

Demands on the police forces in England and Wales during the Covid-19 pandemic**Introduction**

This release presents the latest data on the demands being placed on the 43 territorial police forces in England and Wales during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The latest figures cover the 4 week period to ending 7th June 2020 and are compared with the equivalent 4 week period in 2019.

Calls for Service

As last reported, calls for service remain lower compared with the same period last year. However, the level of reduction is lower than reported last month: with 999 calls down by 16% and 101 calls by 12% (compared with 23% and 25% respectively last month). This trend might be expected given the restrictions on social distancing began to be eased during this latest period (Table 1).

Table 1: Trends in telephone calls for service to police forces in England and Wales, 4 weeks ending 7th June 2020 compared with the equivalent 4 week period in 2019

	% change
999 calls	-16%
101 calls	-12%

Calls for service generate incident recording which can be categorised by broad themes. Reflecting reductions in calls for service, there has been a downward trend in most types of safeguarding incidents (Table 2). However, the reduction in demand for police support for mental health incidents was not as large as reported last month (down 2% compared with a fall of 8% last month). The volume of incidents related to reports of missing persons was down 29%, again lower than reported last month (down 37%).

The increase in recorded domestic abuse incidents was higher this month (up 8% on the same 4 week period in 2019) than we reported last month (4%). As previously reported, however, this rise is not consistent across all forces. Domestic abuse incidents are a measure of concerns that have been brought to the attention of the police. Not all such incidents will result in a crime being identified and recorded. Nor will hidden abuse be captured in these data.

Table 2: Trends in safeguarding incidents recorded by police forces in England and Wales, 4 weeks ending 7th June 2020 compared with the equivalent 4 week period in 2019

	% change
Domestic abuse related	+8%
Missing person related	-29%
Mental health related	-2%

Crime

As previously reported, there has been a marked fall in most crime types compared with the equivalent period in 2019 (Table 3).

The reductions have been seen in high volume crimes such as burglary, vehicle-related theft and shoplifting. This is to be expected given the reduction of opportunities for criminals to commit acquisitive crime.

There has also been a reduction in contact-crime including rape, assaults (including both Grievous Bodily Harm and Actual Bodily Harm) and robbery committed against individuals. For some of these types of crime, the closure of the night-time economy will be a key driver.

Table 3: Trends in crime recorded by police forces in England and Wales, 4 weeks ending 7th June 2020 compared with the equivalent 4 week period in 2019

	% change
All notifiable crime	-18%
Rape	-47%
Assaults and personal robbery	-25%
Assaults on emergency workers	+24%
Residential burglary	-33%
Theft from and of a vehicle	-38%
Shoplifting	-51%

In contrast, there has been an upward trend in the number of assaults on emergency workers. This might seem counter-intuitive since traditionally much of these assaults tend to alcohol-related and, with the closure of the night-time economy, we might have expected them to fall.

These offences are recorded in relatively low volumes and it is thought the 24% rise may be driven by increases in common assaults on police constables, including suspects spitting on officers while claiming to be infected with Covid-19. The latest rise follows an increase of 14% reported last month and will include some assaults related to disorder in the wake of public protests in early June.

The police in England and Wales recorded a total of 102,304 Covid-19 related incidents in the 4 weeks to the 9th June. This will include incidents where officers have proactively offered advice to people, responded to reports from the members of the public about breaches of the regulation by others and offences where criminals have sought to take advantage of the pandemic to commit a crime.

Understanding the data

The data reported here is based on a new ad hoc NPCC collection instituted to inform Operation Talla. The purpose was to provide a mechanism for monitoring and tracking demands on the police during the Covid-19 outbreak to inform operational decisions.

A small number of key indicators have been collated from the 43 territorial forces in England and Wales by the NPCC team. We are aware that not all forces have been able to supply

consistent returns across all indicators. The data should be viewed as provisional, having been gathered at speed, and as only indicative of recent trends.

In this release, we have restricted our reporting to those indicators that we have confidence are sufficiently robust to provide a reliable picture.