

Reports of rape drop significantly during lockdown

Reports of rape dropped significantly during lockdown, according to new figures released by Police Scotland.

Between 24 March and 5 July 2020, 529 rapes were recorded by Police Scotland, representing a 20.2% reduction over the same period in 2019.



While the number of reports has increased as lockdown has eased, between 24 March to 15 November 2020, reports of rape, both recent and non-recent offences, were down 6.5% (1,526 down to 1,427) on the same period in 2019.

Reports of recent rape are down 10.8% (959 to 855). However, a reduction in reporting does not mean a reduction in offending. All forms of sexual crime continue to be under-reported.

Assistant Chief Constable Judi Heaton, lead for public protection and major crime, Police Scotland, said:

“While this data shows a clear reduction in reports of recent rape and sexual crime during lockdown, it is too early to draw conclusions as to why this might be.

“What we do know is that the vast majority of rape and sexual crime is committed by someone known to the victim.

“More than half of rapes reported to us occur within a relationship, whether that’s during the early stages of dating or in longer term relationships. Most of those reports are made by women and girls.

“Let’s be very clear about this, being in a relationship does not mean an entitlement to sex. People in a relationship are entitled to say no to sex and to be heard. The law is very simple, sex without consent is rape.

“We recognise how incredibly challenging it must be for victims of rape within a relationship to proactively reach out and seek help when they are in a ‘lockdown’ situation with the perpetrator, even where they don’t reside together.

“We want you to know that we are here if you feel able to report and we will always listen.”

Police Scotland is committed to supporting all victims of rape and other sexual offences, whether the offences occurred recently or in the past. You can report to the police by phoning 101 or 999 in an emergency.