

## I Constituency-level crime data

This note highlights the constituency-level crime data that is potentially available.

The House of Commons Library is considering how best to use this source of crime data. We would be very interested to hear from MPs and their staff as to whether such constituency-level data using non-national statistics is desired given that local authority level data, using the National Statistics series, is available back to 2002/03.

It is not possible to obtain constituency-level crime data from the two sources of official crime statistics – the police recorded crime series and the Crime Survey of England and Wales (CSEW; formerly called the British Crime Survey).

The police recorded crime data is collected by the Home Office from forces that submit recorded crime data returns at local authority and police force area level. As forces don't provide individual offence level data it is only possible to get information for the geographies that they provide.

The CSEW provides national level data, although some headline information is available at a regional level. Most CSEW data is not available at police force area or local authority level.

A new source of crime data is the Police.uk website which provides street level crime and anti-social behaviour data for each month from December 2010. The information was initially available for six categories - Burglary; Robbery; Vehicle crime; Violence; Other crime; Anti-social behaviour.

Following an upgrade, crime data from September 2011 is broken down into more offence categories, with the 'Other crime' category disaggregated further: Public disorder; Shoplifting; Criminal damage/Arson; Other theft; Drugs; Other.

Offences that took place in public places, including shopping centres and railway stations, were separately identifiable from this time onwards.

On the Police.uk website each crime is mapped to the nearest map point (centre point of a street, above a public place such as a park or airport, or above a commercial premise like a shopping centre or nightclub).

Each of these map points must contain eight or more postal addresses or no postal addresses at all.

As offence data is linked to each map point and the postcodes of each map point are available it is possible to aggregate data to different geographic levels, such as parliamentary constituency.

The crime data published on the Police.uk website will not necessarily be the same as the data contained in the official recorded crime statistics. For example:

- The most recent official statistics indicate that 4.04 million offences were recorded by the police in England and Wales in 2011.
- Data from Police.uk suggests that there were 3.87 million offences recorded by the police in England and Wales in 2011.

Police.uk uses data which is directly uploaded by police forces each month and is intended to provide a snapshot of crime and related justice activity in a local area at that point in time. National crime statistics, which are published quarterly following quality assurance by statisticians, remain the most robust and accurate source of information in relation to crime and justice outcomes.

It would be preferable if constituency-level data could be aggregated from the official crime statistics and this may be possible in the future.

Some forces are now providing offence-level data to the Home Office through the Home Office Data Hub. This is designed to align with

Management Information Systems used in many police forces, allowing for the creation of automated extracts from one system to the other without the need for the completion of aggregate data collection forms.

Once all forces are using the Data Hub, expected later in 2012/13, it should be possible for the official recorded statistics to be aggregated to parliamentary constituency level.

### Crime and anti-social behaviour by constituency

The following table shows the constituencies with the highest and lowest rates of crime and anti-social behaviour in England and Wales.

Crime rates have been calculated using number of offences based on the crime data from Police.uk and ONS mid-2010 population estimates.

Total recorded crimes and anti-social behaviour incidents per 1,000 population				
Rank	Constituency	Party of sitting MP	Rural/urban	Rate
1	Central Devon	Con	Rural	42.9
2	South West Devon	Con	Rural	44.8
3	Buckingham	Speaker	Rural	45.3
4	Rayleigh and Wickford	Con	Urban	48.3
5	Torrige and West Devon	Con	Rural	48.5
6	Haltemprice and Howden	Con	Rural	49.2
7	Stone	Con	Rural	49.6
8	North Wiltshire	Con	Rural	53.5
9	Hexham	Con	Rural	53.7
10	Sheffield, Hallam	Lib Dem	Urban	53.7
564	Newcastle Upon Tyne Central	Lab	Urban	243.0
565	Bethnal Green and Bow	Lab	Urban	244.0
566	Derby South	Lab	Urban	246.0
567	Middlesbrough	Lab	Urban	264.8
568	Holborn and St Pancras	Lab	Urban	266.3
569	Leeds Central	Lab	Urban	271.2
570	Blackpool South	Lab	Urban	271.2
571	Manchester Central	Lab	Urban	279.1
572	Birmingham, Ladywood	Lab	Urban	295.4
573	Cities Of London and Westminster	Con	Urban	574.4

#### Sources

www.police.uk; Population Estimates, ONS; Rural/Urban Local Authority (LA) Classification, ONS

It is not surprising that the crime rate is so much higher in Cities of London and Westminster than other constituencies, almost twice the next highest rate. Using the resident population data as the denominator does not take into account the substantial number of visitors to this area.

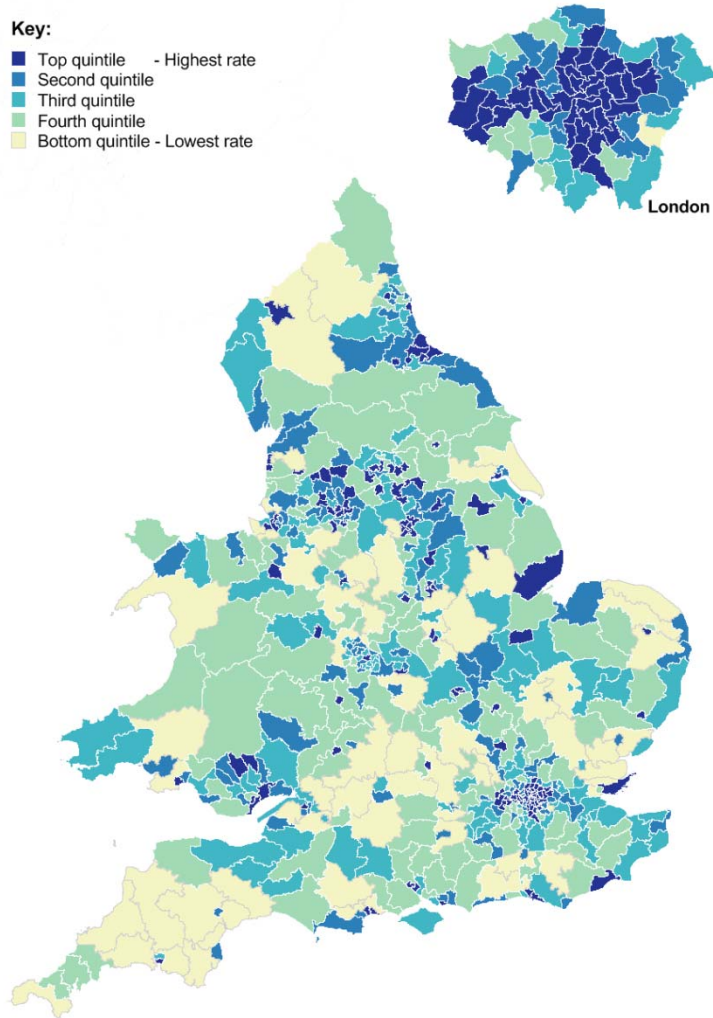
- The total recorded crime rate was lowest in Hexham (22 offences per 1,000 population) and highest in Cities of London and Westminster (443 offences per 1,000 population)
- In Central Devon the violent crime rate was the lowest of all constituencies in England and Wales (4.3 offences per 1,000 population), while the rate in Cities of London and Westminster was the highest (49 offences per 1,000 population).
- Burglary rates were lowest in South West Devon (13 offences per 1,000 population) and highest in Leeds Central (21 offences per 1,000 population).
- According to the Police.uk data there were no robberies recorded in either Berwick upon Tweed or Central Devon in 2011. In Birmingham Ladywood there were 13 recorded robberies per 1,000 population
- In Torrige and West Devon there were 1.5 vehicle crime offences per 1,000 population compared to 25 offences per 1,000 population in Birmingham Ladywood.
- Anti-social behaviour was lowest in Haltemprice and Howden (13 incidents per 1,000 population) and highest in Middlesbrough and Cities of London and Westminster (both 132 per 1,000 population)

The map on the following page highlights the areas of the country where crime and anti-social behaviour rates are highest.

**Total crime and anti-social behaviour incidents per 1,000 population in Parliamentary Constituencies**

**Key:**

- Top quintile - Highest rate
- Second quintile
- Third quintile
- Fourth quintile
- Bottom quintile - Lowest rate



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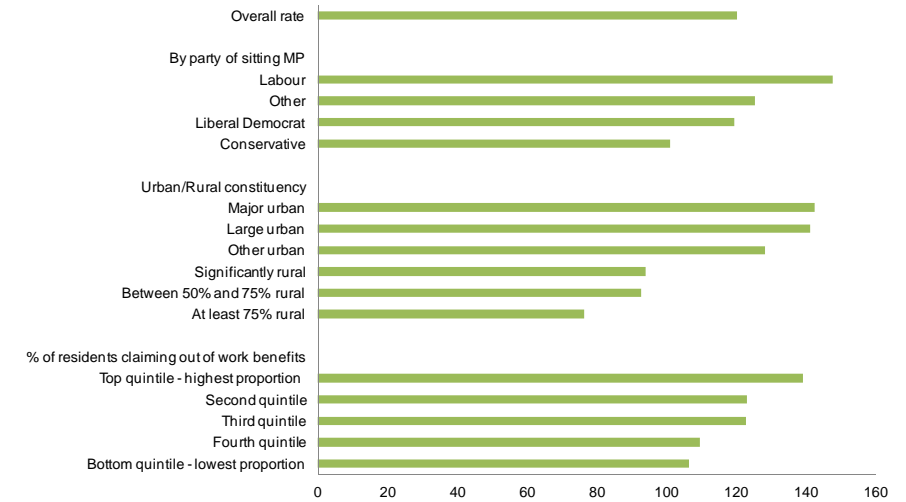
**Constituency analysis**

Crime and anti-social behaviour rates are highest in Labour, lower in Liberal Democrat and lowest in Conservative constituencies and this is true for each category of offence/anti-social behaviour. This is obviously not to say that there is causal link between the party of the sitting MP and crime rates!

Crime/ASB is higher in those constituencies with higher proportions of people in receipt of out of work benefits.

Urban constituencies are more likely to have higher crime rates than rural ones.

**Total recorded crimes and anti social behaviour incidents per 1,000 population**



Labour MPs are more likely to represent constituencies with higher proportions of residents in receipt of out of work benefits and are also more likely to represent urban constituencies.

When comparing a time series of data it is normal to compare with a year earlier to avoid the effect of seasonal variation.

The House of Commons Library has currently only collated constituency level data up to December 2011. Therefore the only possible comparisons would be with December 2010.

Over this period the percentage change in crimes recorded by the police ranged from 87% increase to 40% decrease. Due to the relatively small number of offences recorded in some constituencies such month-on-month comparisons are not advisable.

As a longer time series of data becomes available it will be possible to provide a trend analysis of crime in a particular constituency.

### **Future developments of crime mapping**

In May 2012 Police.uk will introduce a second map to show what action the police took and what the criminal justice outcome was for crimes recorded by the police from January 2012.

The precise structure of the website has not been publicised, however Home Office officials suggest that initially a crime will be 'under investigation' or 'no further action possible' will be the outcome.

'No further action possible' is the likely outcome for the majority of crimes recorded by the police. The Home Office estimates that this will be the outcome in over 70% of cases, mainly low impact/high volume crimes, although a much lower proportion of serious offences would end in such an outcome.

An example of such a low impact/high volume offence would be where a car has been scratched, but there were no witnesses to the offence. For insurance purposes a crime would be recorded, but the police would not be able to follow up with an investigation.

Those offences that were 'under investigation' would subsequently be shown as either having a 'police disposal', for example caution, fine or penalty notice or as 'suspect charged'.

The final stage would be to show the court outcome of those offenders charged, for example whether found not guilty, given a community sentence or custodial sentence. No further detail regarding the sentence will be shown, such as custodial sentence length, only the type of sentence provided.

As with the recorded crime data, it would be more useful if outcome data was based on the official statistics rather than separate returns made to Police.uk. The Home Office does not currently have any plans to link the official recorded crime data to Ministry of Justice outcome data.

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