

Recorded crime in Scotland at its lowest level since 1974



Recorded crime in Scotland is at its lowest level since 1974 according to new figures released today.

In total, 246,243 crimes were recorded in 2015-16, compared to 256,350 in the previous year. Key highlights include:

- Crimes of dishonesty including theft, housebreaking and shoplifting fell from 126,857 to 115,789
- Non-sexual crimes of violence are at their second lowest level since 1974 despite a slight rise over the twelve months from 6,357 to 6,775
- Fire-raising, vandalism etc. increased from 52,091 to 54,226, though this remains 58% lower than in 2006-07
- Other crimes (mostly drug related or crimes against public justice) fell from 61,488 to 59,180.
- Crimes of handling offensive weapons have fallen to their lowest level since 1984, down to 3,111
- The number of offences recorded by the police in Scotland fell from 379,498 to 339,193. These include motor vehicle offences and breach of the peace
- The overall police clear-up rate increased by 1.2 percentage points to 51.6%.

Cabinet Secretary for Justice Michael Matheson said: "I am very pleased that Scotland now has the lowest rate of recorded crime in 42 years, including reductions in drug crime, theft and handling offensive weapons over the last year.

"I am grateful for the excellent work of Scotland's police officers and their specialist and other civilian colleagues in detecting, disrupting and deterring criminal activities. Each of us can contribute to keeping our communities, homes and businesses safe, including by minimising opportunities for criminals.

"Police continue to lead that preventative approach alongside partners in other public services and the private and third sectors – not least in addressing emerging threats online, including child sexual exploitation, radicalisation and cyber-fraud.

"While higher levels of recorded sexual crime are broadly in line with UK trends, include a significant number of historical cases and may reflect greater willingness by victims to come forward, such incidents are completely unacceptable. This is why we have taken tough action to ensure perpetrators are brought to justice.

"Since 2006-07 we have also invested more than £10.5 million in a range of violence reduction programmes during which time violent crime has more than halved (down 52%) and is at its second lowest level since 1974.

“Today’s report also indicates that female victims of common assault were far more likely than men to be assaulted by a partner or ex-partner – underlining why the Scottish Government has committed an additional £20 million over three years to tackle violence against women, alongside our plan to strengthen legislation against all forms of domestic abuse.”