



Ministry
of Justice

Knife Possession Sentencing Quarterly Brief January to March 2014 England and Wales

Ministry of Justice
Statistics Bulletin

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Introduction

This bulletin presents key statistics describing the trends in cautioning and sentencing, probation supervision and the prison population for possession of a knife or offensive weapon in England and Wales. This bulletin does not cover all knife crimes (offences involving a knife) as published by the Office for National Statistics¹. Details of other official statistics publications regarding knife related statistics can be found on page 30 of this bulletin.

The information presented combines both offences of possession of an article with a blade or point and offences of possession of an offensive weapon. The detailed offence codes used in this bulletin are outlined in the glossary section.

Also included in this bulletin are statistics on the recently introduced offences of aggravated possession of a knife or offensive weapon. These are included in their own separate table and are not included in other totals to enable consistent comparisons over time.

Recent Developments

- **New offence of aggravated knife possession (Tables 8-9, pages 20-21)**

From 3 December 2012, new offences of aggravated knife possession came into force as part of the provisions introduced in the Legal Aid Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders (LASPO) Act 2012. Initial disposals given for offenders dealt with against these new offences were included for the first time in the January to March 2013 Quarterly Bulletin

- **Methodological change introduced in Q4 2012**

From the fourth quarter of 2012 the figures presented in this bulletin were based on new estimates of the number and breakdown of disposals given for the possession of a knife or an offensive weapon. The estimates were introduced following a detailed analysis that tracked changes in the disposal figures from those initially published for each quarter to those released over the following year as data held on the PNC was updated with new information. It has now been over a year since the new methodology was introduced and Appendix B provides comparisons and commentary on the accuracy of the estimated final disposal outcomes for Q1 2013.

The background and methodology used to derive these estimates was published in the October to December 2012 release of this bulletin – [click here for link](#)

¹ www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/crime-stats/crime-statistics/period-ending-december-2013/stb-crime-stats-dec-2013.html#tab=Offences-involving-knives-and-sharp-instruments

Future Developments

In the next Knife Possession Sentencing Brief in September, we are planning to publish more detailed knife possession statistics at a police force area level to provide information at a more disaggregated level. Any feedback on our plans, or any other changes you would like to see to this statistical bulletin would be greatly appreciated.

This statistical brief, along with the full tables (including both current and estimated figures) are available from the Ministry of Justice Website at:

www.gov.uk/government/collections/knife-possession-sentencing-quarterly

The key events that might be expected to affect the statistics were:

- On 21 May 2008, the Court of Appeal issued the judgment in *Povey*² that said, because of prevalence, magistrates should normally sentence those convicted of knife crime possession offences at the top end of the range.
- The Sentencing Guidelines Council issued an update to the magistrates' courts guidelines, with effect from 4 August 2008, which set out the effect of the Court of Appeal judgment and made it clear that the starting point for the lowest level of knife possession amongst adults should be 12 weeks' custody.
- This applies in cases where a first time offender pleads not guilty to possession of a knife in non-dangerous circumstances. A guilty plea would attract a discount in the normal way, as would any personal mitigation, and could take the sentence below the custody threshold.
- Since September 2008 all probation areas have been able to provide intensive delivery of 300 hour Community Payback sentences for unemployed offenders convicted of knife crime offences, who are on the brink of custody. In January 2009 this offer of intensive delivery of a minimum of 18 hours per week over three days was extended to Community Payback sentences of any length imposed for an offence of knife crime, when an offender is unemployed.
- From 3 December 2012, a new offence of aggravated knife possession came into force. Anyone aged 16 or over who uses a knife or offensive weapon to threaten and endanger others will face a mandatory custodial sentence, unless the court considers there to be particular circumstances which would make it unjust to do so.³

This publication has been prepared by Justice Statistics Analytical Services. If you have any feedback, questions or request for further information about these statistics, please direct them to the appropriate contact given at the end of this report.

² Povey & Ors, R. v, Court of Appeal - Criminal Division, May 21, 2008, [2008] EWCA Crim 1261.

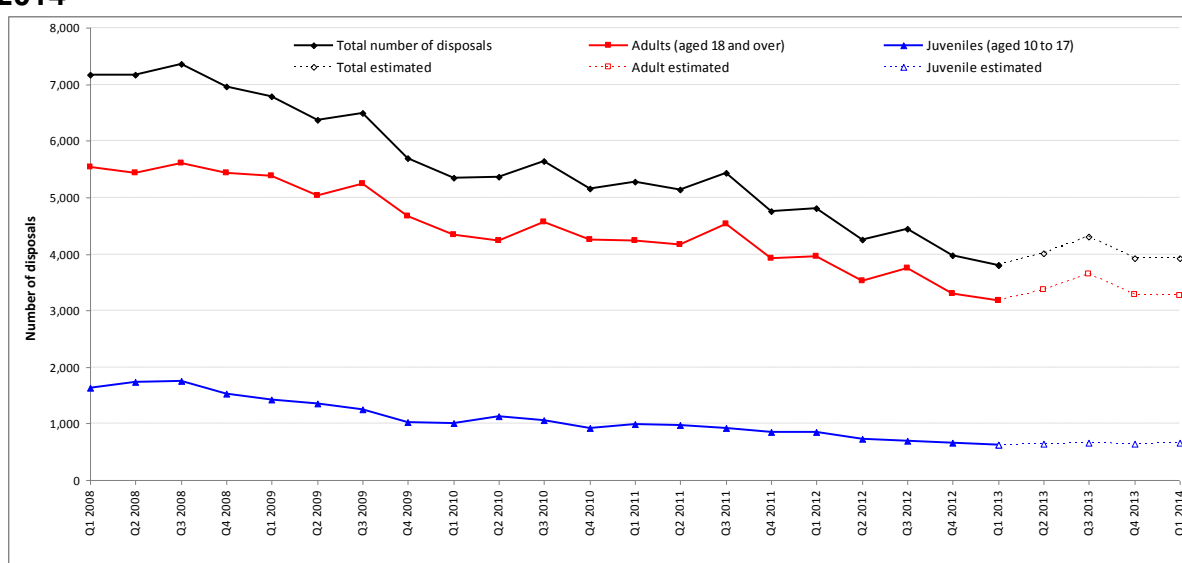
³ For legislation, see: www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2012/10/contents/enacted

Key findings

Estimates indicate that the final disposal⁴ figures for Q1 2014 will show:

- 3,914 disposals were given for possession of a knife or offensive weapon offence, broadly the same compared to the previous quarter and three per cent higher than in Q1 2013. The latest estimate appears to show the downward trend is beginning to level off. The number of cautions or convictions, however, given for these offences have almost halved since the peak seen in Q3 2008 (7,360).
- It is estimated that over 5 times as many adults offenders (3,262) were cautioned or convicted for possession offences compared to 652 juveniles offenders – a ratio that has generally been increasing over the last 5 years as the number of juveniles cautioned or convicted has fallen at a faster rate than for adults, although this ratio has decreased slightly in the most recent year.
- Nearly a third (32 per cent) of adult offenders were given an immediate custodial sentence, a slight increase to a year ago and up over the longer term. The proportion of adult offenders given cautions has significantly fallen in recent years, and is now at its lowest reported level at 12 per cent.
- The proportion of juveniles given a youth caution has fallen by five percentage points from the same period a year ago and is now 27 per cent. There has been a subsequent increase (to 56 per cent) in the proportion of juveniles given a community sentence over the same period. 10 per cent of juveniles were given an immediate custodial sentence – up slightly on the same period a year ago.

Figure 1: Number of disposals given for knife and offensive weapon possession offences by age, in England and Wales, between Q1 2008 and Q1 2014

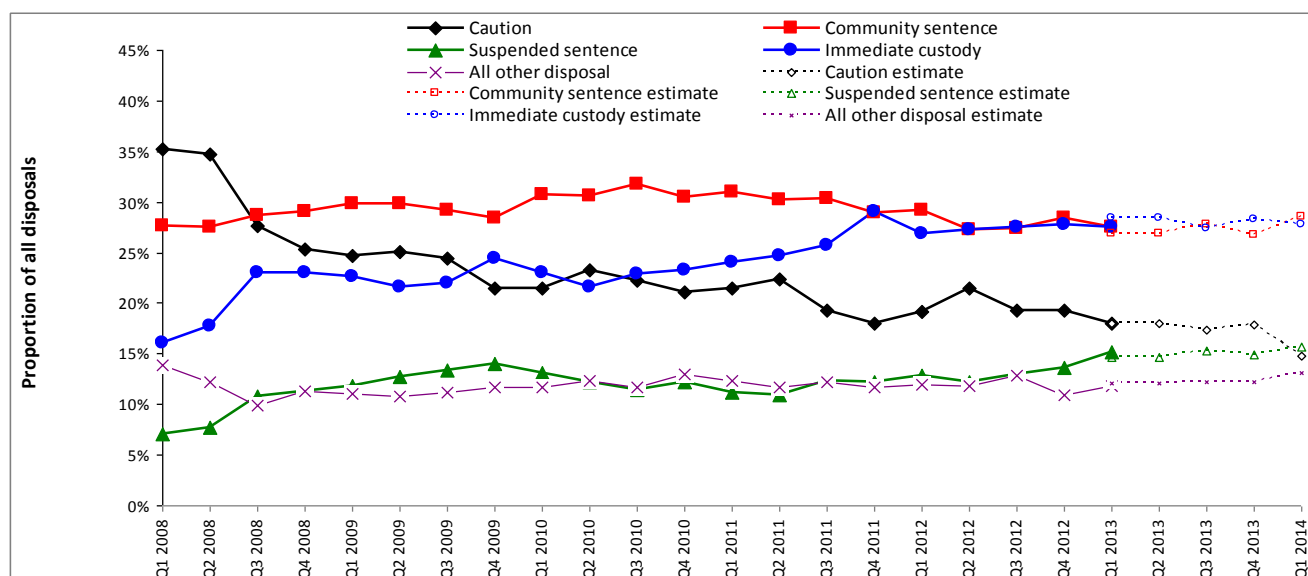


⁴ The disposal used in figures and tables in this bulletin is the most severe disposal of those given as a result of being found guilty, and may also depend on other offences dealt with at the same time.

Knife Possession offences by disposal type

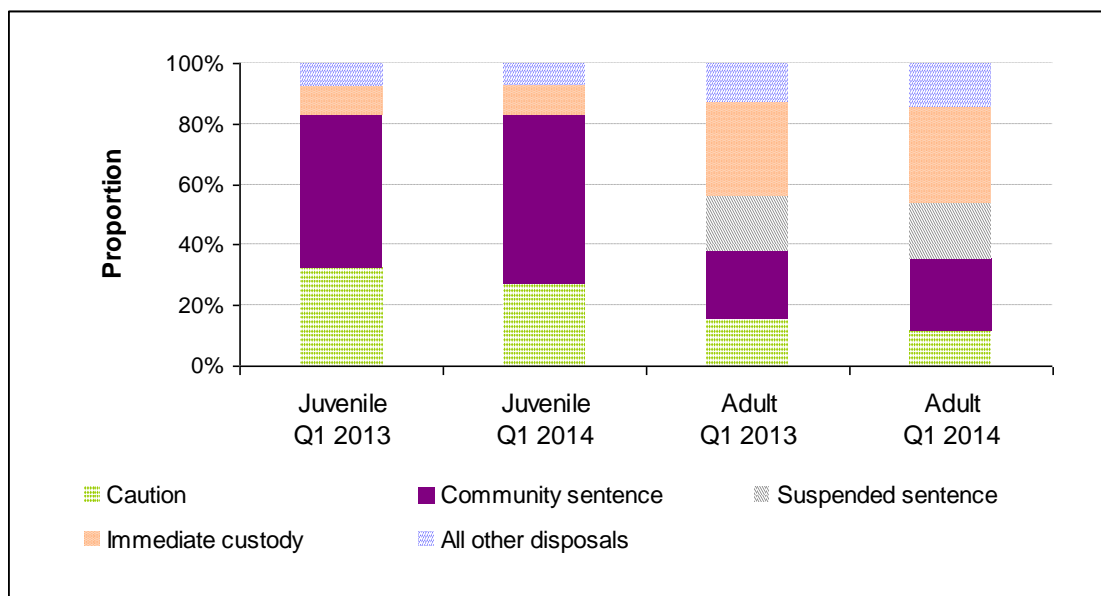
- The most common disposals for possession of a knife or an offensive weapon were a community sentence (29 per cent) and an immediate custodial sentence (28 per cent).
- Nearly three quarters (73 per cent) of all disposals were for immediate custody, suspended sentence order or community sentence, which is the highest proportion it has ever been. On the contrary we have seen the lowest levels of cautions recorded on the Police National Computer since 2000 for knife possession, with 14 per cent of all disposals. Note that figures for the latest quarter are estimated so this may change slightly once final outcomes are known.
- Over the longer term, the proportion of possession offences resulting in an immediate custody has increased since 2008 (from 16 per cent in Q1 2008 to 28 per cent in Q1 2014). The increase started particularly during 2008 when changes were made to the sentencing guidelines for knife possession as outlined earlier in this bulletin. Contrasting to this, the proportion of possession offences resulting in a police caution has fallen since 2008.

Figure 2: Proportion of type of disposal given for knife and offensive weapon possession in England and Wales, between Q1 2008 and Q1 2014



- Over half of all juveniles (56 per cent) receiving disposals for possession offences were given a community sentence, while nearly a third (27 per cent) were given a youth caution⁵, 10 per cent were given an immediate custodial sentence, up one percentage point on the same period one year ago and down two percentage points on the same period two years ago. The proportion of juveniles given a youth caution fell by five percentage points to 27 per cent compared to the same period a year ago and two percentage points lower than three years ago.
- Over three in ten adult offenders were given an immediate custodial sentence, a slight increase to a year ago and is up over the longer term. The proportion of cautions given has fallen in the last year - from 15 per cent in Q1 2013 to 12 per cent in Q1 2014.

Figure 3: Proportion of type of disposal given for knife and offensive weapon possession for juveniles and adults, in England and Wales, Q1 2013 and Q1 2014

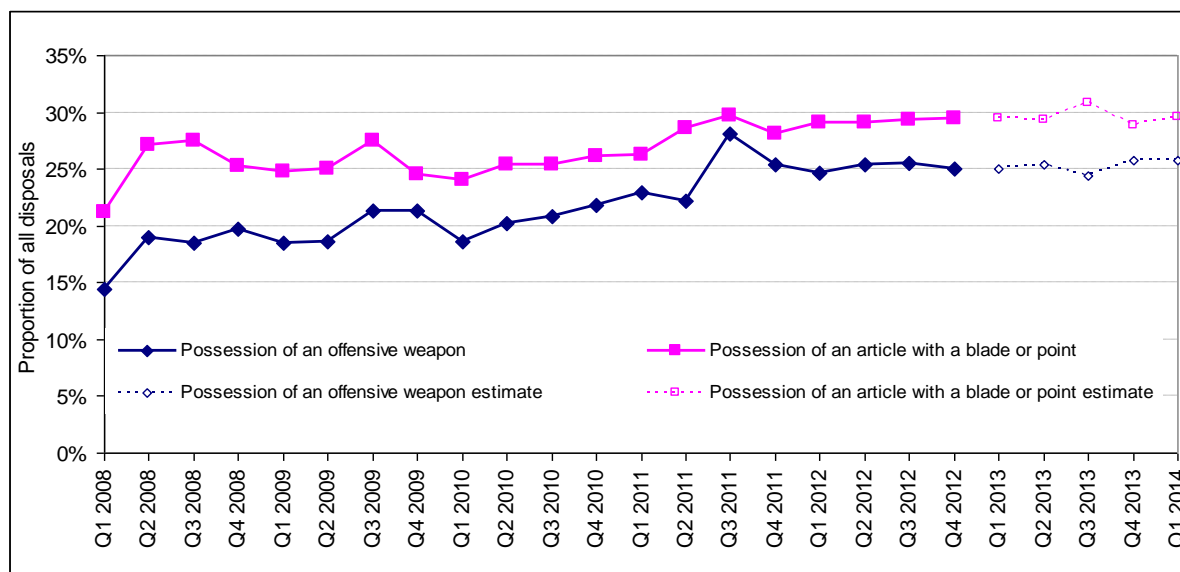


Knife possession offences by type of offence

- A greater proportion of offences resulting in a caution or sentence (60 per cent) involved the possession of an article with a blade or point, than possession of an offensive weapon (40 per cent). Over the last four quarters the number of possession offences involving an article with a blade or point has increased by eight per cent while possession offences for an offensive weapon fell by four per cent.
- Offenders convicted of offences involving the possession of an article with a blade or point are more likely to be given an immediate custodial sentence than offenders convicted of offences involving an offensive weapon, 30 per cent compared to 26 per cent.

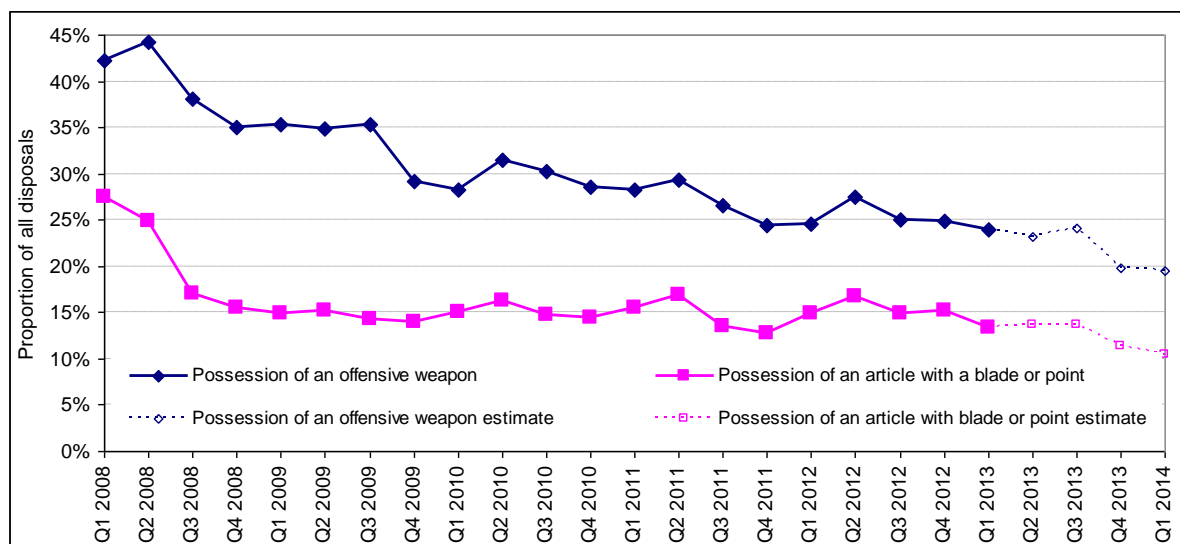
⁵ Since April 8th 2013 youth cautions were introduced replacing reprimands and warnings for young offenders.

Figure 4: Proportion of offences resulting in custodial sentences given for knife and offensive weapon possession in England and Wales, between Q1 2008 and Q1 2014



- The proportion of cautions given to offenders is twice as high for possession of an offensive weapon (20 per cent) than for the possession of an article with a blade or point (10 per cent).

Figure 5: Proportion of offences resulting in cautions for knife and offensive weapon possession in England and Wales, between Q1 2008 and Q1 2014



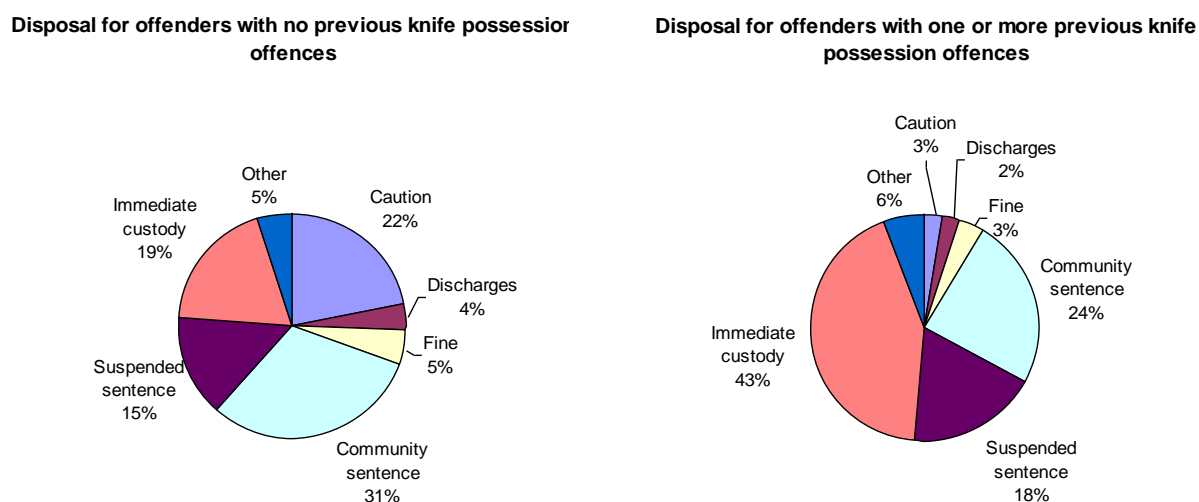
Knife possession offences by length of immediate custodial sentence

- Immediate custodial sentences given for possession offences were 221 days, or 7.4 months, on average, the same as in Q1 2013 (220 days). This was 11 per cent longer than the 199 days two years ago. The latest quarter represents an increase of 68 per cent or 3 months, compared to the end of 2007.

Criminal history of those cautioned or sentenced for knife possession offences

- The types of disposal given for knife possession offences are correlated with the number of previous cautions or convictions for possession offences. For offenders with no previous knife possession offences, 22 per cent received a caution in the 12 months ending March 2014 whereas 31 per cent received a community sentence and 19 per cent were given immediate custody. However, for offenders with at least one previous possession offence on their record, 43 per cent were sentenced to immediate custody in the 12 months ending March 2014, while only three per cent received a caution.
- Juvenile offenders having more than one previous knife possession offence on their record are most likely to receive a community sentence (63 per cent) or immediate custody (24 per cent). Only three per cent of juvenile offenders with one or more previous receive a youth caution⁴.
- The custody rate of adult offenders rises in relation with their number of previous possession offences, with 54 per cent of those offenders with three or more previous offences receiving an immediate custody sentence compared to 22 per cent for those with no previous possession offence.

Figure 6: Number of previous convictions or cautions for the possession of a knife or offensive weapon for offenders convicted or cautioned for a possession offence in 12 months ending March 2014, in England and Wales



New aggravated knife or offensive weapon possession offences

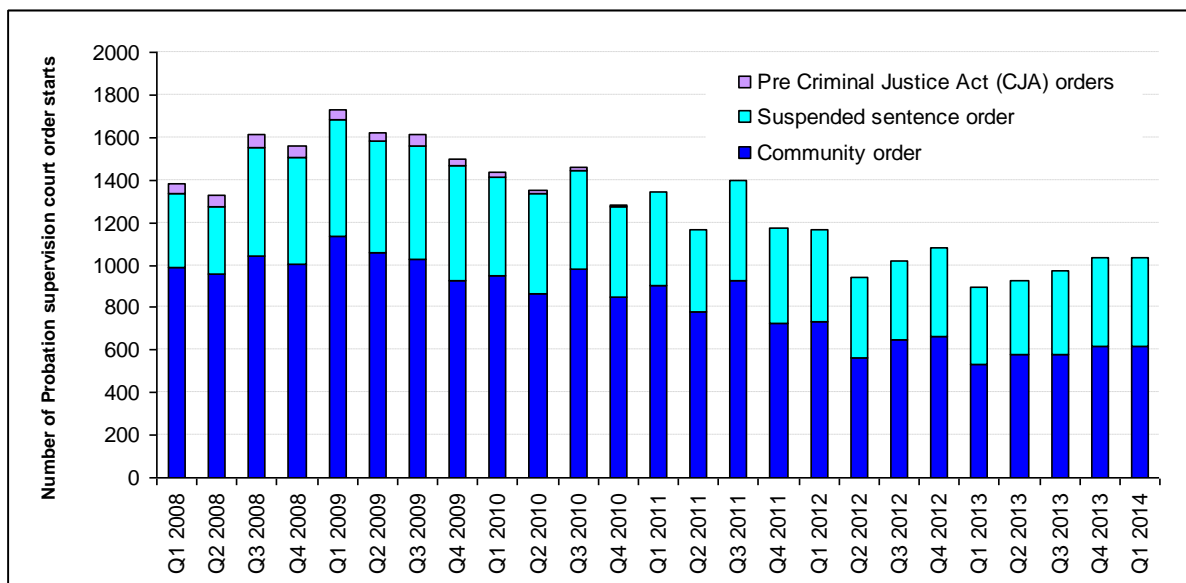
- In the 12 months ending March 2014 a total of 257 offences (189 by adults, 68 by juveniles) have been dealt with in relation to one of the new aggravated knife possession offences that came into effect from 3 December 2012.
- Of the 68 offences committed by juveniles, 34 offences were committed by offenders aged between 10 and 15 when sentenced. (Sentencing guidelines differ for these age bands as explained page 4).

- Of the 223 new offences of aggravated knife possession where offenders were aged 16 and over, 126 offences or 57 per cent have received an immediate custodial sentence, and 78 per cent received either an immediate custodial sentence or suspended sentence order. Please note however that these figures are provisional and are likely to change, in particular the number of immediate custodial sentences is likely to rise, once all sentences have been finalised.

Offenders commencing probation

- 1,034 offenders started a court order under probation supervision for possession offences. This is up 16 per cent from Q1 2013 but 11 per cent down from Q1 2012. These changes reflect the general trends in the number of possession offences dealt with over the period.
- The most common requirement placed on offenders starting court orders for possession offences was supervision – 36 per cent of suspended sentence orders (SSOs) and 33 per cent of community orders (COs). The next most common requirement was unpaid work – 26 per cent of SSOs and 29 per cent of COs, respectively. The use of unpaid work as a requirement has fallen over recent years – down five percentage points since Q1 2011 for COs and down one percentage point for SSOs over the same period.
- Where unpaid work requirements were placed upon those starting a community order for possession offences, 43 per cent were for less than 80 hours and 39 per cent were for 81 to 150 hours. For those starting suspended sentence orders, 27 per cent were for under 80 hours and 51 per cent were for 81 to 150 hours.

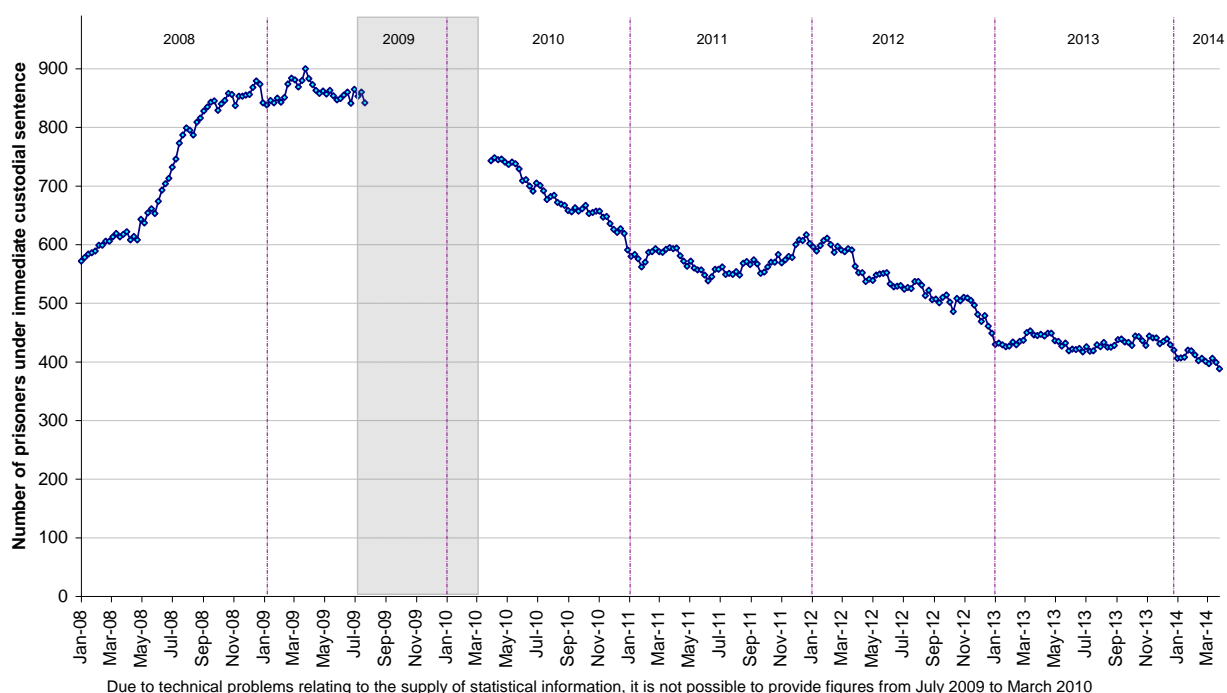
Figure 7: Number of offenders commencing a court order under probation supervision for possession of an offensive weapon, in England and Wales from Q1 2008 to Q1 2014



Offenders in prison for knife possession offences

- 388 offenders were in prison serving a sentence for possession of an offensive weapon on 28 March 2014, down 13 per cent from a year ago and continuing the reductions seen in the prison population for this offence since early 2009. This trend comes despite the generally increasing use and length of custodial sentences for possession offences, and is likely to be primarily related to the reductions in the total number of offences dealt with over the period.

Figure 8: Prison population under sentence for possession of an offensive weapon⁶ (excludes recalls) in England and Wales, between 2008 – Q1 2014



⁶ Includes having an article with a blade or a point.

Appendix A: Statistical Tables

Table 1: Offences involving the possession of a knife or offensive weapon resulting in a caution or sentence, in England and Wales

Number of offences and percentage change								
Disposal Category ¹	Q1 2011	Q1 2012	Q1 2013	Q2 2013 ^E	Q3 2013 ^E	Q4 2013 ^E	Q1 2014 ^E	% change, Q1 2013 to estimated Q1 2014
	Number of offences							
England and Wales ²	5,235	4,801	3,810	4,012	4,309	3,926	3,914	3
Caution ³	1,091	918	684	699	771	585	552	-19
Absolute/Conditional discharge	217	172	139	118	153	132	157	13
Fine	213	203	174	186	183	190	164	-6
Community sentence	1,632	1,399	1,046	1,105	1,149	1,131	1,138	9
Suspended sentence	593	614	579	608	652	624	606	5
Immediate custody	1,271	1,295	1,048	1,112	1,217	1,084	1,099	5
Other disposal ⁴	218	200	140	184	184	180	198	41
	Percentage of total offences							
Caution ³	21	19	18	17	18	15	14	
Absolute/Conditional discharge	4	4	4	3	4	3	4	
Fine	4	4	5	5	4	5	4	
Community sentence	31	29	27	28	27	29	29	
Suspended sentence	11	13	15	15	15	16	15	
Immediate custody	24	27	28	28	28	28	28	
Other disposal ⁴	4	4	4	5	4	5	5	

Source: Police National Computer (PNC)

¹ The disposal given in this table is only the most severe of the disposals given as a result of the offender being found guilty and may also be dependent on other offences committed at the same time.

² England and Wales includes all 43 police force areas and the British Transport Police.

³ Cautions include juveniles receiving reprimands and warnings or youth cautions. Youth cautions were introduced on April 8th 2013 replacing reprimands and warnings for young offenders. The guidance is published at the link <http://www.justice.gov.uk/out-of-court-disposals>

⁴ Includes cases where an offender may have been convicted, but is awaiting further sentencing

^E Denotes where estimated figures have been used. The estimates are based on historical data changes. Please see explanatory notes of bulletin for further details.

Table 2: Offences involving the possession of a knife or offensive weapon resulting in a caution or sentence by age group, in England and Wales

Number of offences and percentages								
Disposal Category ²	Q1 2011 ³	Q1 2012 ³	Q1 2013 ³	Q2 2013 ^E	Q3 2013 ^E	Q4 2013 ^E	Q1 2014 ^E	% change, Q1 2013 to estimated Q1 2014
Number of offences								
Aged 10 to 17	991	843	627	646	665	643	652	4
Reprimands & warnings/Youth cautions ⁴	288	208	201	181	194	180	175	-13
Absolute/conditional discharge	24	19	22	16	19	25	20	*
Fine	4	2	2	2	0	0	0	*
Community sentence	541	476	319	329	344	326	366	15
Immediate custody	93	105	59	78	72	77	66	12
Other disposal ⁵	41	33	24	40	36	35	25	*
Percentage of total offences								
Reprimands & warnings/Youth cautions ⁴	29	25	32	28	29	28	27	
Absolute/conditional discharge	2	2	4	2	3	4	3	
Fine	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Community sentence	55	56	51	51	52	51	56	
Immediate custody	9	12	9	12	11	12	10	
Other disposal ⁵	4	4	4	6	5	5	4	
Number of offences								
Aged 18 and over	4,239	3,958	3,180	3,366	3,644	3,283	3,262	3
Caution	801	710	483	518	577	405	377	-22
Absolute/Conditional discharge	192	153	117	102	134	107	137	17
Fine	209	201	172	184	183	190	164	-5
Community sentence	1,090	923	726	776	805	805	772	6
Suspended sentence	593	614	579	608	652	624	606	5
Immediate custody	1,177	1,190	987	1,034	1,145	1,007	1,033	5
Other disposal ⁵	177	167	116	144	148	145	173	49
Percentage of total offences								
Caution	19	18	15	15	16	12	12	
Absolute/Conditional discharge	5	4	4	3	4	3	4	
Fine	5	5	5	5	5	6	5	
Community sentence	26	23	23	23	22	25	24	
Suspended sentence	14	16	18	18	18	19	19	
Immediate custody	28	30	31	31	31	31	32	
Other disposal ⁵	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	

Source: Police National Computer (PNC)

¹ Includes all 43 police force areas and the British Transport Police.

² The disposal given in this table is only the most severe of the disposals given as a result of the offender being found guilty and may also be dependent on other offences committed at the same time.

³ The difference between the totals in Table 1 and the adult / juvenile breakdown is where there is no age recorded on the system

⁴ Since April 8th 2013 youth cautions were introduced replacing reprimands and warnings for young offenders. The guidance is published at the link <http://www.justice.gov.uk/out-of-court-disposals>

⁵ Includes cases where an offender may have been convicted, but is awaiting further sentencing

^E Denotes where estimated figures have been used. The estimates are based on historical data changes. Please see explanatory notes of bulletin for further details.

* Indicates that one or more of the comparative numbers are less than 50. For small numbers this could give misleading percentage changes.

Table 3: Offences involving the possession of a knife or offensive weapon resulting in a caution or sentence by type of offence, in England and Wales

Number of offences and percentages									
Disposal Category ²	Q1 2011	Q1 2012	Q1 2013	Q2 2013 ^E	Q3 2013 ^E	Q4 2013 ^E	Q1 2014 ^E	% change, Q1 2013 to estimated Q1 2014	
Possession of an article with a blade or point	Number of offences								
	2,836	2,711	2,154	2,414	2,559	2,312	2,329	8	
	Caution ³	441	403	287	329	350	264	242	-16
	Absolute/Conditional discharge	139	111	88	82	101	91	98	11
	Fine	107	125	105	124	106	115	105	0
	Community sentence	928	820	624	681	713	681	720	15
	Suspended sentence	355	372	343	372	406	377	365	6
	Immediate custody	739	764	634	707	789	668	690	9
	Other disposal ⁴	127	116	73	119	94	116	109	49
	Percentage of total offences								
Caution ³	16	15	13	14	14	11	10		
Absolute/Conditional discharge	5	4	4	3	4	4	4		
Fine	4	5	5	5	4	5	5		
Community sentence	33	30	29	28	28	29	31		
Suspended sentence	13	14	16	15	16	16	16		
Immediate custody	26	28	29	29	31	29	30		
Other disposal ⁴	4	4	3	5	4	5	5		
Possession of an offensive weapon	Number of offences								
	2,399	2,090	1,656	1,598	1,750	1,614	1,585	-4	
	Caution ³	650	515	397	370	421	321	310	-22
	Absolute/Conditional discharge	78	61	51	36	52	41	59	16
	Fine	106	78	69	62	77	75	59	-14
	Community sentence	704	579	422	424	436	450	418	-1
	Suspended sentence	238	242	236	236	246	247	241	2
	Immediate custody	532	531	414	405	428	416	409	-1
	Other disposal ⁴	91	84	67	65	90	64	89	33
	Percentage of total offences								
Caution ¹	27	25	24	23	24	20	20		
Absolute/Conditional discharge	3	3	3	2	3	3	4		
Fine	4	4	4	4	4	5	4		
Community sentence	29	28	25	27	25	28	26		
Suspended sentence	10	12	14	15	14	15	15		
Immediate custody	22	25	25	25	24	26	26		
Other disposal ⁴	4	4	4	4	5	4	6		

Source: Police National Computer (PNC)

¹ England and Wales includes all 43 police force areas and the British Transport Police.

² The disposal given in this table is only the most severe of the disposals given as a result of the offender being found guilty and may also be dependent on other offences committed at the same time.

³ Cautions include juveniles receiving reprimands and warnings or youth cautions. Youth cautions were introduced on April 8th 2013 replacing reprimands and warnings for young offenders. The guidance is published at the link <http://www.justice.gov.uk/out-of-court-disposals>

⁴ Includes cases where an offender may have been convicted, but is awaiting further sentencing

^E Denotes where estimated figures have been used. The estimates are based on historical data changes. Please see explanatory notes of bulletin for further details.

Table 4: Proportion of knife and offensive weapon possession offences resulting in an immediate custodial sentence, by sentence length, in England and Wales¹

Offences resulting in an immediate custody							
Sentence length	Q1 2011	Q1 2012	Q1 2013	Q2 2013	Q3 2013	Q4 2013	Q1 2014
	Percentage of total offences						
Up to and including 3 months	40	38	36	39	35	34	38
Over 3 months and up to and including 6 months	32	29	28	28	27	28	25
Over 6 months	28	33	36	33	38	39	37

Source: Police National Computer (PNC)

¹ England and Wales includes all 43 police force areas and the British Transport Police.

² Figures are based on the current figures and not the estimates used in Tables 1 to 3.

³ Excludes life sentences

Table 5: Average sentence length of immediate custodial sentences for knife and offensive weapon possession offences in England and Wales

Average Sentence length							
	Q1 2011	Q1 2012	Q1 2013	Q2 2013	Q3 2013	Q4 2013	Q1 2014
	Average sentence length (days)						
England and Wales ¹	186	199	220	203	225	220	221
							% change, Q1 2013 to Q1 2014
							0

Source: Police National Computer (PNC)

¹ England and Wales includes all 43 police force areas and the British Transport Police.

² Figures are based on the current figures and not the estimates used in Tables 1 to 3.

³ Excludes life sentences

Table 6a: Number of previous convictions or cautions for the possession of a knife or offensive weapon for offenders convicted or cautioned for a possession offence 12 months ending March 2014, in England and Wales⁶

Number of previous convictions/cautions					
Disposal Category ^{1,5}	Number of previous convictions / cautions				Total
	0	1	2	3 or more	
Number of offenders					
England and Wales ²	11,211	2,336	837	694	15,078
Cautions ³	2,455	91	13	8	2,567
Absolute/Conditional discharge	415	63	17	15	510
Fine	559	96	18	16	689
Community sentence	3,445	640	182	122	4,389
Suspended sentence	1,656	433	143	118	2,350
Immediate custody	2,143	880	412	372	3,807
Other disposal ⁴	538	133	52	43	766
Percentage					
Cautions ³	22	4	2	1	17
Absolute/Conditional discharge	4	3	2	2	3
Fine	5	4	2	2	5
Community sentence	31	27	22	18	29
Suspended sentence	15	19	17	17	16
Immediate custody	19	38	49	54	25
Other disposal ⁴	5	6	6	6	5

Source: Police National Computer (PNC)

¹ The disposal given in this table is only the most severe of the disposals given as a result of the offender being found guilty and may also be dependent on other offences committed at the same time..

² England and Wales includes all 43 police force areas and the British Transport Police.

³ Cautions include juveniles receiving reprimands and warnings or youth cautions. Youth cautions were introduced on April 8th 2013 replacing reprimands and warnings for young offenders. The guidance is published at the link <http://www.justice.gov.uk/out-of-court-disposals>.

⁴ Represent cases where an offender may have been convicted, but is awaiting further sentencing.

⁵ Please note that the figures in this table are based on current figures and not the estimates used in Tables 1 to 3. In particular the number of immediate custodial sentences will rise as sentences passed by the Crown court become available on the Police National Computer.

⁶ Figures are based on counting the number of cautioning and sentencing occasions for offences committed by offenders which were prosecuted by police forces in England and Wales including the British Transport Police. Offenders may appear more than once in the year, where they have been sentenced on multiple occasions within the year.

Table 6b: Number of previous convictions or cautions for the possession of a knife or offensive weapon for offenders convicted or cautioned for a possession offence 12 months ending March 2013, in England and Wales

Number of previous convictions/cautions					
Disposal Category ^{1,5}	Number of previous convictions / cautions				Total
	0	1	2	3 or more	
Number of offenders					
England and Wales ²	11,717	2,428	805	616	15,566
Cautions ³	3,068	100	18	8	3,194
Absolute/Conditional discharge	414	85	21	17	537
Fine	549	109	18	17	693
Community sentence	3,376	632	176	87	4,271
Suspended sentence	1,455	387	127	83	2,052
Immediate custody	2,406	1,011	407	376	4,200
Other disposal ⁴	449	104	38	28	619
Percentage					
Cautions ³	26	4	2	1	21
Absolute/Conditional discharge	4	4	3	3	3
Fine	5	4	2	3	4
Community sentence	29	26	22	14	27
Suspended sentence	12	16	16	13	13
Immediate custody	21	42	51	61	27
Other disposal ⁴	4	4	5	5	4

Source: Police National Computer (PNC)

¹ The disposal given in this table is only the most severe of the disposals given as a result of the offender being found guilty and may also be dependent on other offences committed at the same time.

² England and Wales includes all 43 police force areas and the British Transport Police.

³ Cautions include juveniles receiving reprimands and warnings or youth cautions. Youth cautions were introduced on April 8th 2013 replacing reprimands and warnings for young offenders. The guidance is published at the link <http://www.justice.gov.uk/out-of-court-disposals>.

⁴ Represent cases where an offender may have been convicted, but is awaiting further sentencing.

⁵ Figures are based on counting the number of cautioning and sentencing occasions for offences committed by offenders which were prosecuted by police forces in England and Wales including the British Transport Police. Offenders may appear more than once in the year, where they have been sentenced on multiple occasions within the year.

Table 7a: Number of previous convictions or cautions for the possession of a knife or offensive weapon for offenders convicted or cautioned for a possession offence 12 months ending March 2014, split by age group in England and Wales^{1,6}

Number of previous convictions/cautions					
Disposal Category ^{2,5}	Number of previous convictions / cautions				Total
	0	1	2	3 or more	
Number of offenders					
Aged 10 to 17 ⁷	2,143	258	58	21	2,480
Reprimands & warnings/Youth cautions ³	703	11	0	0	714
Absolute/Conditional discharge	62	8	0	1	71
Fine	2	0	0	0	2
Community sentence	1,142	172	30	9	1,353
Immediate custody	150	50	20	10	230
Other disposal ⁴	84	17	8	1	110
Percentage					
Reprimands & warnings/Youth cautions ³	33	4	0	*	29
Absolute/Conditional discharge	3	3	0	*	3
Fine	0	0	0	*	0
Community sentence	53	67	52	*	55
Immediate custody	7	19	34	*	9
Other disposal ⁴	4	7	14	*	4
Number of offenders					
Aged 18 and over ⁷	9,067	2,077	779	673	12,596
Caution	1,751	80	13	8	1,852
Absolute/Conditional discharge	353	55	17	14	439
Fine	557	96	18	16	687
Community sentence	2,303	467	152	113	3,035
Suspended sentence	1,656	433	143	118	2,350
Immediate custody	1,993	830	392	362	3,577
Other disposal ⁴	454	116	44	42	656
Percentage					
Caution	19	4	2	1	15
Absolute/Conditional discharge	4	3	2	2	3
Fine	6	5	2	2	5
Community sentence	25	22	20	17	24
Suspended sentence	18	21	18	18	19
Immediate custody	22	40	50	54	28
Other disposal ⁴	5	6	6	6	5

Source: Police National Computer (PNC)

¹ England and Wales includes all 43 police force areas and the British Transport Police.

² The disposal given in this table is only the most severe of the disposals given as a result of the offender being found guilty and may also be dependent on other offences committed at the same time.

³ Since April 8th 2013 youth cautions were introduced replacing reprimands and warnings for young offenders. The guidance is published at the link <http://www.justice.gov.uk/out-of-court-disposals>.

⁴ Includes cases where an offender may have been convicted, but is awaiting further sentencing.

⁵ Please note that the figures in this table are based on current figures and not the estimates used in Tables 1 to 3. In particular the number of immediate custodial sentences will rise as sentences passed by the Crown court become available on the Police National Computer.

⁶ Figures are based on counting the number of cautioning and sentencing occasions for offences committed by offenders which were prosecuted by police forces in England and Wales including the British Transport Police. Offenders may appear more than once in the year, where they have been sentenced on multiple occasions within the year.

⁷ The difference between the totals in Table 6a and the adult / juvenile breakdown in this table, is where there is no age recorded on the system.

* Indicates that one or more of the comparative numbers are less than 50. For small numbers this could give misleading percentage changes.

Table 7b: Number of previous convictions or cautions for the possession of a knife or offensive weapon for offenders convicted or cautioned for a possession offence 12 months ending March 2013, split by age group in England and Wales^{1,6}

Number of previous convictions/cautions					
Disposal Category ^{2,5}	Number of previous convictions / cautions				Total
	0	1	2	3 or more	
Number of offenders					
Aged 10 to 17 ⁵	2,340	220	42	14	2,616
Reprimands & warnings/Youth cautions ³	790	4	0	0	794
Absolute/Conditional discharge	50	6	1	1	58
Fine	3	1	0	1	5
Community sentence	1,196	127	24	4	1,351
Immediate custody	196	65	12	6	279
Other disposal ⁴	105	17	5	2	129
Percentage					
Reprimands & warnings/Youth cautions ³	34	2	*	*	30
Absolute/Conditional discharge	2	3	*	*	2
Fine	0	0	*	*	0
Community sentence	51	58	*	*	52
Immediate custody	8	30	*	*	11
Other disposal ⁴	4	8	*	*	5
Number of offenders					
Aged 18 and over ⁷	9,373	2,207	763	602	12,945
Caution	2,278	96	18	8	2,400
Absolute/Conditional discharge	364	79	20	16	479
Fine	546	108	18	16	688
Community sentence	2,178	504	152	83	2,917
Suspended sentence	1,455	387	127	83	2,052
Immediate custody	2,208	946	395	370	3,919
Other disposal ⁴	344	87	33	26	490
Percentage					
Caution	24	4	2	1	19
Absolute/Conditional discharge	4	4	3	3	4
Fine	6	5	2	3	5
Community sentence	23	23	20	14	23
Suspended sentence	16	18	17	14	16
Immediate custody	24	43	52	61	30
Other disposal ⁴	4	4	4	4	4

Source: Police National Computer (PNC)

¹ England and Wales includes all 43 police force areas and the British Transport Police.

² The disposal given in this table is only the most severe of the disposals given as a result of the offender being found guilty and may also be dependent on other offences committed at the same time.

³ Since April 8th 2013 youth cautions were introduced replacing reprimands and warnings for young offenders. The guidance is published at the link <http://www.justice.gov.uk/out-of-court-disposals>.

⁴ Includes cases where an offender may have been convicted, but is awaiting further sentencing.

⁵ The difference between the totals in Table 6b and the adult / juvenile breakdown in this table, is where there is no age recorded on the system.

⁶ Figures are based on counting the number of cautioning and sentencing occasions for offences committed by offenders which were prosecuted by police forces in England and Wales including the British Transport Police. Offenders may appear more than once in the year, where they have been sentenced on multiple occasions within the year.

* Indicates that one or more of the comparative numbers are less than 50. For small numbers this could give misleading percentage changes.

Table 8: Offences involving threatening with a knife or offensive weapon resulting in a caution or sentence in England and Wales, Q1 2013 to Q1 2014

Number of offences and percentages						
Disposal Category ¹	Q1 2013	Q2 2013	Q3 2013	Q4 2013	Q1 2014	12 months ending March 2014
Number of offences						
England and Wales²	15	43	59	69	86	257
Caution ³	2	0	1	3	3	7
Absolute/Conditional discharge	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fine	0	0	0	0	0	0
Community sentence	2	14	11	11	19	55
Suspended sentence	2	6	10	12	20	48
Immediate custody	9	21	35	40	34	130
Other disposal ³	0	2	2	3	10	17
Percentage						
Caution ³	*	*	2	4	3	3
Absolute/Conditional discharge	*	*	0	0	0	0
Fine	*	*	0	0	0	0
Community sentence	*	*	19	16	22	21
Suspended sentence	*	*	17	17	23	19
Immediate custody	*	*	59	58	40	51
Other disposal ⁴	*	*	3	4	12	7

Source: Police National Computer (PNC)

¹ The disposal given in this table is only the most severe of the disposals given as a result of the offender being found guilty and may also be dependent on other offences committed at the same time.

² England and Wales includes all 43 police force areas and the British Transport Police.

³ Cautions include juveniles receiving reprimands and warnings or youth cautions. Youth cautions were introduced on April 8th 2013 replacing reprimands and warnings for young offenders. The guidance is published at the link <http://www.justice.gov.uk/out-reprimands>

⁴ Other disposals may represent cases where an offender has been convicted, but is awaiting further sentencing.

* Indicates that one or more of the comparative numbers are less than 50. For small numbers this could give misleading percentage changes.

An additional breakdown showing previous knife possession offences for these offenders is available in table 8a of the accompanying excel tables.

Table 9: Offences involving threatening with a knife or offensive weapon resulting in a caution or sentence by age group in England and Wales, 12 months ending March 2014

Disposal Category ¹	Number of offences			Total
	Adults	Juveniles		
		10-15	16-17	
Number of offences				
England and Wales ^{2,5}	189	34	34	257
Caution ³	4	3	0	7
Absolute/Conditional discharge	0	0	0	0
Fine	0	0	0	0
Community sentence	16	25	14	55
Suspended sentence	48	0	0	48
Immediate custody	108	4	18	130
Other disposal ⁴	13	2	2	17

Source: Police National Computer (PNC)

¹ The disposal given in this table is only the most severe of the disposals given as a result of the offender being found guilty and may also be dependent on other offences committed at the same time.

² England and Wales includes all 43 police force areas and the British Transport Police.

³ Cautions include juveniles receiving reprimands and warnings or youth cautions. Youth cautions were introduced on April 8th 2013 replacing reprimands and warnings for young offenders. The guidance is published at the link <http://www.justice.gov.uk/out->

⁴ Other disposals may represent cases where an offender has been convicted, but is awaiting further sentencing.

An additional breakdown showing previous knife possession offences for these offenders is available in table 8a of the accompanying excel tables.

Table 10: Offenders commencing a court order under probation supervision for possession of an offensive weapon¹, in England and Wales

Number of starts and percentages								
Court order starts	Q1 2011	Q1 2012	Q1 2013	Q2 2013	Q3 2013	Q4 2013	Q1 2014	% change, Q1 2013 to Q1 2014
	number of starts							
England and Wales	1,343	1,168	895	927	972	1,032	1,034	16
Community order	906	735	530	577	583	621	614	16
Suspended sentence order	435	432	365	348	388	411	420	15
Pre CJA orders	2	1	0	2	1	0	0	*
	percentage of total starts							
Community order	67	63	59	62	60	60	59	
Suspended sentence order	32	37	41	38	40	40	41	
Pre CJA orders	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	

Source: Probation administrative IT systems

¹ Includes having an article with a blade or a point.

* Indicates that one or more of the comparative numbers are less than 50. For small numbers this could give misleading percentage changes.

These figures have been drawn from administrative IT systems, which, as with any large scale recording system, are subject to possible errors with data entry and processing and are subject to revision in future editions.

Table 11: Requirement starts for possession of offensive weapon¹, in England and Wales

Number of requirements and percentages								
	Q1 2011	Q1 2012	Q1 2013	Q2 2013	Q3 2013	Q4 2013	Q1 2014	% change Q1 2013 to Q1 2014
Number of requirements								
Community order	1,512	1,216	869	928	935	1,000	985	13
Unpaid Work ²	514	388	259	276	273	270	289	12
Supervision	470	389	301	314	326	358	327	9
Curfew	156	120	66	69	69	97	125	89
Accredited program	91	76	59	52	50	59	37	*
Specified activity	143	117	94	119	108	91	95	1
Drug treatment	49	29	23	33	35	31	37	*
Alcohol treatment	42	50	34	27	45	44	43	*
Mental health	14	12	9	11	13	20	9	*
Exclusion	4	8	5	3	2	5	5	*
Residential	4	5	7	4	2	2	5	*
Attendance centre	20	17	9	17	11	20	11	*
Prohibited activity	5	5	3	3	1	3	2	*
Percentage of total requirements								
Unpaid work	34	32	30	30	29	27	29	
Supervision	31	32	35	34	35	36	33	
Other requirements	35	36	36	36	36	37	37	
Number of requirements								
Suspended sentence order	788	758	642	621	623	679	658	2
Unpaid work ²	213	210	156	148	151	160	168	8
Supervision	288	281	232	233	232	250	236	2
Curfew	74	65	66	64	51	75	78	18
Accredited program	71	73	64	50	53	61	50	*
Specified activity	58	64	56	57	68	65	48	*
Drug treatment	28	21	11	26	14	23	29	*
Alcohol treatment	32	24	33	18	32	23	27	*
Mental health	2	4	8	7	8	9	2	*
Exclusion	6	2	3	9	3	4	4	*
Residential	10	7	7	5	4	3	2	*
Attendance centre	4	4	2	3	2	3	10	*
Prohibited activity	2	3	4	1	5	3	4	*
Percentage of total requirements								
Unpaid work ²	27	28	24	24	24	24	26	
Supervision	37	37	36	38	37	37	36	
Other requirements	36	35	40	39	39	40	39	

Source: Probation administrative IT systems

¹ Includes having an article with a blade or a point.

² The difference between unpaid work total in this table and table 12 is due to the different source that the data was taken from. Table 11 data is based on sentencing records while table 12 data is based on requirement records.

* Indicates that one or more of the comparative numbers are less than 50. For small numbers this could give misleading percentage changes.

These figures have been drawn from administrative IT systems, which, as with any large scale recording system, are subject to possible errors with data entry and processing and are subject to revision in future editions.

Table 12: Unpaid work requirements started by length of requirement given for possession of offensive weapon¹, in England and Wales

Number of requirements and percentages								
	Q1 2011	Q1 2012	Q1 2013	Q2 2013	Q3 2013	Q4 2013	Q1 2014	% change Q1 2013 to Q1 2014
Number of requirements								
Community order	624	426	270	271	260	269	269	0
0-80 hours	230	159	108	95	93	117	117	8
81-150 hours	273	176	112	109	121	105	105	-6
151-199 hours	39	21	12	21	17	15	15	*
200-250 hours	75	67	34	43	27	32	32	*
251-300 hours	7	3	4	3	2	0	0	*
Percentage of total requirements								
0-80 hours	37	37	40	35	36	43	43	
81-150 hours	44	41	41	40	47	39	39	
151-199 hours	6	5	4	8	7	6	6	
200-250 hours	12	16	13	16	10	12	12	
251-300 hours	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	
Number of requirements								
Suspended sentence order	237	221	169	148	140	153	162	-4
0-80 hours	53	56	43	25	23	29	44	*
81-150 hours	128	108	86	82	78	83	83	-3
151-199 hours	16	15	14	10	11	13	8	*
200-250 hours	36	40	25	29	28	26	25	*
251-300 hours	4	2	1	2	0	2	2	*
Percentage of total requirements								
0-80 hours	22	25	25	17	16	19	27	
81-150 hours	54	49	51	55	56	54	51	
151-199 hours	7	7	8	7	8	8	5	
200-250 hours	15	18	15	20	20	17	15	
251-300 hours	2	1	1	1	0	1	1	

Source: Probation administrative IT systems

¹ Includes having an article with a blade or a point.

² The difference between unpaid work total in this table and table 11 is due to the different source that the data was taken from. Table 11 data is based on sentencing records while table 12 data is based on requirement records.

* Indicates that one or more of the comparative numbers are less than 50. For small numbers this could give misleading percentage changes.

These figures have been drawn from administrative IT systems, which, as with any large scale recording system, are subject to possible errors with data entry and processing and are subject to revision in future editions.

Appendix B: Assessing the accuracy of estimation method

This appendix assess the accuracy of the methodology introduced in the October to December 2012 bulletin, to estimate the number and breakdown of disposals given for the possession of a knife or an offensive weapon in the most recent four quarters.

These estimates were introduced to account for the changes seen in the disposal figures from those initially published for each quarter to those released over the following year as data held on the Police National Computer (PNC) was updated with new information. In particular the number of immediate custodial sentences recorded on the PNC was seen to increase significantly over time – as sentences passed by the Crown court became available on the system. As the scale of the changes to these figures over time was very stable, a new methodology was introduced to predict these final sentencing figures for the most recent four quarters.

It has been now been over a year since this new methodology of estimating disposal figures was introduced; we continue to assess the accuracy of the estimation method used. Table 13 below illustrates the accuracy of the estimation process that was used to provide the statistics that were published for Q1 2013.

Table 13: Changes in the number of disposals reported for knife possession offences in Q1 2013 between the non-estimated figures, the estimated figures and the final actual figures

Disposal category	Q1 2013 - non estimated	Q1 2013- estimated	Q1 2013 - actual figures	% change - non estimated to actual figures	% change - estimated to actual figures
Caution	675	678	684	1	1
Absolute/Conditional discharge	116	122	139	20	14
Fine	161	170	174	8	2
Community sentence	1,045	1,015	1,046	0	3
Suspended sentence	597	577	579	-3	0
Immediate custody	905	1,077	1,048	16	-3
Other disposal	284	154	140	-51	-9
All disposals	3,783	3,793	3,810	1	0

The table compares the Q1-2013 non-estimated and estimated figures by disposal group with the actual figures published one year on. As outlined above, figures show that there were large differences between the non-estimated and the actual final figures for those receiving an immediate custodial sentence or other disposal, with differences of 16 per cent and 51 per cent respectively. When comparing the estimated figures for these disposals there is less change between the two, with figures differing by around 3-9 per cent. This shows that the methodology being used has been successful in predicting the changes seen in disposals over the year and future bulletins will continue to use this methodology. We will continue to review this methodology and provide updates on the accuracy of our estimates.

Explanatory notes

Data quality and sources

Tables 1 to 9

The statistics presented in tables 1 to 9 in this Bulletin are drawn from an extract of data held on the Police National Computer (PNC) as at 2 May 2014.

The PNC is a large administrative database containing information about police cautions and court convictions held by individual offenders in England and Wales. As an administrative system, the PNC is regularly updated as new information about particular individuals becomes available. For example, an offender with previous convictions may have recently been charged with another offence, appeared in court against this charge and then been subsequently convicted of this offence. This information would then be updated accordingly against that individual's record in the PNC.

As these updates involve some element of manual data entry alongside more automated systems, there can be delays in the database becoming updated with the latest information about an offender's convictions. As such, the number of cautions/convictions recorded in the PNC extract for knife possession offences in recent quarters, in particular for the most recent quarter included in this bulletin, is likely to be lower than the actual number of cautions/convictions given in the period.

In addition, the different disposals recorded in the PNC extract for knife possession offences in recent quarters are also subject to some change. This is partly due to the delays in updating recent court outcomes on the PNC, but is also due to the fact that, while some individuals will have been convicted of a knife possession offence in a magistrate's court during the quarter, information about the disposal they received is not yet available as the case has been passed to the Crown court for sentencing at a later date. These cases will be updated when information about the final sentence given for the offence becomes available.

As a result of these updates, the statistics presented in this bulletin are based on estimates of what the final sentencing outcomes will be for the latest period once all data updates have been made.

The estimates were introduced from the Q4 2012 edition of this bulletin and followed detailed analysis that tracked changes in the disposal figures from those initially published for each quarter to those released over the following year as data held on the PNC was updated with new information.

The background to and methodology used to derive these estimates was published in the October to December 2012 release of this bulletin – [click here for link](#) – and this has been reviewed in Appendix B.

Tables 10 to 12 and Figures 7 and 8

The probation data has been processed from data collected and held centrally by the Ministry of Justice. The data are drawn from the local probation administrative IT systems from each of the 35 probation trusts in England and Wales. The figures

showing the numbers starting court orders relate to the number of *offenders* starting probation supervision in a given period. The numbers drawn from the PNC data in tables 1 to 5 relate to the total number of *offences* committed by offenders given particular disposals, which are likely to be greater than the number of offenders. Also, the probation data shows offenders convicted of the more general offence of 'possession of an offensive weapon'. This will include possession of knives, as well the particular offence of 'possession of an article with a blade or point', but these cannot be separately distinguished in the probation data.

Prison population data presented in this brief are drawn from the prison administrative IT systems. The figures showing the numbers under sentence refer to the number of *offenders* serving a custodial sentence. Figures drawn from PNC data refer to the number of *offences* committed by offenders given particular disposals. Prison establishments routinely provide records of the numbers of persons held in custody at the end of each month, broadly subdivided according to age, sex, custody type and sentence length. The records are collated and processed centrally. However, data recorded by prisons only show the numbers serving a sentence for the general offence of "possession of an offensive weapon". This offence includes the possession of a knife but can also include possession of other dangerous weapons (excluding firearms).

Due to technical problems relating to the supply of data for statistical purposes it has not been possible to provide data relating to the prison population for specific offence types from July 2009 to March 2010.

Glossary

This glossary provides a brief description of the main terms used in the Commentary section of this report. For further information, please contact the Justice Statistics Analytical Services division using the details provided in the contacts section at the end of this bulletin.

Adult: An offender aged 18 and over.

Caution: A warning given to adults offenders who admit guilt and agree to be cautioned. They are issued on the instructions of a senior police officer where there is sufficient evidence for a conviction and it is not considered to be in the public interest to institute criminal proceedings.

Community sentence: An alternate to custodial sentence (sending offenders to prison) which allows offenders to make amends for their crimes. For juveniles the main community sentence used are the referral order and the Youth Rehabilitation Order (YRO). With a community sentence there are specific things the offender can, can't and must do while serving their sentence. Elements of custodial sentence include;

- Supervision,
- Unpaid work,
- Specified activities,
- Prohibited activities,
- Accredited programmes,
- Curfew, exclusion,
- Residence,
- Mental health treatment,
- Drug rehabilitation,
- Alcohol treatment and attendance centre requirement for under 25s

England and Wales – Total figures for England and Wales now include all police forces in England and Wales and the British Transport Police (BTP). The Home Office is responsible for policing the 43 police forces in England and Wales. There are also other authorities who prosecute offenders such as:

- Department for Work and Pensions (DWP),
- HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC),
- Ministry of Defence (MOD) and
- British Transport Police (BTP).

Immediate custody: Unsuspended imprisonment for adults aged 21 or over and detention in a young offender institution for those aged 18 to 20. The maximum sentence available is 4 years for possession of a bladed article in a public place or an offensive weapon. Juveniles aged 12 to 17 may receive a detention and training order of 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 18 or 24 months

Juvenile: An offender between the ages 10 and 17.

Offences included: The PNC data (tables 1 to 5) produced in this brief are the number of offences committed **not** the number of offenders. The offences relate to possession offences rather than offences where a knife was used. The offence codes included in the dataset are as follows:

- **00811** – Possession of offensive weapons without lawful authority or reasonable excuse. Prevention of Crime Act 1953 Section 1.
- **00828** – Possession of offensive weapons without lawful authority or reasonable excuse on school premises. Criminal Justice Act 1988 Section 139 A (2) as amended by Offensive Weapons Act 1996 Section 4 (1).
- **00826** – Having an article with a blade or a point in a public place. Criminal Justice Act 1988 Section 139 (1) as amended by Offensive Weapons Act 1996 Section 3 (1).
- **00827** – Having an article with a blade or a point on school premises. Criminal Justice Act 1988 Section 139 (2) as amended by Offensive Weapons Act 1996 Section 4 (1).

New offence codes include: The PNC data (tables 8 and 9) produced in this brief are the number of offences committed **not** the number of offenders. The offences relate to threatening offences rather than offences where a knife was used. The offence codes included in the dataset are as follows:

- **00861** – Threaten with an offensive weapon in a public place.
- **00862** – Threaten with a blade/sharply pointed article on a school premises
- **00863** – Threaten with an offensive weapon on a school premises.
- **00864** – Threaten with a blade/sharply pointed article in a public place.

Offensive weapon: Any article made or adapted for use for causing injury to the person, or intended by the person having it with him for such. Examples includes: a swordstick, a hollow walking-stick or cane containing a blade.

Reprimand and warning: Issued to juvenile first time offenders for minor offences. Reprimand and warning for juveniles are equivalent of cautions for adults.

Youth cautions: Introduced on April 8th 2013. They are formal out-of-court disposals for young offenders (aged 10 to 17) and intended to allow a more flexible response to offending than the preceding Final Warning Scheme.

Suspended Sentence: A custody sentence of less than 12 months, suspended for a period ranging from six months to two years available for **adult** only.

Contact points for further information

Current and previous editions of this publication are available for download at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-justice/series/knife-possession-sentencing-quarterly

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

Tel: 020 3334 3536

Other enquiries about these statistics should be directed to:

Ministry of Justice
Justice Statistics Analytical Services
7th floor
102 Petty France
London SW1H 9AJ

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

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

Other knife and sharp object related statistical releases

Other government departments also release statistics relating to knives and sharp objects. Below are some links and brief outlines of other available sources.

- The Home Office provide a guidance document regarding the law for knives and offensive weapons:

www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/186911/Knives_and_offensive_weapons_information_GDS_FAQ.pdf

www.gov.uk/find-out-if-i-can-buy-or-carry-a-knife

- The Home Office also publish statistics of offences involving knives and sharp instruments. This is contained within the *Crime in England and Wales* statistical bulletin and has a section called *Offences involving knives and sharp instruments*.

www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/crime-stats/crime-statistics/period-ending-december-2013/stb-crime-stats-dec-2013.html#tab-Offences-involving-knives-and-sharp-instruments

- The Department for Health release hospital admission data for assaults on an ad hoc basis. Within this data there is a category for *X99 - Assault by sharp object*. The link for the most recently released publication is listed below and the data can usually be found in the *Monthly HES data – Monthly topic of interest* section of the HES online website.

www.hscic.gov.uk/hes

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