Over the most recent year, the sentenced population increased by 546 (6 per cent) from 9,304 in 2010 to 9,850 in 2011.

Offenders in prison for sexual offences tend to spend more time in prison than for other offence groups. In 2011, sex offenders spent on average 32 months in prison, including time spent on remand, compared to an average of 10 months for all other offences.

Offence group

An increasing proportion of prisoners sentenced for sexual offences are serving sentences for *other sexual offences*²⁸ rather than for *rape* or *gross indecency with children*.

In 2011, 42 per cent of those prisoners sentenced for sexual offences had committed *other sexual offences*, an increase from 25 per cent in 2005. In contrast, the number serving sentences for *gross indecency with children* has fallen steadily between 2005 and 2008 and remained relatively stable until 2011, now comprising 8 per cent of those prisoners sentenced for sexual offences, compared with 19 per cent in 2005. Similarly, the proportion of prisoners sentenced for sexual offences that had committed an offence of *rape* was 50 per cent in 2011, compared with 56 per cent in 2005.

This trend can also be seen in the number of prisoners on remand for sexual offences. The number of prisoners on remand for an offence of *gross indecency with children* has been consistently low; the majority of these prisoners serve immediate custodial sentences.

Characteristics of prisoners in custody for sexual offences

Gender

In 2011, there were 10,832 male prisoners in custody for sexual offences, a rise of 4 per cent since 2010. There were 103 female prisoners in custody for sexual offences, a fall of 15 per cent since 2010.

Although there has been a general upward trend in the number of female prisoners in custody for sexual offences, it remains very low and is a very small proportion of the overall female prison population (2 per cent). For both the remand and the immediate custodial sentenced populations of prisoners in custody for sexual offences, the vast majority have an offence type of other sexual offences.

Ethnic group

In 2011, 82 per cent of offenders serving an immediate custodial sentence for sexual offences were White – this proportion has remained steady since 2005. There are proportionately more white offenders serving an immediate custodial sentence for

²⁸ 'Other sexual offences' include sexual assault.

sexual offences than in the overall prison population – in 2011, white prisoners comprised 73 per cent of the total prison population.

Of the other offenders serving an immediate custodial sentence for sexual offences, 8 per cent were Black, 5 per cent were Asian, 2 per cent were of mixed or other ethnicity, and the remaining 2 per cent were not stated or unrecorded.

Foreign national prisoners

In line with the rise in the overall number of offenders sentenced for sexual offences, the number of foreign national offenders sentenced for sexual offences almost doubled between 2005 and 2011, from 575 to 1,034 respectively. Again in line with the overall population, this rise has been driven by the number of offenders sentenced for other sexual offences which has seen a threefold increase over this period, with much of the increase occurring between 2005 and 2008. There has been a steady increase in the number of foreign national prisoners serving immediate custodial sentences for rape over the same time period.

Prisoners serving indeterminate sentences

The number of prisoners serving indeterminate sentences for sexual offences (either a life sentence or an Indeterminate sentence for Public Protection – an IPP) increased rapidly between 2005 and 2008 (from 677 to 1,824). Although the indeterminate sentenced population has continued to increase reaching 2,469 in 2011, the rate of year-on-year growth has slowed considerably following the changes introduced in the CJA 2008 which restricted the use of IPPs.

In 2011, 98 per cent of offenders serving indeterminate sentenced for sexual offences were adults, i.e. aged 21 and over.

Offenders supervised by the Probation Service

Since the introduction of new court orders, in particular the Suspended Sentence Order (SSO) in 2005 (under the Criminal Justice Act 2003), there has been an increase in the number of offenders being supervised in the community under community orders and suspended sentence orders for sexual offences.

Figure 6.2 shows that there was a sharp increase in both community orders and SSOs from 2005 reflecting the fact that these orders were introduced for offences committed after 4th April 2005.

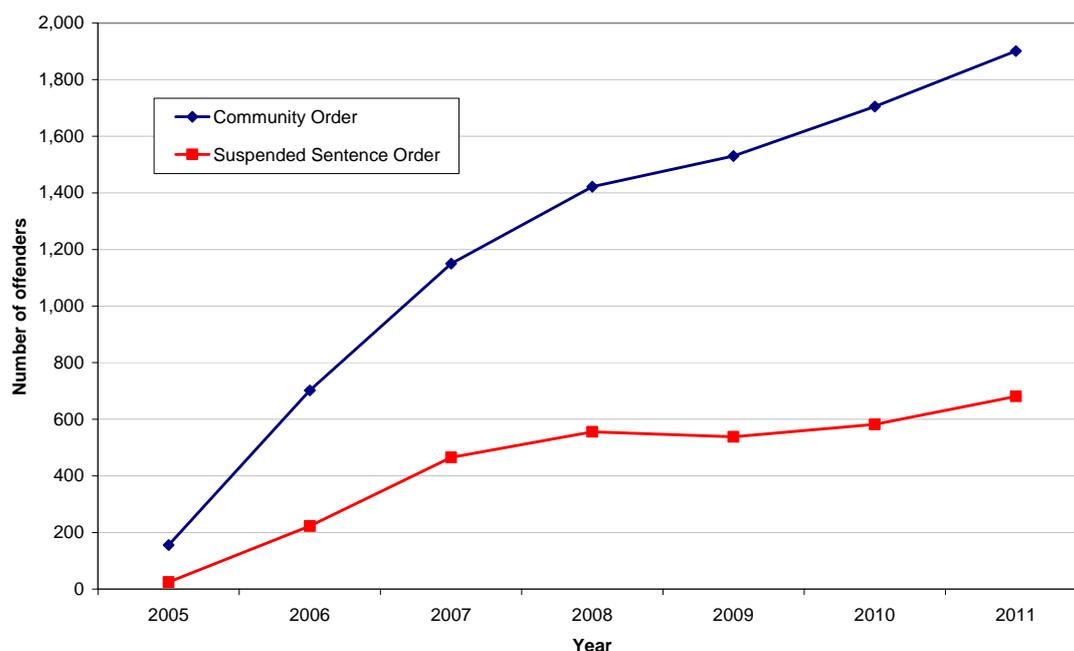
- Following a further sharp increase between 2006 and 2007, there has been a steady year on year increase in the number of offenders being supervised in the community under community orders given for sexual offences.
- This increase partly reflects the length of orders given for sexual offences (e.g. they will generally be longer than community orders for other offences) and the trend seen in community order starts (Table 6.6) which, after a sharp increase in 2006, increased slowly between 2006 and 2009. Further sharp increases were seen in the number of community starts in 2010 and 2011, mirroring the trend in sentencing data – as a result, the future caseload is likely to continue to increase over time.
- The number of offenders supervised under suspended sentence orders has also increased over the same time period but the growth has slowed in recent years

The increase in the number of offenders being supervised under community orders and SSOs for sexual offences is in line with the trend in the overall probation caseload - an increasing number of offenders with convictions for indictable offences are being supervised in the community. By the end of 2011, 54 per cent of those on the community order caseload and 69 per cent of those on SSOs had been convicted of an indictable offence (compared to 50 and 57 per cent respectively in 2006).

Despite this increase, given the serious nature of sexual offences, the number of offenders supervised in the community under either community orders or SSOs are relatively low. They represent just 2 per cent of the total number of offenders supervised under community orders (1,901 out of 84,168) and SSOs (681 out of 41,766).

The number of offenders being supervised under post release supervision for sexual offences has remained relatively stable over the last seven years (ranging between 2,750 and 3,024). However, as a proportion of all offenders supervised on licence, the number has fallen from 11 and 12 per cent in 2005 and 2006 respectively, to just 7 per cent in each of the last two years.

Figure 6.2 – Sexual offenders supervised by the Probation Service under Community Orders and Suspended Sentence Orders, 2005 to 2011



Characteristics of offenders supervised under community orders or SSOs for sexual offences

Almost all (99 per cent) of those offenders supervised by the Probation Service under community orders or SSOs for sexual offences are male. Similarly, a large proportion (88 per cent) are adults, i.e. aged 21 and over. For those supervised under post release supervision, the proportion of females is also very small, but has risen from 0.6 per cent to 1.5 per cent between 2005 and 2011.

The ethnic profile of offenders supervised under community orders or SSOs for sexual offences is very similar to those in custody for sexual offences: 82 per cent of those serving a community order for sexual offences were white; for SSOs, 79 per cent were white. This mirrors the total probation caseload ethnic profile.

Chapter 7: Offender histories

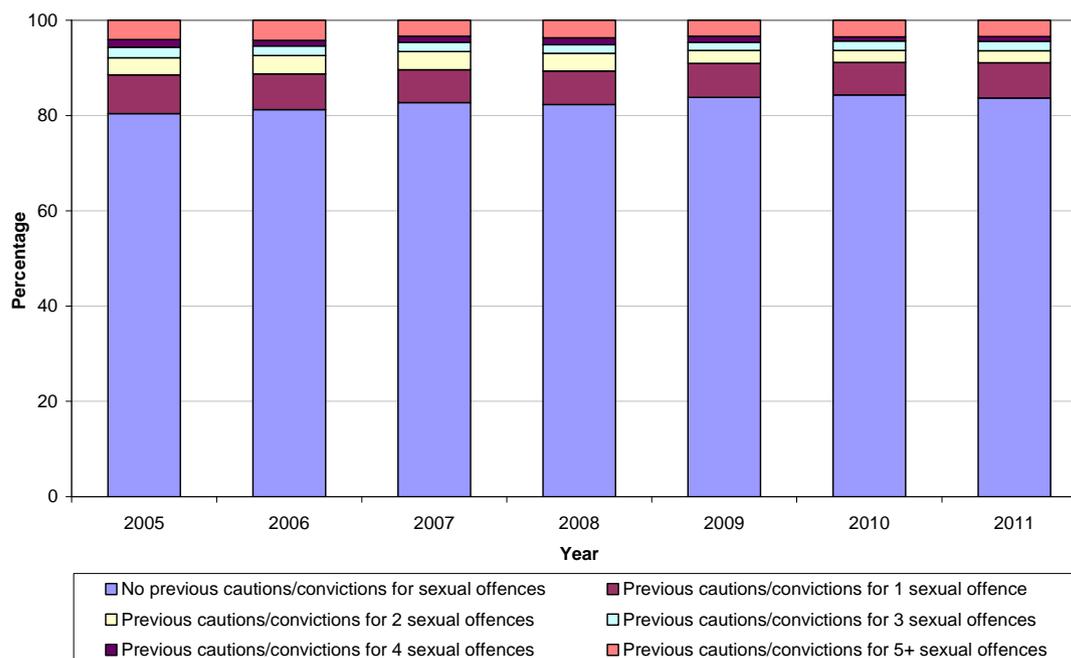
This chapter provides key statistics about the previous offending of offenders convicted for sexual offences. The data are drawn from the Police National Computer (PNC) which, as a large administrative data source maintained by police forces, holds slightly different figures from those held in the court proceedings database. As such, the overall conviction and sentencing numbers presented here will differ slightly from those in chapter 4. Data in this chapter cover the period 2005 to 2011.

Previous cautions or convictions for sexual offences

The large majority of offenders sentenced for sexual offences in 2011, 83.7 per cent, had not previously been cautioned or convicted for a sexual offence. This proportion is down slightly on 2010, but 3.3 percentage points higher than the equivalent figure for 2005.

3.4 per cent of offenders sentenced for sexual offences in 2011 had been previously cautioned or convicted for five or more sexual offences. This proportion has been fairly stable over the last three years but has decreased since 2005 and 2006.

Figure 7.1 – Offenders sentenced for sexual offences, by previous cautions/convictions for sexual offences, 2005 to 2011

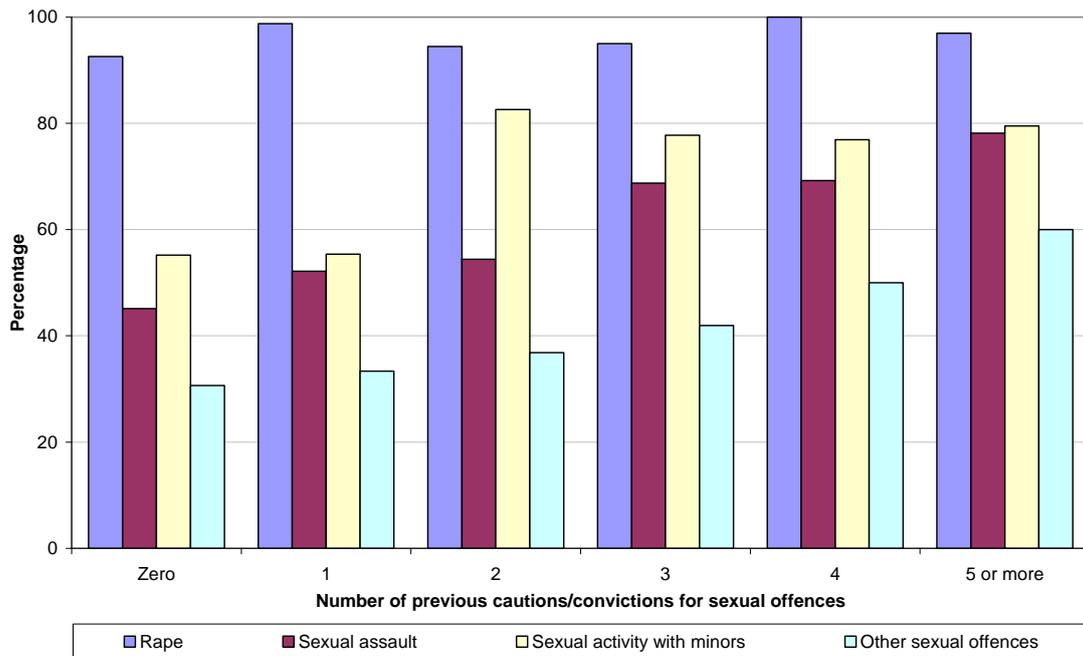


A larger proportion of offenders sentenced for *rape* have no previous cautions or convictions for sexual offences (86.4 per cent in 2011) than for other types of sexual offence. Similarly, a smaller proportion of offenders sentenced for *rape* have previous cautions or convictions for five or more sexual offences than for other offence types.

53.9 per cent of offenders with no previous cautions or convictions for sexual offences who were sentenced for sexual offences in 2011 received an immediate custodial sentence. This increases to 77.9 per cent for the group of offenders with cautions or convictions for five or more previous sexual offences.

The increase in the custody rate for offenders with larger numbers of previous sexual offences is particularly apparent for those sentenced for sexual assault, where the custody rate increases from 45.1 per cent of offenders with no previous cautions or convictions for sexual offences, to 78.2 per cent for offenders with previous cautions or convictions for five or more sexual offences. Custody rates for rape are higher than all other types of sexual offence, as outlined in earlier chapters.

Figure 7.2 – Percentage of offenders sentenced to immediate custody for sexual offences, by offence type and previous cautions/convictions for sexual offences, 2011



Background to the criminal justice system

The following is an extract from the 'Background to the criminal justice system' section of "A Guide to Criminal Justice Statistics", updated on a quarterly basis and available on the Ministry of Justice website²⁹. More information on crime, detection, court procedures and sentencing can also be found on the gov.uk website³⁰.

Reporting crime

This section relates to crimes that are reported to the police and recorded by them. The Criminal Justice System (CJS) cannot work without the support of the community. In particular, victims and witnesses play a vital part in the justice process. If crimes aren't reported, offenders can't be brought to justice.

Investigation

The police are responsible for responding to allegations that a person has committed a crime, deciding whether an investigation is required and subsequently conducting the investigation, with their role being to identify suspects to arrest and question. Once their investigations are complete, the police will either:

- Charge the suspect, in conjunction with the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS);
- Apply for a summons for the suspect to appear at court;
- Deal with them by using an out-of-court disposal (an alternative to prosecution);
- Resolve the matter informally (e.g. the victim agrees to informal resolution or restorative justice approach);
- Release the individual without charge on the basis they should not face criminal action.

Offences not prosecuted by the police

Not all offences under law are investigated or prosecuted by the police. For example television licence evasion is investigated by the TV licensing authority, and offences relating to benefits were prosecuted by the Revenue and Customs Prosecution Office (RCPO) which was an independent prosecuting authority reporting to the Attorney General. The RCPO was merged into the Crown Prosecution Service from 1 January 2010.

Deciding what happens with a case

The Criminal Justice Act 2003 requires that the decision to charge a person in all but the most minor or routine offences is now undertaken by the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS). However, the police investigate the alleged offence and in some cases will decide whether to administer an out-of-court disposal or charge the individual.

In the most serious cases, Crown Prosecutors will decide whether to charge a person with a criminal offence, and will determine the appropriate charge or charges. The CPS will decide whether or not to prosecute by applying the Code for Crown

²⁹ www.justice.gov.uk/downloads/statistics/criminal-justice-stats/criminal-justice-statistics-guide-sept-2012.pdf (September 2012 edition)

³⁰ www.direct.gov.uk/en/CrimeJusticeAndTheLaw/index.htm

Prosecutors³¹ to the facts of the particular case. In those less serious cases where the police determine the charge, they apply the same principles.

When a file is received from the police, a Crown Prosecutor will decide whether or not there is enough evidence against the suspect and if it is in the public interest to bring that person to court. Prosecutors are responsible for making charging decisions in the most serious cases, ensuring pre-charge decisions are timely, and identifying cases appropriate for out of court disposals prior to charge. In police charged cases these are made prior to the first hearing. These arrangements allow for strong cases to be built from the start and cases where there is not enough evidence to bring a prosecution are sifted out as quickly as possible.

The CPS will continue to review cases after a Charging Decision has been made and throughout the court process in accordance with the Code for Crown Prosecutors. If as part of this on-going review, the CPS considers there is no longer sufficient evidence for a realistic prospect of conviction or that prosecution is no longer in the public interest, it may discontinue the proceedings at any time before the start of the trial or committal. If the Crown Prosecutor is thinking of changing the charges, i.e. downgrading the original offence, or stopping the case, they will contact the police wherever possible. This gives the police the chance to provide more information that may affect the decision.

Although the police and the CPS work closely together, both organisations are independent of each other, and the final responsibility for the decision as to whether or not to proceed with an offence that has been charged rests with the CPS.

Out of court disposals

When deciding whether a case should be prosecuted, the police and Crown Prosecutors consider the alternatives to prosecution, i.e. out-of-court disposals, in appropriate circumstances. These include:

- Reprimand (for young people aged 10-17 years);
- Final warning (for young people aged 10-17 years).
- Fixed Penalty Notice (for driving offences);
- Penalty Notice for Disorder;
- Cannabis warning;
- Simple caution;
- Conditional caution;

Cautions

A caution can be administered when there is sufficient evidence to provide a realistic prospect of a conviction and it is not considered to be in the public interest to institute criminal proceedings. Additionally, the offender must admit guilt and consent to a caution in order for one to be given. A formal caution may be given by, or on the instructions of, a senior police officer.

Cautions are intended for low level, often first time, offending, and have traditionally been mostly used for juvenile and first time offenders. A system of reprimands and final warnings replaced cautioning for juveniles in June 2000. There are two types of cautions – simple cautions and conditional cautions.

³¹ www.cps.gov.uk/publications/directors_guidance/dpp_guidance_4.html

Simple Cautions

A 'simple caution' is used to deal quickly and simply with those who commit less serious crimes. It aims to divert offenders away from court, and to reduce the likelihood that they will offend again. If you are given a simple caution you will be officially warned about the unacceptability of your behaviour, that the simple caution forms part of your criminal record and may be disclosed, and the likely consequences of committing further crimes will be explained to you. Young people, aged 10-17, cannot get simple cautions but are instead given similar reprimands and warnings which can also involve interventions to prevent further offending

Simple cautions are currently available for all offences. The decision to offer a simple caution is made by the police except in indictable only offences where the decision must be made by a Crown Prosecutor.

Conditional Cautions

A 'conditional caution' is a caution with conditions attached.

Examples of conditions might be:

- Rehabilitation – conditions that help to change the behaviour of the offender, reduce the likelihood of re-offending or help to reintegrate the offender into society such as an alcohol treatment programme;
- Reparation - conditions that aim to repair the damage done by the offender such as an apology to the victim or to physically repair any damage caused.

Currently conditional cautions are only available for summary (non-motoring) offences and a few either way offences such as criminal damage and theft. Conditional cautions are available for adults aged 18 or over and in some areas for young people aged 16-17. The decision to administer a conditional caution is currently made by the Crown Prosecution Service.

Like simple cautions, conditional cautions aim to keep lower level offenders from overburdening the court system. They also address the needs of both victims and offenders by dealing with the offender's behaviour quickly, and allowing action to be taken to rehabilitate the offender or to repair the damage caused by the offence.

Court proceedings

If an out of court disposal is not deemed to be appropriate, the next step is for court proceedings to be initiated.

Once an accused person is charged, the law requires that they are brought before a magistrates' court as soon as possible. There are three main methods of ensuring the defendant attends court:

- they have been held in custody by the police to appear as soon as practicable;
- they may have been released on bail to attend court;
- they have been summoned to appear in court.

Court jurisdiction

Magistrates' courts: Virtually all criminal cases start in magistrates' courts and 95 per cent of cases finish there. As well as hearing criminal cases magistrates deal with family matters. Cases in magistrates' courts are usually heard by a panel of three magistrates (Justices of the Peace) supported by a legally qualified Court Clerk. There are also around 130 district judges. They are experienced barristers or solicitors who sit alone and deal with more complex or sensitive cases. Magistrates cannot normally order sentences of imprisonment that exceed six months (or 12 months for consecutive sentences), or fines exceeding £5,000. In cases that are triable-either-way (in either magistrates' courts or the Crown Court) the offender may be committed by the magistrates to the Crown Court for sentencing if a more severe sentence is thought necessary.

The Crown Court: The Crown Court deals with more serious criminal cases such as murder, rape or robbery, some of which are on appeal or referred from magistrates' courts. Trials are heard by a Judge and a 12 person jury. Members of the public are selected for jury service or may have to go to court as witnesses. The Crown Court is based at 77 centres across England and Wales. It deals with cases transferred from magistrates' courts. It also hears appeals against decisions of magistrates' courts, and deals with cases sent for sentence from magistrates' courts. Penalty levels vary depending on the court trying the offence.

Youth courts: Young people aged between 10 and 17 are mainly dealt with in the youth courts by specially trained magistrates. In youth courts, no person is allowed to be present unless authorised by the court, except for the members and officers of the court, parties to the case (normally including parents/guardians), their legal representatives, witnesses and bona fide representatives of the media. Proceedings may be reported in the press but the young person may not generally be identified.

Conviction and sentencing

The section below details the main purposes of sentencing and describes some of the major disposals presented in this publication – more guidance can be found on the Crown Prosecution Service's website³².

When an offender is convicted, in either a magistrates' or the Crown Court, the court can either pass sentence immediately or if further information is required they may adjourn to a later date.

The Criminal Justice Act 2003 set out the five main purposes of sentencing for adults:

- The punishment of offenders;
- The reduction of crime (including its reduction by deterrence);
- The reform and rehabilitation of offenders;
- The protection of the public;
- The making of reparation of offenders to persons affected by their offences.

³² www.cps.gov.uk/legal/s_to_u/sentencing_-_general_principles/
www.cps.gov.uk/legal/s_to_u/sentencing_manual/

While courts are obliged to have regard to these principles, sentence will generally be determined according to seriousness of the offence. Seriousness is made up of the harm caused by the offence and the culpability of the offender in committing it.

There is also a statutory aggravating which provides that recent and relevant previous convictions make an offence more serious. There are thresholds of penalty based on seriousness:

- Offences that are **so serious** that neither a fine alone nor a community sentence can be justified;
- Offences that are **serious enough** to warrant a community sentence.

If neither of these thresholds is reached then a fine or a discharge will be appropriate.

Disposals given in court

Immediate Custody

Adults aged over 21 will be sentenced to imprisonment, adults aged 18–20 will be sentenced to detention in a young offenders institution. Maximum penalties are specified for all offences according to the seriousness of the offence.

One of the characteristics of the criminal law in England and Wales is that offences are defined very broadly. Hence sentences imposed tend to cluster much lower than the maxima.

Short sentences – Under 12 months: Those sentenced to **under 12 months** (made under the Criminal Justice Act 1991) spend the first half of their sentence in prison and are then released and considered '**at risk**' for the remaining period. This means they are under no positive obligations and do not report to the probation service but, if they commit a further imprisonable offence during the at risk period, they can be made to serve the remainder of the sentence in addition to the punishment for the new offence. The exception to this is those aged 18–20 who have a minimum of three months' supervision on release.

Sentences of 12 months or over: The Criminal Justice Act 2003 created a distinction between **standard determinate sentences** and **public protection sentences**. Offenders sentenced to a **standard determinate sentence** serve the first half in prison and the second half in the community on **licence** and subject to conditions. Offenders convicted of a sexual or violent offence may be sentenced to a **public protection sentence**. In such cases, the court has to determine whether the offender is dangerous to the extent that there is a significant risk to the public of serious harm through the commission by him or her of a further sexual or violent offence. If the court does consider that to be the case, it may impose a public protection sentence. There are two such sentences:

Imprisonment or detention for public protection: (IPP – sections 225 and 226 of the Criminal Justice Act 2003) – where the maximum for the offence is ten years or more and where a life sentence is not available or appropriate. An IPP is an indeterminate sentence; an offender will serve the tariff (minimum term) as set by the judge and then is eligible to be released if considered safe by the Parole Board. The only significant distinction between life and IPP is that, whereas life sentences last for the whole of the offender's life, the Parole Board can bring an IPP licence to an end after a minimum of 10 years in the community following release.

Extended sentence: (EPP – section 227 of the 2003 Act) – where the maximum for the offence is less than 10 years. An extended sentence comprises the normal determinate custodial period plus an extended period on licence. The offender may be released at any time between the half way point and the end of the normal custodial period and is on licence until the end of the extension period.

The **Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008** changed the provisions so as to give judges more discretion over the use of public protection sentences; they were to be restricted to offences for which two years real time is justified; and for release from an extended sentence to be automatically at the half way point of the custodial period with licence extending from then until the end of the extension period. These changes apply to cases sentenced on or after 14 July 2008.

Licence: For the duration of the licence, an offender is obliged to comply with the terms of that licence. These may include requirements to report to the probation service, restrictions as to where he may live and what work he may undertake, and requirements to attend programmes. If an offender breaches his licence he is liable to be recalled to prison, potentially until the end of his sentence.

Life Sentence

The main types of life sentence and the respective age related variants are as follows:

Mandatory Life Sentences

- Imprisonment for Life – this is the only sentence that can be imposed on anyone over the age of 21 who is convicted of murder.
- Detention during Her Majesty's Pleasure – this is the mandatory sentence for a person convicted of murder who was aged 10 or over but under 18 at the time of the offence.
- Custody for Life – this is the mandatory sentence for a person aged 18 or over but under 21 at the time of the offence who is convicted of murder and sentenced while under 21.

Discretionary Life Sentences

- Imprisonment for Life – this is the maximum sentence for those over 21 convicted of certain serious offences, e.g. manslaughter, attempted murder, rape, armed robbery, arson etc.
- Detention for Life – this is the maximum sentence for a person aged 10 or over but under 18, who is convicted of offences other than murder for which a discretionary life sentence may be passed on a person over 21.
- Custody for Life – this sentence may also be imposed where a person aged 18 or over but under 21 at the time of the offence is convicted of any other offence for which a discretionary life sentence may be passed on an adult.

Under any life sentence the court determines the minimum term to be served in custody before the offender can be considered for release by the Parole Board. If

and when the offender is released he or she remains on licence, and subject to recall to custody, for the rest of their lives.

Suspended sentence orders

These sentences were introduced under the Criminal Justice Act 2003 and are available for offences committed on or after 4 April 2005. They enable a court which passes a custodial sentence of 12 months or less to suspend that sentence for a period of between six months and two years while ordering the offender to undertake certain requirements in the community (drawn from the same list as those available for the community order). If the offender breaches the requirements there is a presumption that the custodial sentence will be given effect.

Community Sentences

Since the implementation of the Criminal Justice Act 2003, there has been a single community order that can comprise up to 12 requirements depending on the offence and the offender. These are:

- Unpaid work (formerly community service/community punishment) – a requirement to complete between 40 and 300 hours' unpaid work;
- Activity – e.g. to attend basic skills classes;
- Programme – there are several designed to reduce the prospects of reoffending;
- Prohibited activity – requirement not to do something that is likely to lead to further offending or nuisance;
- Curfew – electronically monitored;
- Exclusion – not much used as no reliable electronic monitoring yet available;
- Residence – requirement to reside only where approved by probation officer;
- Mental health treatment (requires offender's consent);
- Drug rehabilitation (requires offender's consent);
- Alcohol treatment (requires offender's consent);
- Supervision – meetings with probation officer to address needs/offending behaviour;
- Attendance centre – three hours of activity, usually on Saturday afternoons, between a minimum of 12 hours and a maximum of 36 in total.

Typically, the more serious the offence and the more extensive the offender's needs, the more requirements there will be. Most orders will comprise one or two requirements but there are packages of several available where required. The court tailors the order as appropriate and is guided by the probation service through a pre-sentence report.

Fines

Fines are available to punish all offenders (other than where mandatory minimum sentences apply, such as for murder). In general, the maximum fine that can be imposed by magistrates' courts is defined in terms of level.

There are five levels, currently set as follows:

- Level 1 £200
- Level 2 £500
- Level 3 £1,000
- Level 4 £2,500
- Level 5 £5,000

In practice, fine levels are generally much less than the maximum as courts must take account of offenders' means when deciding on the amount to impose. The Crown Court may fine an unlimited amount.

Discharges

A court may discharge a person either absolutely or conditionally where the court takes the view that it is not necessary to impose punishment. An absolute discharge requires nothing from the offender and imposes no restrictions on future conduct. The majority of discharges are conditional discharges where the offender remains liable to punishment for the offence if he is convicted of a further offence within whatever period the court specifies (but not more than three years).

Compensation

In cases involving death, injury, loss or damage, the courts are required to consider making a compensation order, and to give reasons where no such order is made. A compensation order can also be made in addition to any other sentence or order, or can be the only sentence imposed for a particular offence. Magistrates' courts can order compensation up to a maximum of £5,000 per offence, but there is no such limit in the Crown Court. However, courts are required to have regard to the means of the offender when deciding whether to make a compensation order and when deciding on its amount. When the defendant makes payments against financial penalties, compensation orders are paid off before fines.

Further sentences and orders

Other punishments are used to a lesser extent. These include binding over orders, confiscation orders, exclusion orders and disqualification from driving. When a defendant stands convicted before the Crown Court of a drug trafficking offence, the Court is required to determine whether he has benefited from drug trafficking at any time, and if so, to make a confiscation order. The amount to be recovered is what the court assesses to be the value of the defendant's proceeds from drug trafficking, or that which can be realised. The courts have general power to penalise a defendant by making an order for the forfeiture of property associated with the offence.

Sentences specifically for juveniles

Sentencing for juveniles is bound by the provisions of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and the Children and Young Persons Act 1933. More details are presented in the 'Background to the criminal justice system' section of "A Guide to Criminal Justice Statistics".

Explanatory notes

This section describes the data sources used in the compilation of this publication, providing further detail to build on the introductory information presented at the start of each chapter or section. It also covers the symbols and conventions that have been used throughout the tables in the publication.

Data sources and quality

Every effort is made to ensure that the figures presented are accurate and complete. However, these data have been extracted from survey and large administrative data systems generated by the courts, police forces and other agencies. As a consequence, care should be taken to ensure the limitations of these data are taken into account.

The data presented is largely from published government statistical releases and reports, but on occasion has been supplied by criminal justice agency colleagues. It is presented either in terms of calendar years, financial years or other relevant time periods, reflecting the reporting cycles and data collection of the Departments contributing information for this publication. For further technical data and quality statements relating to the various data sources utilised, see sections below and the relevant parent publications.

Crime Survey for England and Wales

The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW), formerly known as the British Crime Survey (BCS), is a face-to-face victimisation survey in which people resident in households in England and Wales are asked about their experiences of a range of crimes in the 12 months prior to the interview. The key aim of the CSEW is to provide robust trends for the crime types and population it covers; the survey does not aim to provide an absolute count of crime. The CSEW does not cover the population living in group residences (e.g. care homes or halls of residence) or other institutions, nor does it cover crime against commercial or public sector bodies. For the crime types and population it covers, the CSEW provides a better reflection of the true extent of crime experienced by the population resident in households in England and Wales than police recorded statistics because the survey includes crimes that are not reported to, or recorded by, the police.

A self-completion module on intimate violence, which includes questions³³ on sexual assault, was first included in the CSEW in 2001 and then on a continuous basis since 2004/05. Intimate violence is a collective term used to refer to a number of different forms of physical and non-physical abuse consisting of partner abuse, family abuse, sexual assault and stalking. The term reflects the intimate nature either of the victim-offender relationship or of the abuse itself. **Sexual assault** in CSEW is the only one of these categories deemed to be a sexual offence. It consists of 'serious' sexual offenses (rape or assault by penetration) and 'less serious' offences (indecent exposure, sexual threats or unwanted touching carried out by any person).

The chapter 'Crime Survey for England and Wales: Sexual offence victimisation' presents the key findings of questions relating to experiences of sexual assault among males and females aged 16 to 59 resident in households in England and

³³ More information on the questions asked in the CSEW can be found at: www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/method-quality/specific/crime-statistics-methodology/crime-survey-for-england-and-wales-2011-12-adult-questionnaire.pdf

Wales. More information on CSEW sampling and classifications can be found in ONS's User Guide to Crime Statistics for England and Wales³⁴.

CSEW uses two measures of sexual assault. One relates to experiences since the age of 16 and the other is limited to those experiences in the last 12 months. To allow for better comparison with the rest of this report, the 12 month measure is used for the majority of the chapter. To help put these figures into context, a short section at the end of the chapter discusses some of the trends since the age of 16. Due to the relatively low number of incidents of sexual assaults compared with other offence types covered by the survey, multiple survey years have been combined to produce most of the figures presented in the chapter.

Police recorded crime

When a potential crime comes to the attention of the police, they will record it as such if the circumstances reported amount to a crime defined in law and there is no credible evidence to the contrary.

Police recorded crime is based upon the notifiable offence list, a list of all offences that could possibly be tried by jury plus a few additional closely-related summary offences which are dealt with by magistrates. Police recording practice is governed by Home Office Counting Rules (HOOCR) and the National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS). These provide a national standard for the recording and classifying of notifiable offences by police forces in England and Wales³⁵.

This police recorded crime dataset is supplied to the Home Office by the 43 territorial police forces of England and Wales, plus the British Transport Police. The Home Office supplies these data to the Office for National Statistics who have had responsibility for the publication of crime statistics since April 2012.

Police recorded sexual offences are part of this notifiable offence dataset. Police recorded sexual offences are grouped together into two sub-categories; **most serious sexual crime**, which encompasses rape, sexual assault and sexual activity with children, and **other sexual offences**, which cover unlawful sexual activity, mostly involving consenting adults, and is therefore particularly influenced by police activity in investigating such crime. It includes, among other offences, exploitation of prostitution and soliciting, but not prostitution itself (which is not a notifiable offence).

In this publication, in order to mirror Ministry of Justice presentation of court statistics, police recorded crime are also aggregated into six sub sections; rape (male and female), sexual assault (male and female), sexual activity with minors and other sexual offences.

The Sexual Offences Act 2003 (introduced in May 2004), changed the coverage of police recorded sexual offences. The definitions were altered for rape, sexual assault and sexual activity with children. The Act also added other offences, most notably sexual grooming. Indecent exposure was included as a sexual offence, having previously been classified under **other offences**.

³⁴ www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/method-quality/specific/crime-statistics-methodology/user-guide-to-crime-statistics.pdf

³⁵ www.homeoffice.gov.uk/science-research/research-statistics/crime/counting-rules (2011)

After the introduction of the NCRS in April 2002, the Audit Commission carried out a series of audits and found that compliance with the NCRS was not instantaneous but improved gradually over the following years. Despite the cessation of the full national audit programme in 2007/08, ongoing work on crime recording continues to consider data quality issues and the National Crime Recording Steering Group³⁶ continues to promote consistent recording practice between forces.

More recently, HMIC have reviewed crime recording in *The Crime Scene: A review of police crime and incident reports*³⁷ (25 January 2012). While this review looked at all recording of crime rather than just sexual offences it gives an indication of the compliance of crime recording by forces. The review found that of the 44 police forces, 18 forces made correct decisions in 95 per cent and above of incidents checked; 15 forces in 90–94 per cent of incidents; and 11 forces in 86–89 per cent of incidents. HMIC plan to release more detailed reports regarding crime recording in the future, including the examination of individual forces looking at how they record sexual offences.

No crimes

Sometimes police forces record some crimes which are subsequently ‘no-crimed’ – this means that the police judged that no crime actually took place. This may be for a number of reasons, including where a crime has been recorded in error or where, having been recorded, additional information following investigation shows that no crime was committed.

The Home Office Counting Rules (HOCR) set out circumstances under which a crime report may be ‘no crimed’. These include situations where a crime is considered to have been recorded in error or where, having been recorded, additional verifiable information becomes available that determines that no crime was committed, which can include details uncovered during investigations, retractions of allegations and occasions where it is later determined the offence took place under another force’s jurisdiction. The level of evidence needed to ‘no crime’ is higher than for the recording of a crime as it requires information to be available that determines that the offence did not happen, rather than the ‘balance of probabilities that a crime did happen. For further information see the ‘general rules’ section of the HOCR³⁸.

Crime reports that are ‘no crimed’ are removed from police crime data and thus from the police recorded crime statistics. ‘No crimes’ are therefore the first stage where a criminal offence can drop out of the criminal justice system once a crime has been initially recorded by the police. Counts of ‘no crimes’ are published and further information on no crimes can be found in the ONS User Guide to Crime Statistics³⁹.

In the HMIC Crime Scene report, a small number of no crime decisions (less than 5,000 across England and Wales) were analysed and it was found that in 87 per cent of cases, the ‘no crime’ decision was correct. More specifically for rape offences, in a joint investigative report, Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) and Her

³⁶ The National Crime Recording Group meets regularly to review the Counting Rules and is attended by the Home Office, Force Crime Registrars and Statistics Officers, and representatives of ACPO and Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary.

³⁷ www.hmic.gov.uk/publication/review-police-crime-incident-reports-20120125/

³⁸ www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/science-research-statistics/research-statistics/crime-research/counting-rules/count-general?view=Binary

³⁹ www.ons.gov.uk/guide-method/method-quality/specific/crime-statistics-methodology/user-guide-to-crime-statistics.pdf

Majesty's Inspectorate for the Crown Prosecution Service (HMCPSI) examined 'no crime' reports in their report *Forging the Links: Rape investigation and prosecution*⁴⁰. Information from this report is presented in the 'No crimes' section in Chapter 3.

Detections

The Home Office collates information on whether recorded crime are detected by the police, and if so, how they are detected. Detected crime is a term that describes notifiable offences that have been 'cleared up' by the police.

The police may use one of several methods to count a crime as detected. They fall into two broad categories; sanction and non-sanction detections. Once a detection has been claimed, any identifiable victim must be informed that the crime has been detected, or in the case of a child, their parent or guardian.

Sanction detections are where a formal sanction is issued to an offender and can be in the form of a charge or summons, a caution, Penalty Notices for Disorder (PNDs) and offences that are asked to be taken into consideration by a court (TICs).

Non-sanction detections are where the offence was cleared up but either no further action was taken against an offender, for example, where the alleged offender has died, where the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) by virtue of their powers under the Criminal Justice Act 2003 decided not to prosecute or in certain cases the offence was cleared up by the use of a form of locally based community resolution.⁴¹ Given the serious nature of many sexual offences, the uptake for community resolutions for sexual offences are relatively low compared with police recorded crime overall. Further information on detections can be found in Crimes Detected in England and Wales 2011/12.⁴²

Cautions and criminal histories (Police National Computer)

The statistics presented in this bulletin in relation to cautions issued and criminal histories of offenders sentenced for sexual offences are taken from an extract of the Police National Computer (PNC) held within the Ministry of Justice. The PNC is a large administrative database of offenders and their criminal histories and is maintained by police forces through a combination of automatic and manual processes. As with any large scale administrative system, the PNC is subject to error and is regularly updated by the police as more information about individual cases becomes available.

There are two data sources for the number of cautions issued by the police: those sent to the Home Office as part of the detections statistical return; and data taken from the PNC which are routinely published by the Ministry of Justice in 'Criminal Justice System Quarterly Bulletin' publications.

Although both data sources cover cautions issued by the police, there are differences between the datasets. The main reason for the differences is that the Home Office data are counted on a victim basis, while Ministry of Justice data are on an offender

⁴⁰ www.hmic.gov.uk/publication/forging-the-links-rape-investigation-and-prosecution/

⁴¹ From April 2011, the Home Office has collected data (supplied on a voluntary basis by 22 police forces) on crimes 'cleared up' by the application of locally based community resolutions or by the application of Restorative Justice (RJ) techniques. For more information see Detections in England and Wales 2011/12: www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/science-research-statistics/research-statistics/crime-research/hosb0812/

⁴² www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/science-research-statistics/research-statistics/crime-research/hosb0812/

basis. For example, if one person is assaulted by two people and these two people are cautioned for the offence, the Home Office figures will show one crime, detected by one caution, while the Ministry of Justice figures will show two cautions for the two separate offenders.

Additionally, there may be differences in the data in what the caution is issued for. For police recorded crime, the crime is recorded according to the Home Office Counting Rules, and stays recorded as this crime unless there is further evidence to the contrary. However, the police may decide to issue a caution for a lesser offence (given that the offender has to agree to accept the caution). Ministry of Justice figures from the PNC will show the caution issued for the lesser offence.

Lastly, due to different production schedules, the cautions data may be extracted at different times from the police via the detections statistical return and from the PNC. Given that the systems where the data are coming from are live operational databases, this can affect the exact numbers of cautions in any time period.

Court proceedings database (prosecutions, convictions and sentencing)

The Ministry of Justice collates data on court proceedings via data extracts from court database administrative systems. Statistics on prosecutions, convictions and sentencing are either derived from the LIBRA case management system, which holds the magistrates' courts records, or the Crown Court's CREST system which holds the trial and sentencing data. The data includes offences where there has been no police involvement, such as those prosecutions instigated by government departments, private organisations and individuals (mentioned for completeness only, as not relevant to sexual offences, which will always have police involvement). From July 1995 all Crown Court data on trials and sentences has been received directly from the Court Service's CREST computer system and from November 2008 all magistrates' courts data has been provided by the LIBRA case management system. Prior to November 2008, the police reported on magistrate court proceedings.

The statistics presented on court proceedings relate to proceedings completed in the year. A defendant may appear more than once in the tables if proceedings were completed against that defendant on more than one occasion during the year.

The figures given relate to persons for whom these offences were the principal offence for which they were dealt with. When a defendant has been found guilty of two or more offences, the offence selected is the one for which the heaviest penalty is imposed. Where the same disposal is imposed for two or more offences, the offence selected is the offence for which the statutory maximum penalty is the most severe.

The offence shown in the conviction statistics is the one for which the court took its final decision, and is not necessarily the same as the offence for which the defendant was initially prosecuted (for example when the court accepts a guilty plea from the defendant on a lesser charge). The sentence shown is the most severe sentence or order given for the principal offence (i.e. the principal sentence), secondary sentences given for the principal offence and sentences for non-principal offences are not counted in the tables.

The complexities of the criminal justice system and the constraints on resources in collating and processing data limit the amount of information collected routinely, so only the final outcome of proceedings at magistrates' courts and the Crown Court (where applicable) is recorded.

Duration of cases ('timeliness') from offence to completion

Statistics on the duration of criminal cases completed in the criminal courts are sourced from linking together extracts taken from the Crown Court case management system (CREST) and the magistrates' court case management system (Libra MIS). The datasets are produced by firstly collecting all Crown Court cases disposed of in the specified quarter and looking for a match for the defendant with the same offence in the magistrates' court data. Records are linked based on a combination of variables including given name, middle name, family name, date of birth, sex, postcode, a committal date, and two identifiers: the Arrest/Summons Number (ASN) and Pre-Trials Issue Unique Reference Number (PTIURN). Where the case is fully disposed in the magistrates' courts during the specified time period, the timeliness data for such cases is collected from the Libra MIS extract and added to the dataset.

A range of quality assurance measures have been carried out on the data. These include ensuring the data are complete, case events follow a logical date sequence with recorded offence information, and all breach cases are excluded. Times are analysed for anomalies or error, including the removal of cases with recorded durations of over ten years to ensure the average times reported are not distorted by incorrect data. Data cleaning is also carried out prior to matching the magistrates' court and the Crown Court datasets to ensure that minor differences between the recording of similar entries on the two systems do not materially affect the ability to match records.

The CREST system and Libra MIS reports provide good quality data and a high rate of data linking, with typically around 95 per cent of Crown Court records on CREST being successfully linked to a defendant recorded at a magistrates' court case on the Libra MIS extract.

Offender management

Prison flows and population

Prison establishments record details for individual inmates on the prison IT system (either Prison-NOMIS or LIDS). The information recorded includes details such as date of birth, sex, religion, nationality, ethnic origin, custody type, offence, reception and discharge dates and, for sentenced prisoners, sentence length. The data from individual prison establishments then feeds through to a central computer database, called the Inmate Information System (IIS), from which data extracts are used to produce the various analyses of prison population, receptions, discharges and time served in custody.

Until June 2009, the prison population data used for analysis was derived by combining two sources: the individual level data collected on IIS, and a set of aggregate totals from each prison establishment giving the numbers held in each prison broadly subdivided according to age group, sex, custody type and sentence length. The individual level data was scaled to the aggregate totals to create the monthly prison population dataset used for all analysis. A more detailed method of scaling was developed in 2004.

Following the rollout of the new prison IT system, Prison-NOMIS, the prison population data is now drawn from a single source, removing the need for the scaling process used previously. All prison population data from July 2009 onwards is taken from this new data source. For all annual tables showing the prison population over

time, this means the 2010 figures have been taken from a different source to earlier years. To aid comparison, the 2009 figures from both the old and new systems have been presented.

Probation Service supervision

Since 2005, detailed information on the supervision of offenders (at the individual offender level) has been submitted by probation trusts on a monthly basis. These monthly 'probation listings' include information on offenders starting and terminating probation supervision and those supervised on the probation caseload at the end of each month.

Symbols and conventions

The following symbols have been used throughout the tables in this bulletin:

- = Nil
- * = Not applicable
- .. = Not available
- (R) = Revised data
- (P) = Provisional data

Links to other resources

Statistics references

The basic statistical information in this document should be considered in conjunction with the parent statistical publications and research reports that are now available on related issues. These reports are published on the individual websites of the Office for National Statistics, the Home Office and the Ministry of Justice, as follows:

Crime Statistics (National Statistics publications presenting the most recent crime statistics from the Crime Survey of England and Wales and police recorded crime) – Office for National Statistics

www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/crime-stats/crime-statistics/index.html

User Guide to Crime Statistics for England and Wales – Office for National Statistics

www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/method-quality/specific/crime-statistics-methodology/user-guide-to-crime-statistics.pdf

Trends in crime: a short story 2011/12 – Office for National Statistics

www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/crime-stats/crime-statistics/period-ending-march-2012/trends-in-crime--a-short-story.html

Crime - research and statistics publications (including police recorded crime open data tables, crimes detected, 'no crimes' data amongst others) – Home Office

www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/science-research-statistics/research-statistics/crime-research/

Criminal Justice Statistics (Official Statistics quarterly bulletins) – Ministry of Justice

www.justice.gov.uk/statistics/criminal-justice/criminal-justice-statistics

A Guide to Criminal Justice Statistics, Ministry of Justice – 29 November 2012

www.justice.gov.uk/downloads/statistics/criminal-justice-stats/criminal-justice-statistics-guide-nov-2012.pdf

Court Statistics (Official Statistics quarterly bulletins) – Ministry of Justice

www.justice.gov.uk/statistics/courts-and-sentencing/judicial-quarterly

Offender management statistics (Official Statistics quarterly bulletins) – Ministry of Justice

www.justice.gov.uk/statistics/prisons-and-probation/oms-quarterly

Offender management statistics: definitions and measurement – Ministry of Justice

www.justice.gov.uk/downloads/statistics/prison-probation/oms-definitions-measurement.pdf

Research references

A gap of a chasm? Attrition in reported rape cases – Home Office Research Study 293, February 2005

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20110218135832/rds.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs05/hors293.pdf>

The Stern Review: A report by Baroness Vivien Stern CBE of an independent review into how rape complaints are handled by public authorities in England and Wales – Home Office, 2010

http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20110608160754/http://www.equalities.gov.uk/PDF/Stern_Review_acc_FINAL.pdf

Providing anonymity to those accused of rape: an assessment of evidence – Ministry of Justice Research Series 20/10, November 2010

www.justice.gov.uk/publications/research-and-analysis/moj/2010/anonymity-rape-assessment-evidence

Contacts

Feedback on this first publication of a system wide overview of sexual offending in England and Wales is welcomed by each of the contributing Departments. If you have any feedback, questions or requests for further information about this statistical bulletin, please direct them to the appropriate contact given below – split by subject chapters.

Chapter 2

Press enquiries should be directed to the Office for National Statistics media relations office:

Tel: 0845 604 1858

Email: media.relations@ons.gsi.gov.uk

Other enquiries about these statistics should be directed the Crime Statistics and Analysis Team at the Office for National Statistics:

John Flatley
1 Drummond Gate
London
SW1V 2QQ
Email: crimestatistics@ons.gsi.gov.uk

General enquiries about the statistical work of the Office for National Statistics can be e-mailed to: info@ons.gsi.gov.uk

Chapter 3 (aspects regarding police recorded crime and detections)

Press enquiries should be directed to the Home Office press office:

Tel: 020 7035 3535

Other enquiries about these statistics should be directed to:

David Blunt
Chief Statistician
Home Office
5th Floor Peel
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF
Email: crimestats@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

General enquiries about the statistical work of the Home Office can be e-mailed to: crimestats@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

Chapters 3 (aspects regarding cautions) and 4 to 7

Press enquiries should be directed to the Ministry of Justice press office:

Tel: 020 3334 3536

Email: newsdesk@justice.gsi.gov.uk

Other enquiries about these statistics should be directed to the Justice Statistics Analytical Services division of the Ministry of Justice:

Mike Elkins
Chief Statistician
Ministry of Justice
7th Floor
102 Petty France
London
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Email: statistics.enquiries@justice.gsi.gov.uk

General enquiries about the statistical work of the Ministry of Justice can be e-mailed to: statistics.enquiries@justice.gsi.gov.uk

General statistical information

General information about the official statistics system of the UK is available from: www.statistics.gov.uk

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Alternative formats are available on request from

statistics.enquiries@justice.gsi.gov.uk