

## Crime

**Police recorded crime at a 35 year low**

Recorded crime is at its lowest level since 1976 and is down 23% since 2006-07. Between 2009-10 and 2010-11, the number of crimes and offences fell in four out of seven crime categories, with the largest fall (12%) in the category "fire raising, vandalism etc."

**Continued decreasing levels of overall crime**

Results from the 2010-11 Scottish Crime and Justice Survey (SCJS) show a similar pattern. The overall risk of being a victim of crime fell from 20.4% in 2008-09 to 17.8% in 2010-11, and the estimated number of crimes experienced by adults in Scotland fell by 16% over the same period.

**Recorded offensive weapon crimes at lowest level in 13 years**

Violent crime recorded by the police went up 2% in 2010-11, but from a historic low in the previous year. The SCJS shows a 30% fall in violent crime between 2008-09 and 2010-11 but indicates that the proportion of crimes reported to the police rose from 38% to 51%. The number of offensive weapons crimes recorded decreased by 11% between 2009-10 and 2010-11 to 6,280, the lowest level since 1997-98. Rape and attempted rape crimes increased by 14%, though this may in part be explained by a widening of the definition of rape in the new Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act, which came into force in December 2010.

**Firearm offences at 32 year low**

Scottish police forces recorded 643 offences in which a firearm was alleged to have been involved in 2010-11, a decrease of 24% from the number recorded in 2009-10 (843). This was the lowest reported total for 32 years. The number of offences in which a firearm was discharged and caused fatal or non-fatal injury decreased by 28% from 154 in 2009-10 to 111 in 2010-11.

**Homicides lowest in 30 years**

There were 78 homicide cases in Scotland in 2009-10, down 20% on 2008-09 and the lowest number recorded since 1979.

**Racist incidents and crimes continue to fall**

The number of racist incidents recorded by the police fell for the third year in a row in 2009-10, falling by 4% compared to the previous year, to 4,950. An incident can include a number of crimes or may not have any criminal element to it. The number of racist crimes recorded fell, by 12% between 2008-09 and 2009-10, to 5,820.

## Policing

**£80m savings generated by police**

The number of full-time equivalent (FTE) police officers in Scotland rose to 17,339 on 30 June 2011. As a result, the target for 1,000 extra officers continued to be achieved. The recently published Scottish Policing Performance Framework Annual Report showed that total cashable savings of £80 million were generated by Scottish police forces in 2010-11.

**Improved confidence in police**

The SCJS showed that 71% of people in 2010-11 had confidence in the police's ability to investigate incidents, compared with 68% in 2009-10 and that victims are increasingly likely to report crimes to the police (39% of crime reported in 2010-11, compared to 37% in 2009-10).

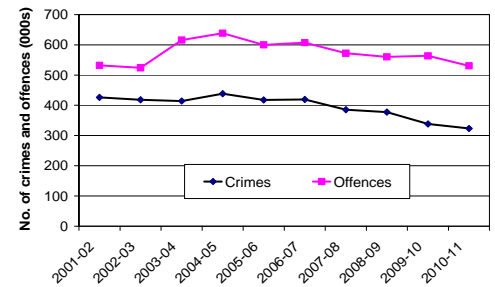
**Reported crimes being solved still at record levels**

The clear up rate for all recorded crimes in 2010-11 was 49%, in line with the previous two years – the highest in over 30 years. The clear-up rate for violent crime rose to 72% - a 35 year high.

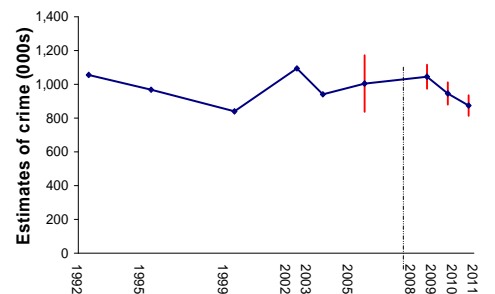
**Increasing use of police fixed penalty notices**

The number of anti-social behaviour police fixed penalty notices (ASBFPNs) issued in 2009-10 was 61,000, up by 26% from 2008-

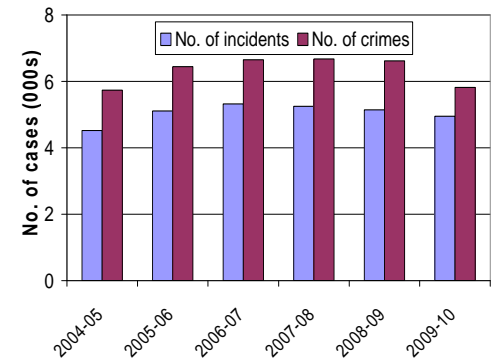
Police recorded crimes and offences



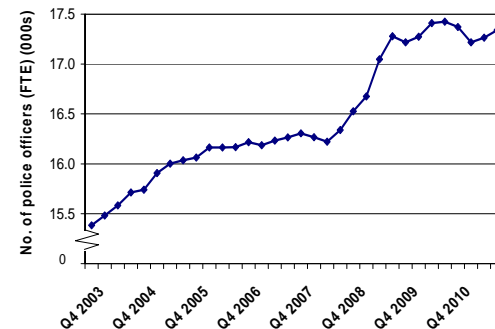
Estimated total number of crimes



No. of racist incidents & crimes



Police officer numbers



ASBFPNs, 2009-10

Offence	Number	%
Consuming alcohol in public place	25,980	43%
Breach of the peace	19,572	32%
Urinating etc.	12,797	21%
Other	2,609	4%

09, the first full year of implementation. It is estimated that the use of new direct measures in 2009-10 resulted in savings of £1.8m to the criminal justice system.

## Drugs

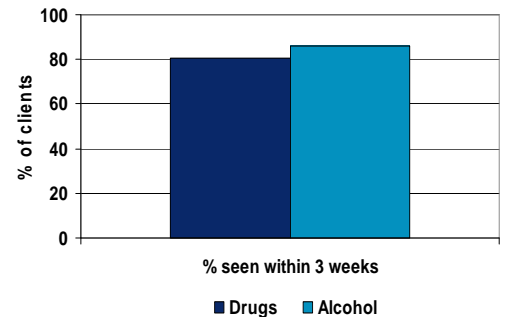
The SCJS showed a decrease between 2006 and 2009-10 in illicit drug use in the last year, from 12.6% to 9.8% (around 60,000 fewer people) amongst adults aged 16-59. The most common drug reported was cannabis. Updated drug use figures from the 2010-11 SCJS will be published in a report around March 2012.

*Overall drug use in adults is falling*

*Five out of six clients waited 3 weeks or less for drug & alcohol treatments*

According to ISD Scotland's new Drug and Alcohol Treatment Waiting Times Database, 84% of clients who started their first treatment for drug or alcohol use between April and June 2011 had waited 3 weeks or less since their referral. Of those still waiting to start drug or alcohol treatment at the end of June 2011, 15% (735 clients) had waited more than 6 weeks. The national HEAT target, which states that, by March 2013, 90% of clients will wait no longer than 3 weeks for drug or alcohol treatment, is on track to be achieved.

Percentage of clients receiving drug or alcohol treatment within 3 weeks of referral



## Community Safety

Provisional figures for 2010-11 show 38,900 fires in Scotland, a slight increase of 0.5% on 2009-10. The number of fire deaths for 2010-11 was 47, the second lowest since devolution. This is a rate of 9.0 fire deaths per million population.

*Fire deaths falling*

*Fewest firearm certificates in the last decade*

There were 26,000 firearm certificates on issue at the end of 2010, the lowest total over the previous ten years, and 5% lower than in 2001. The number of shotgun certificates on issue was 49,400 at the end of 2010, the second lowest total since 2001.

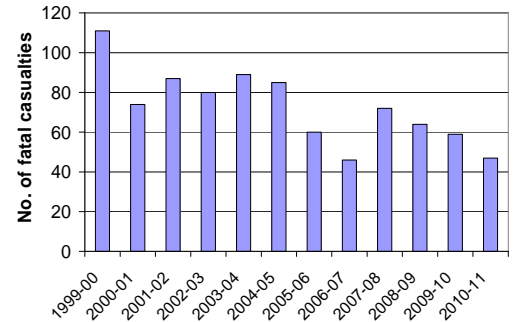
*Public perception of lower local crime levels*

The public feel safer in their local communities: a total of 74% of adults in 2010-11 thought that the local crime rate had stayed the same or improved in their local area, a substantial improvement from previous years.

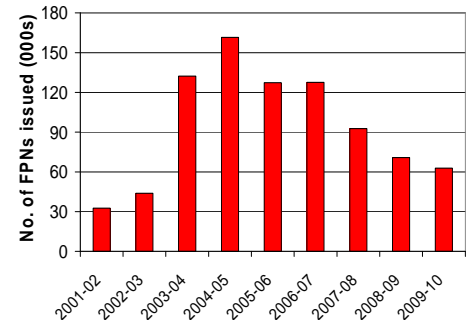
*Fewer recorded instances of speeding at safety camera sites*

At safety camera sites, the number of people issued with conditional offers of fixed penalty notices (FPNs) for speeding offences has fallen by over 60%, from 161,600 in 2004-05 to under 62,800 in 2009-10. Over the same period, the number of speeding offences recorded by the police has also fallen by 46%.

Fire deaths from primary fires



No. of speeding FPNs at safety camera sites



## Criminal and Civil Proceedings

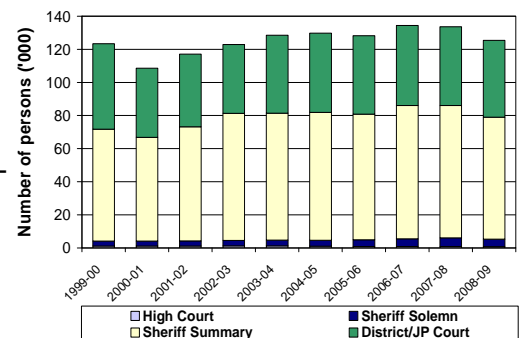
A total of 120,800 people were convicted in Scottish courts in 2009-10, a decrease of 4% on the previous year, and the lowest since 2001-02. This is consistent both with reducing levels of crime, and the aims of Summary Justice Reform.

*Court convictions down*

The majority (60%) of people convicted in 2009-10 received a financial penalty, down from the peak of 67% in 2003-04. Approximately equal proportions (13%) received a custodial or community sentence. Nearly all of the remainder received an admonishment or caution.

*Most common sentence is a fine*

Persons with a charge proved in court



*Percentage of cases being completed is above target*

In 2010-11, 74% of criminal cases were dealt with within 26 weeks of caution and charge to verdict, a 3 percentage point decrease from 2009-10. However, this is still substantially higher than the 2006-07 baseline figure of 66% and has surpassed the Scotland Performs target to achieve a 3 percentage point increase by 2011.

Sentences received, 2009-10

Main Penalty	Number	%
Custody	15,733	13%
Community sentence	16,264	13%
Financial penalty	72,409	60%
Other sentence	16,366	14%

**Rise in charges for religiously aggravated offences**

In 2009-10, 693 charges were reported to Procurators Fiscal of an offence aggravated by religious prejudice (all religious aggravations not limited to 'sectarian' offending), a 10% rise on 2008-09.

**Evidence of changing patterns of business in the civil courts**

Data on the civil justice system is limited to the last 3 years. A total of 97,500 civil cases were initiated in 2010-11, almost all (95%) of which were in sheriff courts. The number of debt cases initiated in the sheriff courts has continued to drop, from 65,800 in 2008-09 to 45,400 in 2010-11.

**Less debt and repossession cases initiated due to changes in legislation and possibly the recession**

In 2010-11 there were over 4,200 ordinary cause repossession cases initiated involving a mortgage or loan secured on a property, 49% fewer than in 2009-10, in part due to the [Home Owner and Debtor Protection \(Scotland\) Act 2010](#), which came into force on 30 Sept 2010. Repossession cases not related to mortgages or loans initiated fell by 29% between 2008-09 and 2010-11, partly due to a change in the way rent arrears are managed across some councils.

**Fewer personal injury cases registered**

Over 9,100 personal injury cases were registered in the civil courts in 2010-11, 7% fewer than the previous year. The number of cases disposed increased by 21% to 7,500. Almost 4 out of every 5 civil cases initiated in the Court of Session were for personal injury.

**Divorces at a 30 year low**

In 2009-10, the number of divorces granted was 10,200, the lowest since the late 1970s. Part of the most recent decrease is due to a reduction in separation periods in May 2006.

### Offender Management

**Prison population rising during 2011**

After a slight drop of 1% between 2009-10 and 2010-11, prison population figures for 2011 to date show an overall upward trend. From the start of September 2011, Scottish Prison Service population figures for each Friday show numbers in custody consistently over 8,100, rising to 8,232 for Friday 28 October. The latest figures are available on the Scottish Prison Service website - <http://www.sps.gov.uk/Publications/ScottishPrisonPopulation.aspx>.

**Custodial sentence length increasing**

For those who are convicted in court and sentenced to custody, the average length of sentence in 2009-10 was over nine months. This is the highest level in the last 10 years, and has increased by almost two months (23%) since the low in 2005-06.

**Over 1,800 CPOs imposed in first 5 months**

The total number of community orders made by courts has increased from 14,200 in 2001-02 to 19,900 in 2009-10. Figures from the Scottish Court Service show that 1,820 community payback orders (CPOs) were imposed in the first 5 months after their introduction on 1 February 2011.

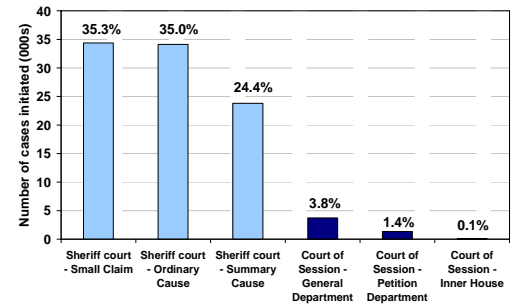
**Reconviction rates lowest in last 12 years**

One year reconviction rates are at their lowest point in the past 12 years, with 31% of the 2008-09 cohort reconvicted within a year. The average number of reconvictions for this cohort (known as the "frequency rate") was 58 per 100 offenders. The frequency rate was highest for those with an index disposal of a drug treatment and testing order who were reconvicted nearly three times as often.

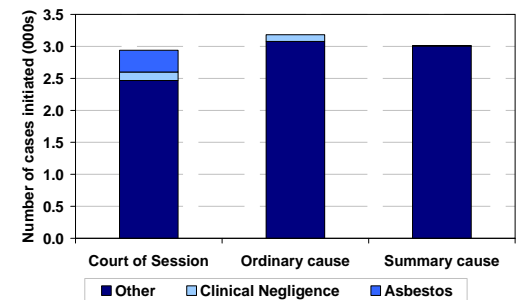
**JAS now on Twitter / Any queries?**

JAS has recently set up a twitter account [@SGJusticeAnlys](#) which will be used to announce publications, consultations etc. All current tweets can be found on <http://twitter.com/#!/SGJusticeAnlys>. If you require further information on any of the statistics in this brief, please contact [JusticeStatistics@scotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:JusticeStatistics@scotland.gsi.gov.uk) or speak to Alan Fleming (0131 244 2647).

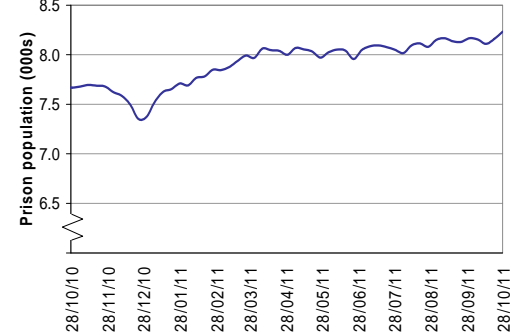
**Cases initiated in the Court of Session and sheriff courts, 2010-11**



**Cases initiated and disposed of in the Court of Session, 2008-09 to 2010-11**



**Prison population in custody (on a Friday), Oct 2010 – Oct 2011 (excl Home Det. Curfew)**



**One and two year reconviction rates (%)**

Cohort	1 year rate	2 year rate
2005-06	32.5	44.9
2006-07	32.4	44.1
2007-08	31.2	42.4
2008-09	31.0	-

**One year reconviction rates (%) and frequency rates (rate per 100 offenders) by index disposal, 2008-09 cohort**

Disposal	Rate	Freq. Rate
Discharged from custody	47%	96
Community service order	27%	42
Probation order	43%	86
Restriction of liberty order	46%	93
Drug t'ment/testing order	64%	162
Monetary penalty	26%	46
Other penalty	23%	42
Total	31%	58

**Monthly Feature: Results from the Scottish Crime and Justice Survey 2010/11**

Results from the Scottish Crime and Justice Survey (SCJS) for 2010/11 were published on 1 November.

The survey is the authoritative source of information on the people of Scotland's perceptions and experience of crime and victimisation including crimes that are not reported to the police, on their attitudes to the police, the courts and prisons, and on their general impressions of how safe from crime and disorder Scottish society really is. Among other things the survey tells us that:

- **The risk of being a victim of crime was lower in 2010/11 than in 2009/10.**

The risk of crime (the % of people who had been a victim in the last 12 months) was 17.8% in 2010/11 compared with 19.3% in 2009/10 and 20.4% in 2008/09 (see Figure 1).

The National Indicator to reduce victimisation rates by 2 percentage points (between 2008/09 and 2010/11) has therefore been met.

- **The risk of crime in Scotland is lower than in England and Wales.**

17.8% in Scotland compared with 21.5% in England and Wales.

- **The number of crimes has fallen by 16% between 2008/09 and 2010/11.**

There were 874,000 crimes in Scotland in 2010/11 compared with 1,045,000 crimes in 2008/09.

- **The public are more positive about the local crime rate in 2010/11 than in 2009/10.**

74% of the Scottish public said the local crime rate had stayed the same or improved in 2010/11 compared with 71% in 2009/10 (see Figure 2).

- **Alcohol remains a major factor in violent crime in Scotland in 2010/11.**

The offender was under the influence of alcohol in 63% of violent crime (62% in 2009/10).

22% of violent crime happened in or around a pub, bar or club (18% in 2009/10).

- **There was an increase in the public's confidence in all aspects of local police performance between 2009/10 and 2010/11.**

In 2010/11 71% said they were confident in the police's ability to investigate incidents compared with 68% in 2009/10 (see Figure 3).

- **There is support for community sentences but recognition that they are not always appropriate.**

In 74% of crimes (where the victim thought the offender should go to court) the victim thought the offender should receive a sentence other than prison.

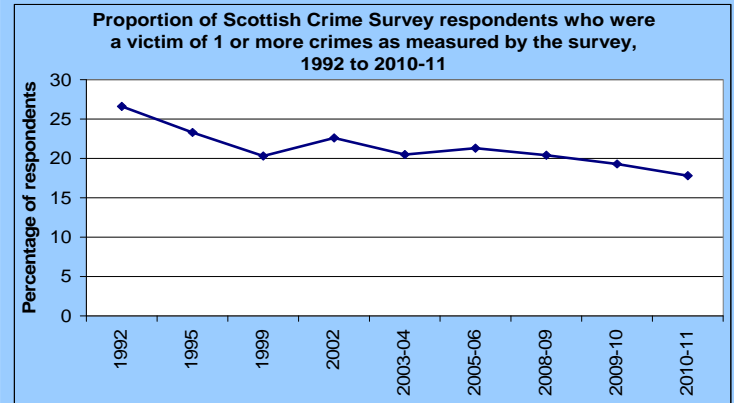
The full report is available here:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2011/10/28142346/0>

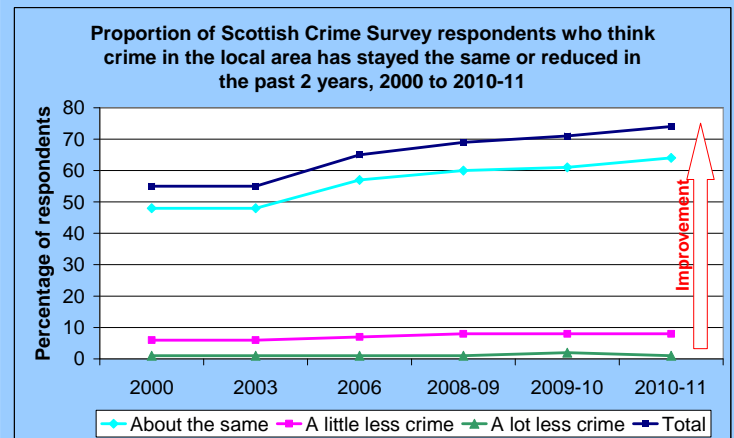
If you require further information on this article, please contact:

**Stuart King, Justice Outcomes Analytical Unit (e-mail [stuart.king2@scotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:stuart.king2@scotland.gsi.gov.uk), phone 0131 244 6934)**

**Figure 1 Victimisation rate in Scotland 1992 to 2010/11**



**Figure 2 Perceptions of change in the local crime rate 2000 to 2010/11**



**Figure 3 Confidence in ability of local police force to undertake specific aspects of work**

