



[Extract from the [King's Speech 2024: background briefing notes](#)]

Pages 57-59

Crime and Policing Bill

“Legislation will be brought forward to strengthen community policing, give the police greater powers to deal with anti social behaviour”

This Bill will deliver on our mission to take back our streets by halving serious violence and increase confidence in policing and the Criminal Justice System. It will give the police the powers they need to crack down on crime and anti social behaviour, whilst introducing new reforms to ensure that our law enforcement agencies perform to the highest standards expected by the public and focus on front-line policing.

The Bill will set out early measures to help deliver on the Government’s mission to halve serious violence over a decade, with strong action to tackle knife crime and violence against women and girls.

What does the Bill do?

The Bill will include measures to:

- rebuild neighbourhood policing. Bring forward arrangements to get neighbourhood police and Police Community Support Officers back on the beat in local communities.
- deliver higher policing standards. Expand the powers of HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services to intervene in failing police forces, introduce higher mandatory national vetting standards across policing, and establish new mandatory arrangements to deliver efficiency savings through nationwide standards for procurement, shared services and specialist functions.
- crackdown on anti social behaviour. Introduce new Respect Orders to tackle persistent adult offenders, fast-track Public Spaces Protection Orders to make it quicker and easier to clamp down on rapid escalations in street drinking, and new powers to tackle the dangerous and anti social use of off-road bikes. Create

a duty for local partners to co-operate to tackle anti social behaviour, with an anti social behaviour lead in every local authority area.

- tackle retail crime. Create a new specific offence of assaulting a shopworker and introduce stronger measures to tackle low level shoplifting.
- tackle knife crime. Get dangerous knives and other weapons off our streets by banning ninja swords and other lethal blades, and introducing strict sanctions on senior executives of online companies who fail to operate within the law. Prevent young people being drawn into crime and criminal gangs by strengthening the law to tackle those who exploit children for criminal purposes, and create arrangements for local Young Futures prevention partnerships to bring together services to support at-risk teenagers.
- provide a stronger, specialist response to violence against women and girls. Ensure the police have the capability to respond robustly to domestic abuse, rape and other sexual offences, and strengthen the law to improve the police response to spiking.

Through this Bill and other measures, we will be rebuilding neighbourhood policing. Bring forward arrangements to get neighbourhood police and Police Community Support Officers back on the beat in local communities.

Territorial extent and application

The Bill will extend and apply to England and Wales.

Key facts

- Serious violent crime, particularly knife crime, remains far too high. Knife crime has risen by 7 per cent in the latest year ending December 2023, where there were over 49,000 recorded offences involving a knife or sharp instrument in England and Wales. Additionally, the most serious incidents – knife-enabled homicides – have risen in the past decade (from 195 in 2012/13 to 244 in 2022/23), with young men most likely to be both the perpetrators and victims of such crimes.
- Thousands of children are potentially vulnerable to child criminal exploitation. In England, in year 2022/23 there were 14,420 Children in Need assessments which identified children at risk of, or a victim of, criminal exploitation; while 11,100 assessments recorded that a child was part of a street or organised crime gang.
- Retail crime is also increasing. Police-recorded crime figures indicate that there were 430,104 shoplifting offences for year ending December 2023, an increase of 37 per cent over the previous 12-month period. Retail sector surveys put the figure up to forty times higher, with the British Retail Consortium Crime Report 2024 estimating it rose to 16.7 million (45,750 a day) up from eight million (in the 12 months to August 2023).

- Anti social behaviour continues to blight communities. The police recorded one million incidents of anti social behaviour in the year ending December 2023. Estimates from the Crime Survey for England and Wales for the year ending December 2023 showed that 35 per cent of people had experienced or witnessed some type of anti social behaviour.
- Violence against women and girls (VAWG) is high-harm and high-volume. The volume of VAWG offences reported to the police has increased in recent years and there remains a substantial gap between prevalence and police recorded crime. For example, it is estimated that only 1 in 6 victims of rape report to the police. In the year ending December 2023, police (excluding Devon and Cornwall Police) recorded 191,052 sexual offences, of which 68,387 were rape offences and 12,900 were exposure and voyeurism offences.
- The criminal justice response to VAWG offences is poor and domestic abuse has seen a general decline in charges and prosecutions since 2015. Domestic abuse flagged offence charges are down 45 per cent and prosecutions have decreased by 41 per cent for the year ending March 2023 compared to year ending March 2015. In addition, the charge rates for sexual offences remain low at 9 per cent in 2023 compared to 19 per cent in 2015 and the proportion of stalking cases charged has fallen from 21 per cent in 2016 to 7 per cent in 2023.
- Criminals are going unpunished. Since March 2015, the percentage of crime recorded that lead to someone being charged has dropped from 15.5 per cent to 6.2 per cent, meaning that in 2023 over two million crime investigations were closed with no suspect identified.
- Confidence in policing is falling. The proportion of people who consider that the police are doing a good or excellent job has been on a downward trend since 2017, falling from 62 per cent to 51 per cent in 2023.