

Safer Crawley Partnership

STRATEGIC INTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENT 2023

Locality Headlines

Crime Summary

Total recorded crime
↑15%

12,499 offences in
2022

Crawley had highest
crime rate across
West Sussex

105 crimes per 1000 residents
(up from 92 in 2021)

Severity of crime
highest in West Sussex
and higher than Sussex & England

(Crime Severity Score:16.8 in Crawley,
11.6 in Sussex, & 15.9 in England)

Violent crime
accounted for 59%
Crawley total crime

Levels of violent crime
↑16%
(Highest in WSx)

Violence offences
increased year on year

Sexual offences ↑28%
(& 20% higher than 2019)

Crawley highest rate of
sexual offending in West
Sussex along with Arun

Domestic abuse ↓9%
*yet still accounts for the
20% of County's DA*
(2nd highest in West
Sussex)

Drugs offences ↓34%

29% County Lines
were operating from
Crawley in 2022

Theft offences ↑27%

Highest in West Sussex
along with Worthing

Theft from a vehicle(↓12%)
Bike theft (↑55%)
Theft from a person(↑49%)
Theft other (↑34%)
Shoplifting (↑12%)
Theft of motor vehicles
(↑47%)

Crawley Borough



Crawley covers **17 miles²**
Main urban areas:
Crawley Town Centre

Broadfield ward is within
the top 10% most deprived
areas among England &
Wales

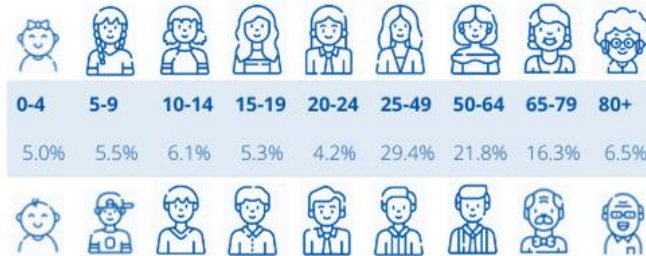


26.35 residents
per hectare
population density

13% of West Sussex
population resides in Crawley



118,500 people living in
Crawley (Census 2021)
↑ **11.2%** increase since
2020



25% are under 19 years old
61% are between 20 and 64
years old (Working Age Adults)



13% are over 65 years old
(Older Residents)



59,500 Female (50%)
59,000 Male (50%)



1% of households lack
central heating; same
as in West Sussex



Of the Children We Care
For living in West Sussex
13% resided in Crawley



21% of children in Crawley
living in poverty



20% NEET children reside
in Crawley
(highest % together
with Arun)

Crime & Disorder



12,499 recorded crimes in 2022 in Crawley
(↑**15%** since 2021; but ↓**4%** since 2019)

The overall crime rate was **105 per 1000 population.**



Police recorded crimes are similar, or exceeding levels seen prior Covid-19, both nationally and locally



Violent crimes (**59%** of all crimes)
7325 in 2022
(↑**16%** since 2021 & ↑**16%** 2019)



Theft offences
(**21%** of all crimes)
2581 in 2022
(↑**27%** since 2021)



Arson & Criminal damage
(**8%** all crimes)
1023 in 2022
(↑**3%** since 2021)



Burglary
(**3%** all crimes)
370 in 2022 (↑**34%** since 2021 & ↓**14%** to 2019)



Drugs offences
(**3%** all crimes)
361 in 2022 (↓**34%** since 2021 and ↓**35%** compared to 2019)

Drugs possession
290 in 2022
↓**29%** comparing to 2021 and ↓**38%** since 2019

Drug Trafficking
71 in 2022 (↓**21%** in 2021 but ↓**19%** in 2019)



Vehicle offences
538 in 2022
(↓**3%** since 2021)



Domestic Abuse Crimes
1911 in 2022 (↓**9%** since 2021 & ↓**15%** compared to **2081** incidents in 2019)

Domestic Abuse Incidents
997 in 2022
(↓**12%** since 2021 & ↓**9%** compared to **1096** offences in 2019)



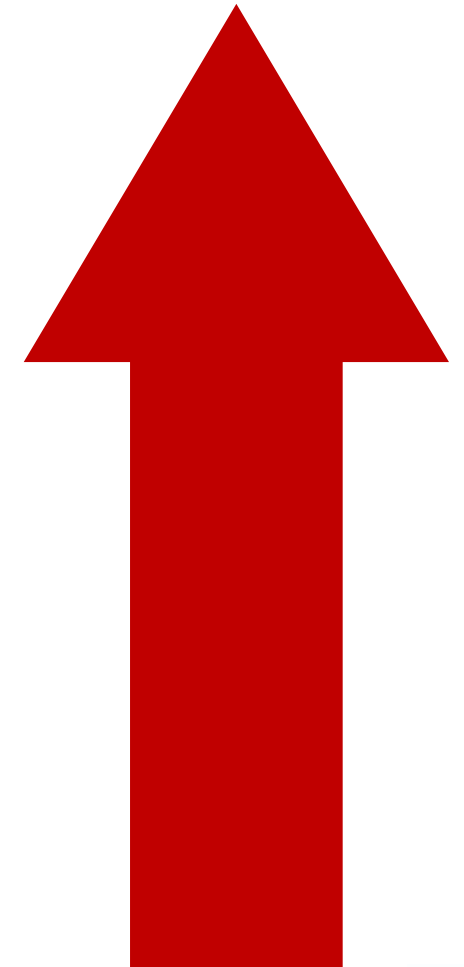
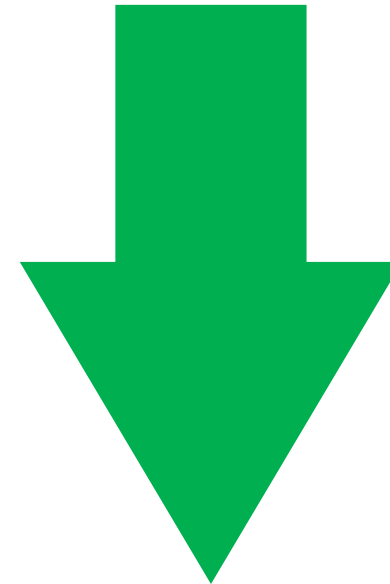
Sexual offences
490 in 2022
(↑**28%** since 2021 & ↑**20%** compared 2019)

Increases in Crime

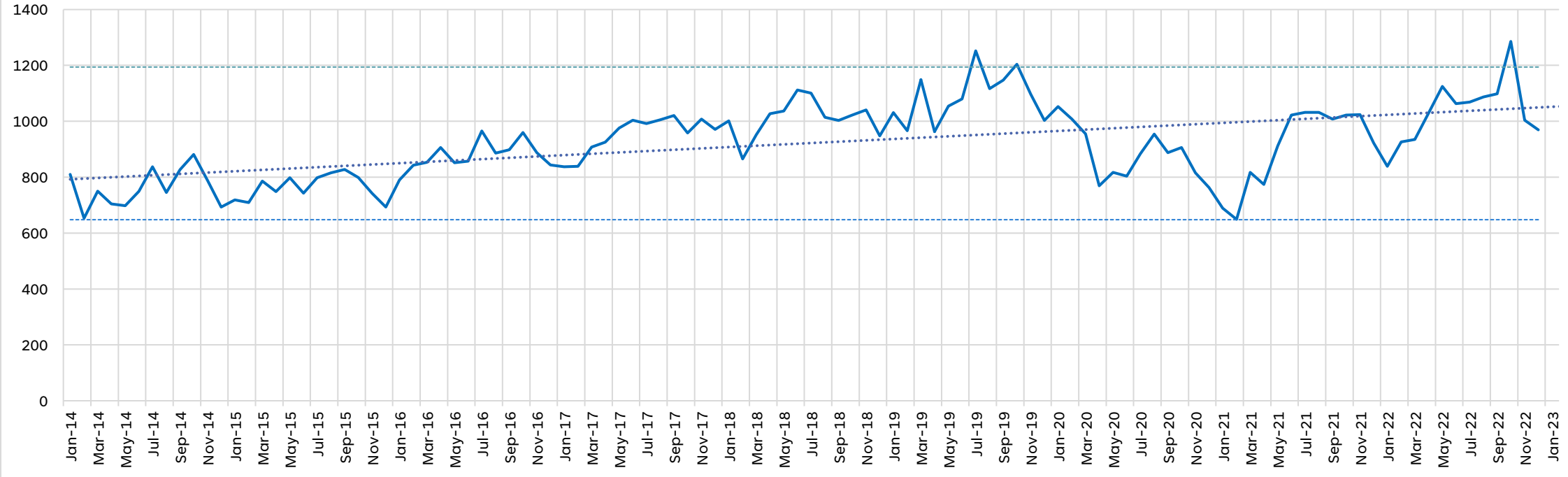
- Arson and Criminal Damage ↑3%
- Burglary ↑34%
- Robbery ↑55%
- Sexual offences ↑28%
- Violence against the person ↑8%
- Violent crime ↑16%
- Knife crime (ADR 160 NDQIS) ↑17%
- Possession of weapon ↑158%
- Theft Of A Motor Vehicle ↑47%
- Theft from a person ↑49%
- Bike theft ↑55%
- Shoplifting ↑12%
- Sexual offences ↑28%

Reductions in Crime

- Drug Offences ↓34%
- ASB ↓51%
- Theft From A Vehicle ↓12%
- Domestic Abuse crime ↓9%
- Domestic Abuse incidents ↓12%



Crawley Total Crimes Jan 2014 - Dec 2022



Recorded offences	Jan-19	Feb-19	Mar-19	Apr-19	May-19	Jun-19	Jul-19	Aug-19	Sep-19	Oct-19	Nov-19	Dec-19
Monthly 2019	1031	966	1149	963	1054	1080	1252	1117	1147	1204	1097	1003
Monthly 2020	1053	1008	955	769	817	804	884	954	888	906	816	763
Monthly 2021	689	649	817	774	912	1022	1032	1032	1008	1022	1024	922
Monthly 2022	839	926	935	1029	1125	1063	1069	1087	1098	1286	1004	969

Violence



Crawley has the **highest** number and rate per 1000 population of violent crime offences; accounting for 23% (+2%) of the county's total



212 serious violence* offences in Crawley in 2022 crimes in West Sussex (**30%**) and increased **↑32%** comparing to previous year

** (non domestic, public place)*



27% of the county's knife crimes were recorded in Crawley
The vast majority (62%) were linked to acts of Violence Against the Person



Levels of recorded violent crime increased 16% last year



The Square in Northgate in Crawley was identified by Op Safety as a hotspot location for serious violence in West Sussex



8336 nominals of violence were identified by Sussex Police in Crawley. **27%** were children

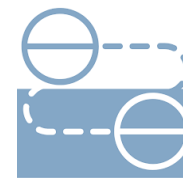
Average age of young people involved in violence: **11 years**



47% of all Violence Against the Person crimes involved Child & Young People (11-24 years old)



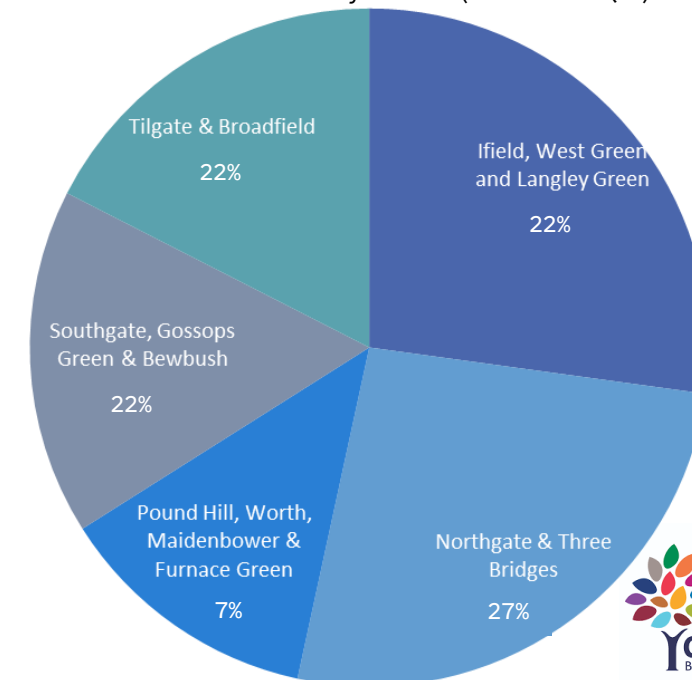
34% of the youth violence was committed by repeated offenders



19% of Serious Violent crime occurring in Crawley had 'County Lines' or 'Suspected CL' flag

Sussex Police Op Safety Power Bi Dashboard

Knife crime in Crawley in 2022 (ADR160 NDQIS)



Child Exploitation



Of those identified, **81%** had indicators of exploitation & harm and 19% were being exploited



17% Children identified at risk or, or experiencing exploitation reside in Crawley Borough



Crawley was identified as the town with the highest number of children identified at risk of exploitation along with Worthing and Bognor Regis

(SOC Local Profile February 2023)



Majority of children on CE cohort in Crawley were 14-16 years old



Half of exploited children in Crawley were male



Bognor Regis along with Crawley was identified as the cuckooing hotspot. The cuckooed addresses are used to store drugs and/or deal from leading to ASB reports in the area

(SOC Local Profile February 2023)



13% Children We Care For in West Sussex reside across Crawley Borough



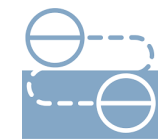
At least **56%** children identified in Crawley were at risk of criminal exploitation



21% of children in Crawley are living in poverty



20% NEET children reside in Crawley



29% of the county lines operating in West Sussex in 2022 were from Crawley. Of the active lines as of December 2022, two thirds were operating from the Borough

Acquisitive Crime



Theft from a shop increase 12%; mainly from supermarkets across the borough

Yet figures 24% lower than shop thefts crimed in 2019



94 more Burglary offences recorded last year (34% increase); yet 14% lower than pre-pandemic



Vehicle Crime reports reduced 3%



Theft from a person offences almost 49% higher than last year; 40% lower than pre pandemic levels



Levels of Robbery (Business & Personal) remain low across the borough; despite 55% since last year (136 offences in 2022)



Theft offences increased 27% last year, and accounted for 21% of the County's crime*

Highest in West Sussex along with Worthing



Theft of pedal cycles were around 55% higher than last year and ↓19% since pandemic levels

* Direct comparisons with 2019 should be treated with caution owing to changes in police recording (theft no longer includes handling offences)



Drugs offences
 (Accounts for 3% total crime)

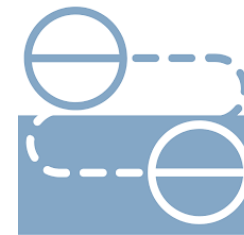
361 offences in 2022
 (↓**34%** since 2021 and ↓**35%**
 compared to 2019)

26% all WSx drug crime
 occurred in Crawley last year



Drugs possession
290 in 2022
 ↓**29%** comparing to 2021
 and ↓**38%** since 2019

Drug Trafficking
71 in 2022 (↓**21%** in 2021
 and ↓**19%** in 2019)



Of all the county
 lines operating
 across West Sussex
 in 2022, **29%** were
 operating from
 Crawley



Crawley along with Bognor
 Regis was identified as the
 cuckooing hotspot.
 The cuckooed addresses are
 used to store drugs and/or
 deal from leading to ASB
 reports in the area
 (SOC Local Profile February 2023)



1883 ASB offences in
 2021; 2nd highest in
 the county
 88% ASB reported to
 CBC concerned
 neighbour nuisance



There were **620**
 admission to hospital
 across Crawley for
 Alcohol Specific
 Conditions



671 Action Fraud reports in
 Crawley in **2022**
 (↓**13%** since 2021).
11% of all West Sussex

168 Op Signature reports
 (↓**28%**); highest sextortion
 (↑**46%**) and courier fraud (↑**21%**)



Hate Crime
397 in 2022 ↑ from 376 in 2021

Hate Incidents
53 in 2022 ↓ from 72 in 2021

Hate Crime (Sexuality)
67 in 2022 ↑ from 56 in 2021

Hate Crime (race)
292 in 2022 ↑ from 271 in 2021



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Recorded Crime Overview

Crawley had the highest crime rate across West Sussex last year; rising from 92 to 105 crimes per 1000 population. Crimes across the Borough increased by 1596 this together with rise crime in Adur & Worthing has contributed disproportionately to a County wide rise in crime. The cost of crime in Crawley was over £41 million, accounting for 20% of the County total; majority due to Violence Against the Person offences. Over fifth of the offences occurred in Northgate ward, followed by Three Bridges, West and Langley Green and Southgate.

Rises in crimes have been driven predominantly by an increase in violent and acquisitive crime; which mirrors county trends. Levels of crime appear to be stabilising following irregularity and anomalies associated with the pandemic and associated lockdowns and social restrictions. Data suggests a shift towards more victim-centric and acquisitive offences such as robbery, theft, and sexual offences. This rise is largely attributable to increases in violence in the Borough (up 1017 crimes) which account for a quarter of the County's violent crime.

Crime peaked during late spring and summer months (highest between May-October) where an average of 1100 offences were recorded each month. Offending decreased for the rest of the year; dipping to around 970 offences in December. These spikes are in line with notable economic events last year including the significant rise in household bills which came into force in April and went up again October 2022.

Of the all the nominals involve in crimes, either as a victims or suspect/offenders over a quarter were children (U18) and 15% of suspects/offenders were under 18. Violence against the person crimes accounted for the highest number of crimes, with 22% crimes committed by Children or Young people under 25.

Whilst Op Safety analysis identified The Square in Northgate as a primary hotspot for serious violence in the Borough, Three Bridges and Southgate remain areas of concern; albeit with a wider distribution of offences across both wards.

Links to county lines was suspected in fifth of the serious violent crime recorded by Sussex police.

Theft offences increased 27% compared to the previous year; however, unlike most other localities, this was mainly driven by rises in 'other theft*' offences, shoplifting and bike theft. Almost a quarter of offences involved children and young people under 25.

Despite a slight increases in Criminal Damage and Arson in Crawley rates remained one of the highest across the County. Incidents of Arson doubled compared with the previous 12 months; yet figures remain low at 63 crimes.

Looking at the weapon crimes, both possession of weapons and knife crime increased, respectively 157% and 17% compared to previous year; this leaves Crawley with the highest rate of weapon related crime across West Sussex. However, this may be skewed by changes in reporting at Gatwick Airport.

Drug crime, domestic abuse crimes and incidents of antisocial behaviour all reduced in 2022; bucking national trend.



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Commentary

The government is largely attributing increases in crime with the relaxation of Covid-19 restrictions. Whilst this is true of some offence types; especially where the opportunity to commit crime was curtailed by lockdown and social restrictions, it is naïve to assume the impact of political, economic and social instability hasn't played a part too.

Nevertheless, it is imperative to understand the extent which the pandemic exacerbated underlying vulnerabilities within and across communities. Health, economic, and social inequities made some communities more vulnerable to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic than others; with Crawley, identified Nationally as an area where vulnerability was and remains high. The societal impact of the pandemic must also be recognised; with cohorts of children throughout the whole education system referred to the as 'covid classes' who have missed out vital education; from early years socialisation to essential relationships, sex and health education (including elements of citizenship) and physical time away from the classroom. This lost time cannot be underestimated as it is these and other 'hidden' aspects of the curriculum that help shape young people through adolescence, provide a counter narrative to the things they see and hear online or in their communities and for some young people; school is a place of safety, security and consistency where they will be warm, have access to food and trusted adults.

Acts of serious and ultra violence are emerging threats across the county; especially across Crawley and Adur & Worthing. These are closely linked with organised crime and exploitation; therefore, it is not implausible to suggest rises in more serious youth crime are indicative of a wider problem (across the county and region as a whole) of children being drawn into organised criminality. This is corroborated by county lines and cuckooing statistics, which suggest over a fifth of the drug lines operating in Sussex run out of Crawley, and the borough has been identified as a cuckooing hotspots in West Sussex; with the most vulnerable residents at risk of exploitation and potential violence in addition to the possibility of homelessness if they try to resist. Moreover, following a serious, fatal incident in Crawley in 2023, Sussex Police has identified two street urban street gangs operating across the Borough; these are the first 2 street gangs identified across Sussex.

The impact of Youth disorder across both localities can be not only in respect of violent crimes but also had a significant impact on theft crimes, especially other thefts and shoplifting last year. This is most likely due to rises in offending itself but also an increase in Police recordings in order to better understand the real impact of crimes caused by children and young adults. With this in mind, it is essential to work with those involved and the communities to work together to deter children and young adults from perpetrating violence and disrupting individual and group activity associated with youth violence. It is vital to listen to young people's voices, support them with more targeted interventions and empower them to make positive choices in their education, employment, training and relationships.



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Next Steps

Data & Intelligence Gaps

Whole district spatial mapping and analysis to determine specific locations of concerns at ward and street level; especially the areas most affected by poverty

More data and analysis is required to better understand current picture of Extra Familial Risk in the Borough

More in-depth analysis to better understand the links between County Lines, drug use and cuckooing in Crawley

Suggested Further Analysis / Actions to Consider

Partnership to continue working with Violence Reduction Partnership and Op Safety team delivering preventative and targeted support to best possible outcomes for young people involved in violence; especially 18-25 cohort

The Contextual Safeguarding Group to raise awareness with schools of the Education for Safeguarding (RSHE) platform; especially among secondary schools

Partnership to work with Alternative Provision Centre(s) to encourage pupils to engage in safety mapping exercises to help the partnership understand areas that young people feel safe or unsafe & why

Partnership to work with other agencies on transitional safeguarding to ensure targeted support is in place in order to protect young people during their journey into adulthood; especially those most vulnerable and currently being exploited and/or involved in violence

Following spates of youth crime and exploitation, partnership should seek to re-promote its range of youth provision to communities and young people

Partnership to work with statutory and voluntary sector to encourage reporting on Domestic Abuse and sexual offending

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