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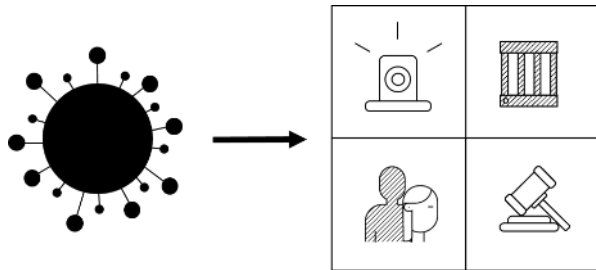
Justice Analytical Services
Coronavirus (COVID-19) Data Report:
January 2021

Published 25th February 2021

Summary

This pack provides information on the impact of COVID-19 on the Justice system during January 2021.

Data has been gathered from a number of different sources and may be subject to future revision.



Public compliance

This pack includes information on COVID-19 related interventions undertaken by Police Scotland. In addition to this, information on the public's compliance with measures to help restrict the spread of COVID-19 is collected from surveys of the population. Findings from these surveys can be found in the [Public attitudes to Coronavirus: January Update](#).

Claimed compliance was high in November and December.

Police activity

- Recorded crime was 6% lower over April 2020 to January 2021 compared to the preceding year.
- The number of incidents remain below 2020 levels.
- Domestic abuse incidents were 4% higher in April 2020 to January 2021 compared to the preceding year.
- Coronavirus interventions increased by 43% between December 2020 and January 2021.

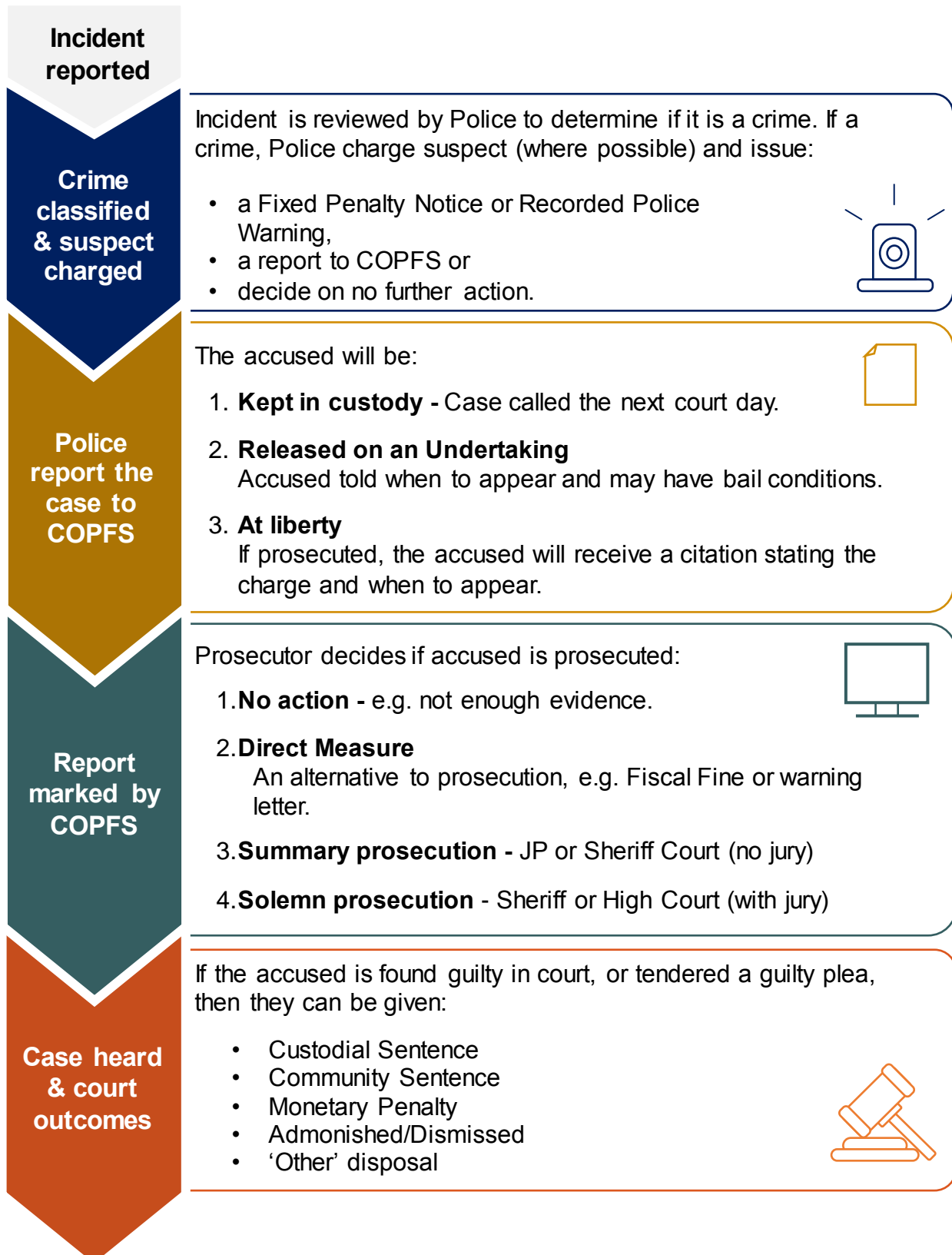
Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS), Courts & Prisons

- COPFS greatly reduced the number of reports awaiting marking January 2021.
- To reduce footfall in lockdown, the majority of summary business was adjourned on 12th January.
- Community disposals were returning to 19-20 levels but there remains a backlog of cases (and associated disposals) to conclude.
- Initiations and disposals in the civil court remain below 19-20 levels.
- Prison populations decreased slightly as court business abated.
- The number of prisoners on remand remain at historically high levels.

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How crime flows through the Justice System



Police Activity

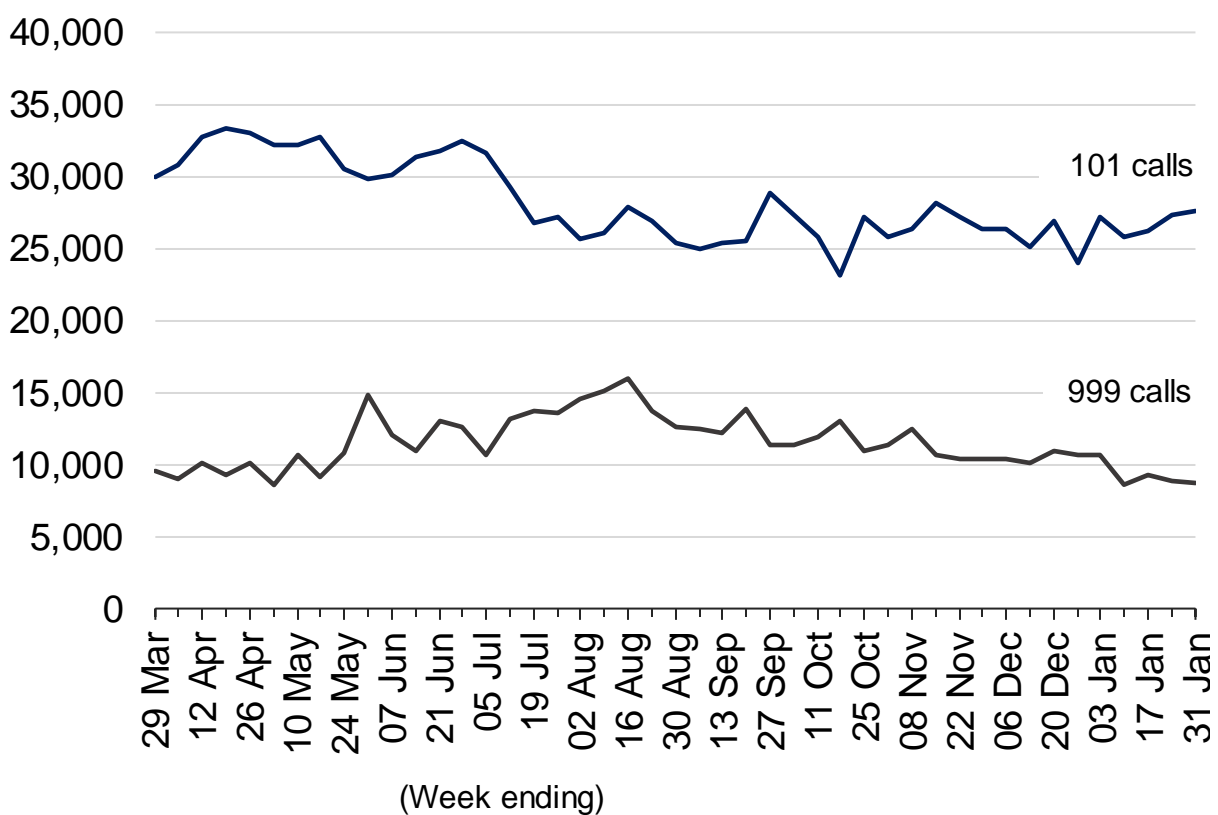
(Police Scotland)

101 and 999 call volumes

Total weekly 999 & 101 calls remain below 2020 levels

- Both 101 calls and 999 calls have remained relatively stable over the past four months.
- There may be evidence of a slight downward trend in 999 calls since August.
- In the week ending 31st January there were 36,302 calls made.
- When combined, calls were slightly higher than the previous week.

Number of calls



	24 th January 2021	31 st January 2021
101 calls	27,357	27,535
999 calls	8,846	8,767
Total calls	36,203	36,302

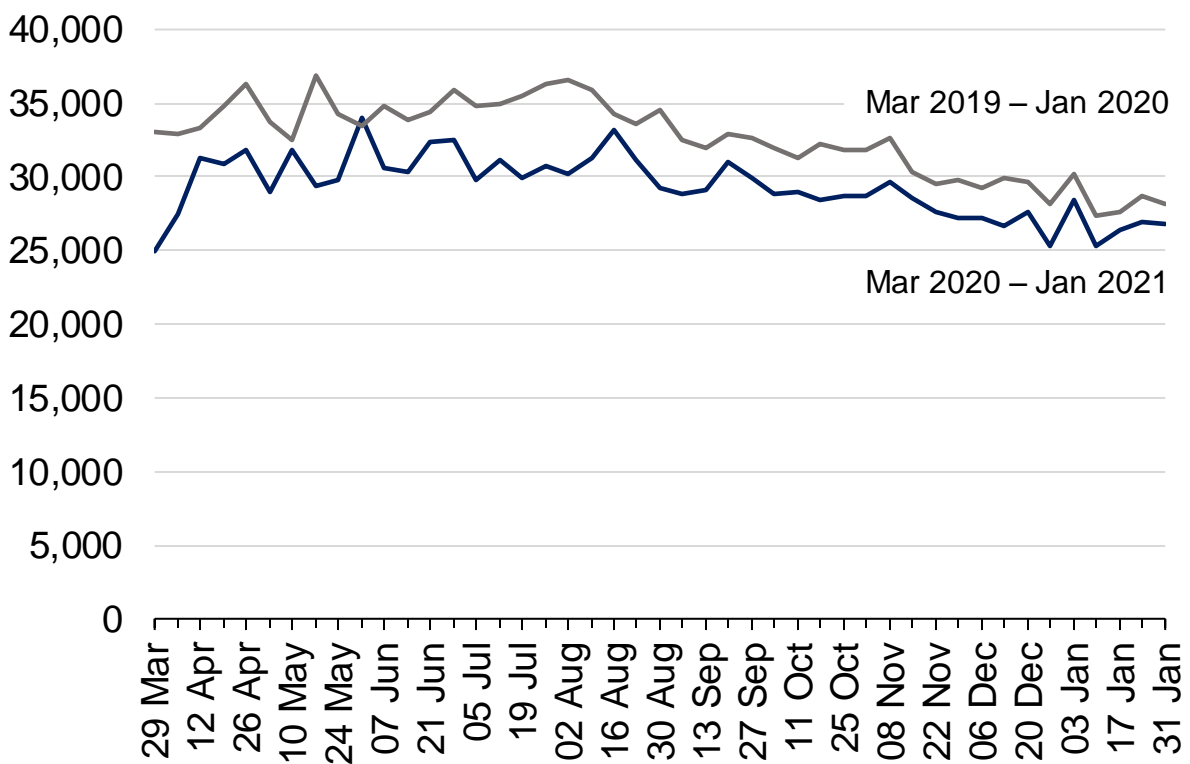
Incidents recorded

Weekly incident numbers remain below 2020 levels

Since March 2020, incident numbers have been trending below levels for the preceding year.

Scotland entered Phase 2 of its route map on 28th May. There was an increase in incidents during that week (w/e Sunday 31st May). However, incident numbers remained below 2019 levels in the weeks that followed, and declined from November onwards. Scotland entered a new period of lockdown on 4th January 2021. Since then, incidents have remained comparatively low.

Number of incidents



In the week ending 31st January:

26,762
incidents recorded



Down 5% compared to an equivalent week in 2020 (28,105 incidents)

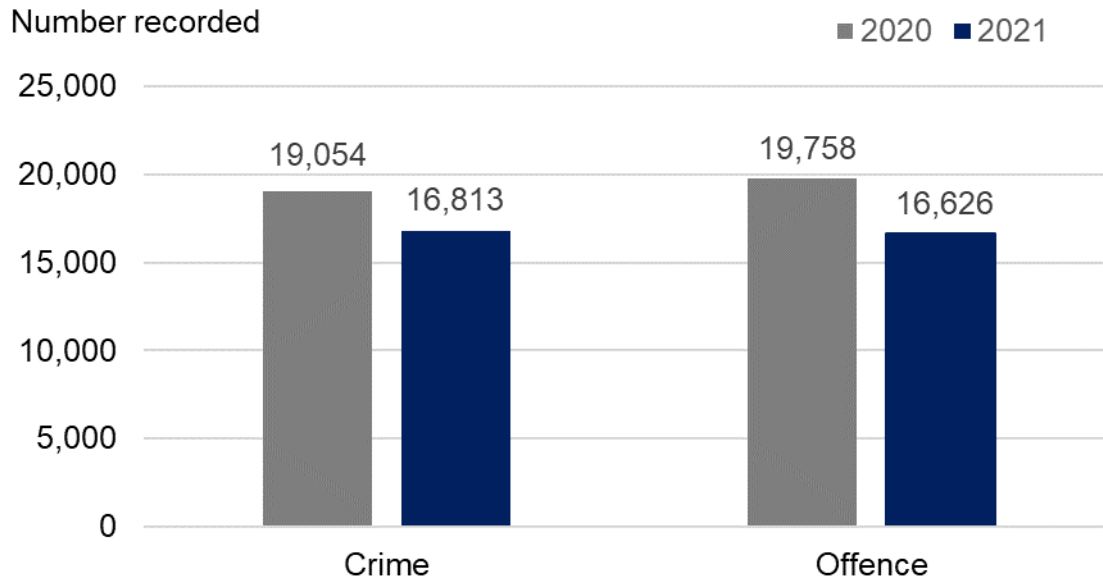
Further information:

A full breakdown of calls & incident volumes is available from:

<https://www.scotland.police.uk/about-us/covid-19-police-scotland-response/enforcement-and-response-data/>

Recorded Crime in Scotland

The recorded crime figures presented below exclude crimes recorded under the coronavirus legislation.



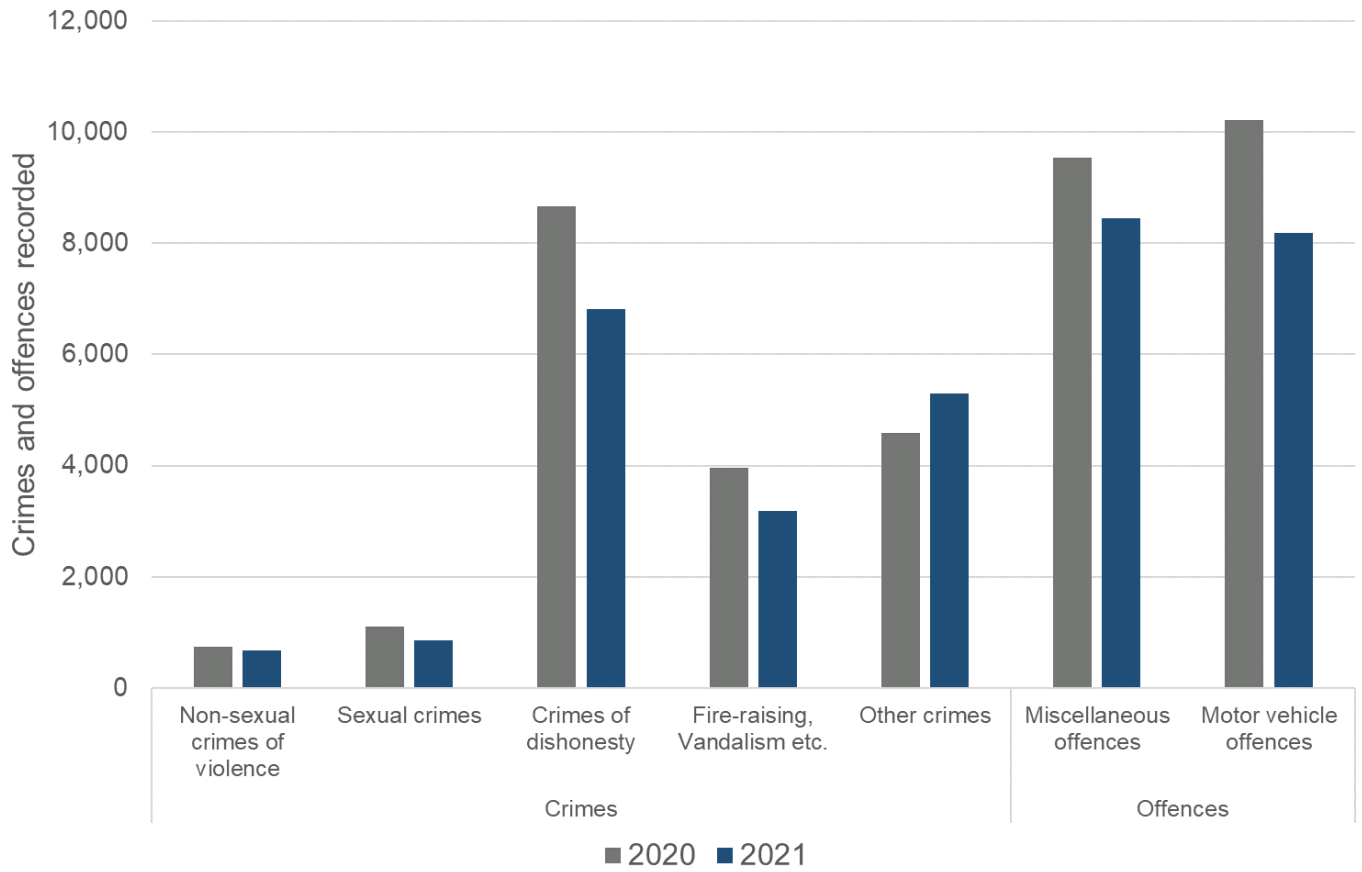
January 2021

The number of crimes recorded in 2021 has returned to trending below 2020 levels.

The number of crimes recorded in January 2021 was 12% lower than in January 2020, and the number of offences was 16% lower than in January 2020.

Since last year, most crime and offence groups have seen a reduction while one group is at a higher level.

Other crimes were 15% higher (or 704 crimes). This increase was driven by rises in Crimes against public justice (up 32%, or 494 crimes).



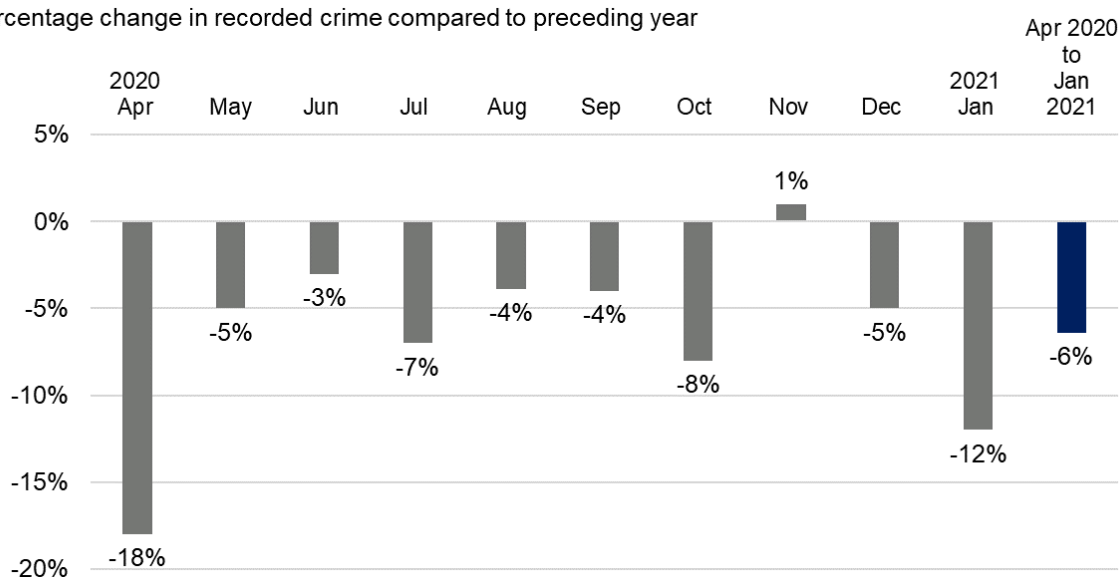
April 2020 to January 2021

In January 2021, crime remained below levels for the preceding year after seeing an increase in November.

When looking across April 2020 to January 2021*, 193,375 crimes were recorded. This was 6% lower than April 2019 to January 2020 (206,567 crimes recorded).

When comparing to previous months, crime since the start of the pandemic has generally remained below that of the preceding year, with the exception of November.

Percentage change in recorded crime compared to preceding year



*The recorded crime figures presented here exclude crimes recorded under the new coronavirus legislation.

The biggest drivers of the reduction across April to January were Shoplifting, Other theft and Vandalism etc.

The biggest drivers of the 6% reduction over April to January (by volume) were:

Shoplifting

↓ 33% (or 8,429 crimes)

Other theft

↓ 19% (or 6,515 crimes)

Vandalism etc.

↓ 12% (or 4,613 crimes)

The biggest increases of this period were in:

Fraud

↑ 63% (or 5,614 crimes)

Crimes against public justice

↑ 32% (or 5,142 crimes)

The [Changes in levels of recorded fraud section](#) in the latest bulletin provides further background on what may be contributing to the above increase.

Further Information:

The data in this section comes from the monthly Official Statistics on crimes and offences recorded by the police in Scotland during the COVID-19 pandemic.

For more information, please see [Recorded Crime in Scotland: January 2021](#).

Coronavirus legislation intervention activity

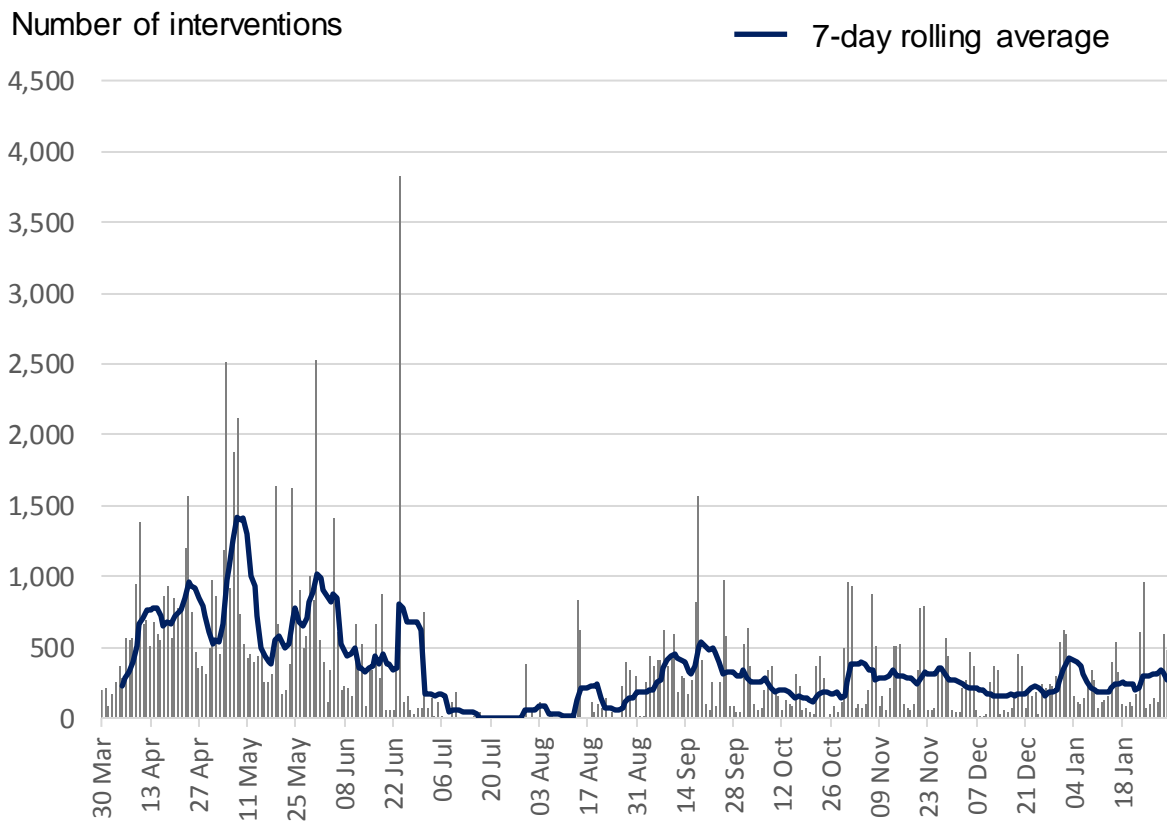
This information is drawn from Police Scotland's 'Coronavirus Interventions' application, which relies on manual input from Police Officers. Due to this manual input, these figures should be viewed as indicative only.

This system currently provides the broadest picture of the differing levels of co-operation experienced by Police across Scotland.

The use of interventions increased in January but remains lower than April to June levels

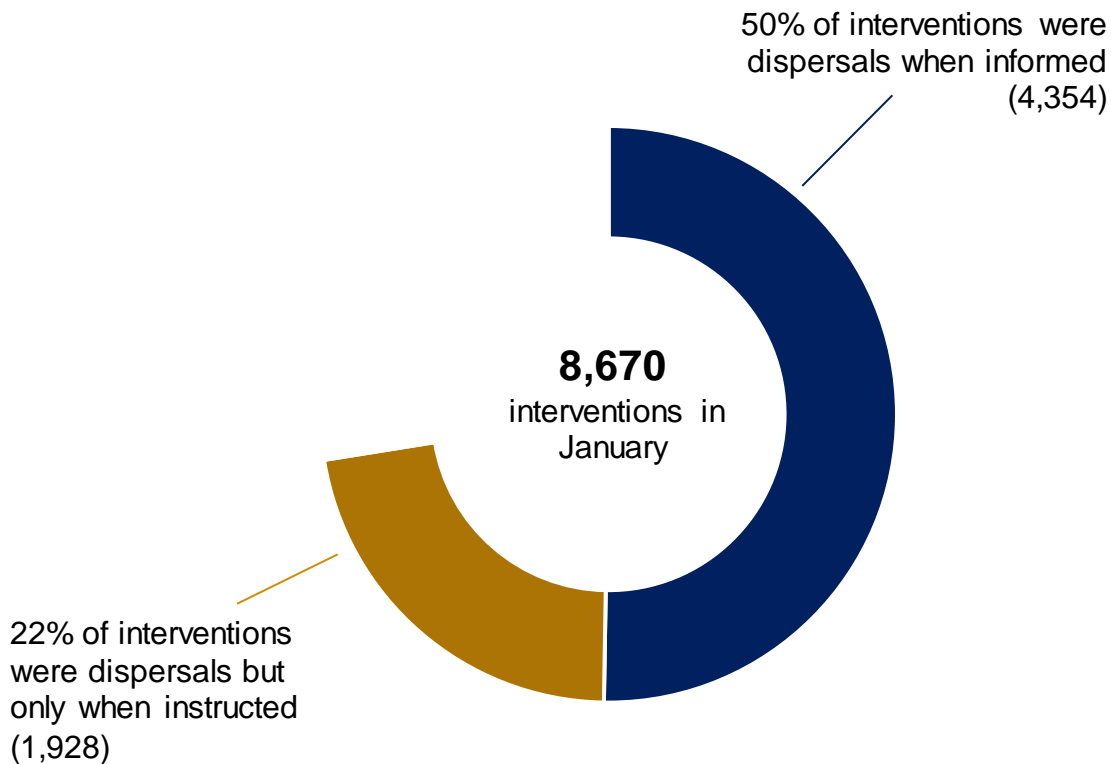
Total use of interventions has increased by 43% (or 2,624 interventions) since the previous month.

A large spike in interventions was seen on 25th June, following a large scale disturbance in Kelvingrove Park.



COVID-19 Intervention Activity in January 2021

In January, 73% of interventions made were dispersals. This is a lower percentage than in previous months, which has ranged from 99% in July to August 2020 to 81% in November and December.



Of the remaining 28% of interventions:

- 47 were dispersed using reasonable force
- 2,226 were issued a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN)
- 115 were arrested

Further Information:

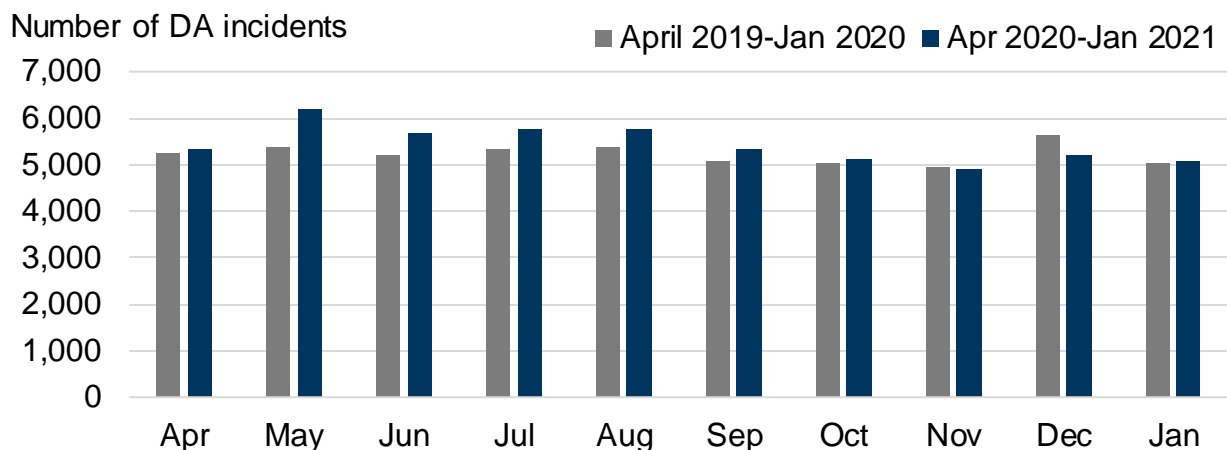
A full breakdown of interventions is available from Police Scotland:
<https://www.scotland.police.uk/about-us/covid-19-police-scotland-response/enforcement-and-response-data/>

Police Recorded Domestic Abuse Incidents

The number of Domestic Abuse incidents recorded in January 2021 was slightly above the level seen in 2020.

These updates (including the proportion with a crime or offence) will be reflected in future editions of the Official Statistics on [Domestic Abuse in Scotland](#). The next edition will cover the 2019-20 reporting year.

Looking cumulatively across April 2020 to January 2021, incidents were 4% higher than the equivalent period the previous year.



In January 2021:

5,098

Domestic incidents recorded



Up 1% since last year
(5,035 incidents)

In April 2020 to January 2021:

54,451

Domestic incidents recorded



Up 4% since equivalent period last year
(52,398 incidents)

The proportion of April 2020 to January 2021 incidents that include the recording of at least one crime or offence was 39.4%. [Police Scotland's Management Information Report](#) suggests an equivalent figure of 43.9% for 2019-20.

In addition to the above, separate figures on crimes recorded under the Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018 are available from the Recorded Crime in Scotland monthly Official Statistics. There were 1,291 such crimes recorded by the police in April 2020 to January 2021, compared to 1,453 during the equivalent period the preceding year (down 11%).

Police Recorded Domestic Abuse Incidents per 10,000 population

Across Scotland as a whole, the police recorded 100 domestic abuse incidents per 10,000 population during April 2020 to January 2021.

The local authorities with the highest rates were Dundee City (148), West Dunbartonshire (133), and Clackmannanshire (130).

Domestic Abuse incidents
per 10,000 population, April
2020 to January 2021



Local authorities with rates
above the national average

Dundee City Council	148
West Dunbartonshire	133
Clackmannanshire	130
West Lothian	124
City of Glasgow	123
North Lanarkshire	122
Falkirk	116
Fife	112
North Ayrshire	109
East Ayrshire	107
Midlothian	106
South Lanarkshire	104
Renfrewshire	100

Further Information:

The data in this section comes from the monthly Official Statistics on crimes and offences recorded by the police in Scotland during the COVID-19 pandemic.

For more information, please see [Recorded Crime in Scotland: January 2021](#)

**Crown Office and
Procurator Fiscal
Service
(COPFS)**

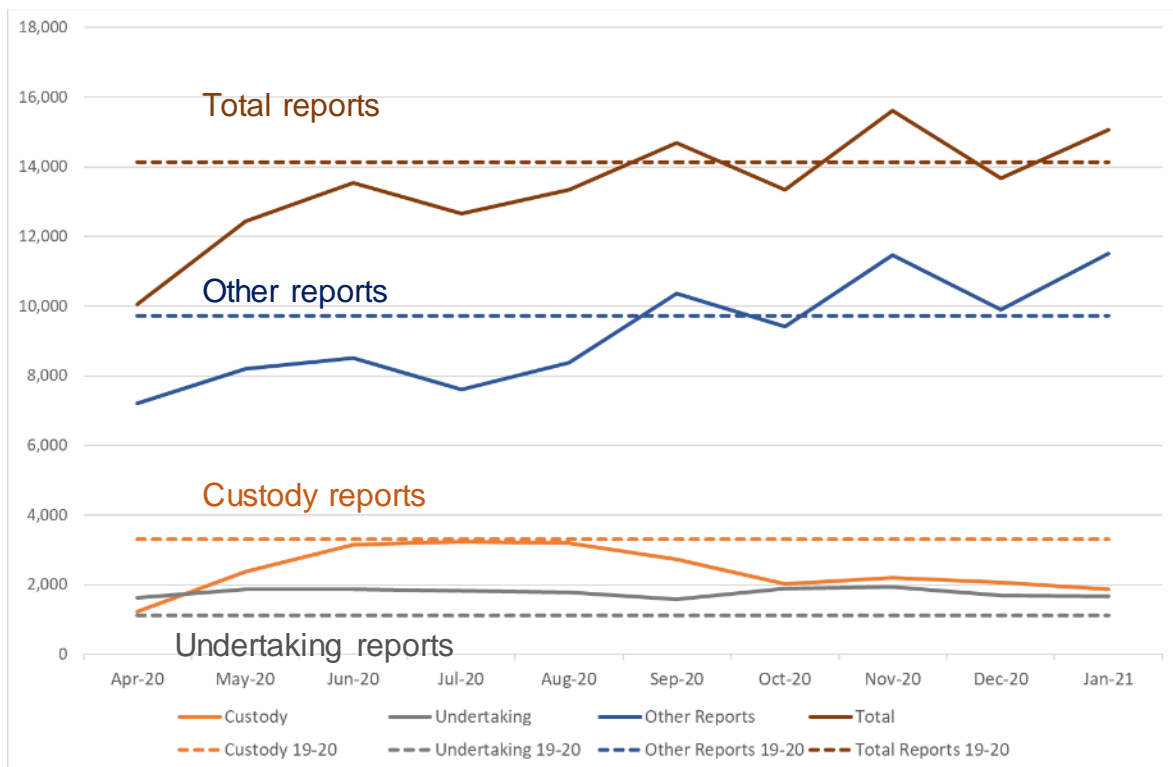
Reports received by COPFS

After a crime is classified and a suspect charged, police send a report to the Crown Office Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS).

Total reports received by COPFS now exceed last year's average levels.

- The total number of reports received by COPFS decreased substantially at the beginning of lockdown. Since that time numbers have been gradually increasing and now sit around 19-20 average levels.
- Undertaking report numbers remain higher than 2019-20 levels.
- Custody report numbers had returned to 2019-20 levels but decreased from August and are now less than half of 19-20 average levels.

Reports received

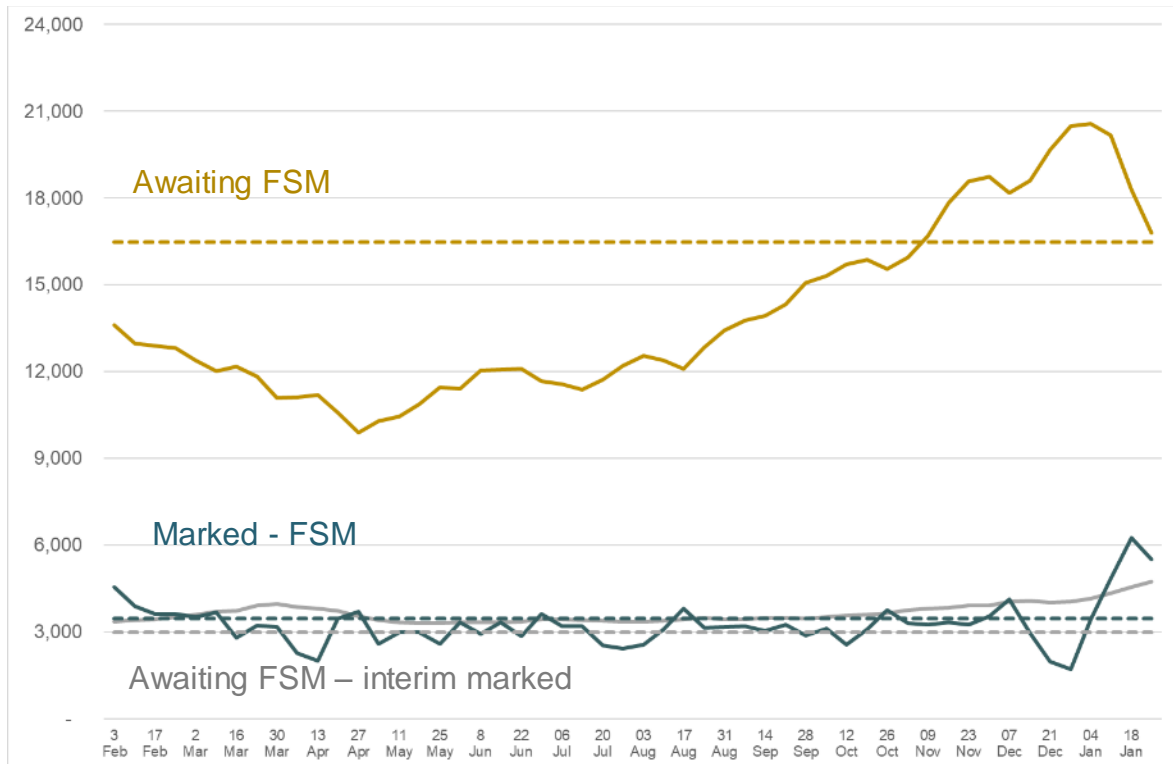


First substantive marking

When COPFS receive a report that someone has committed a crime the prosecutor must decide whether and what action to take. This is recorded on the case as a “marking”. If a decision cannot be taken immediately, an interim marking may be recorded. When a substantive decision is reached a First Substantive Marking (FSM) is recorded, to indicate how the prosecutor has decided to proceed.

The number of accused given a FSM by COPFS increased substantially in the early part of January 2021. At the same time there was a reduction in the number of reports awaiting marking and an increase in the number of interim marked reports.

Number of reports



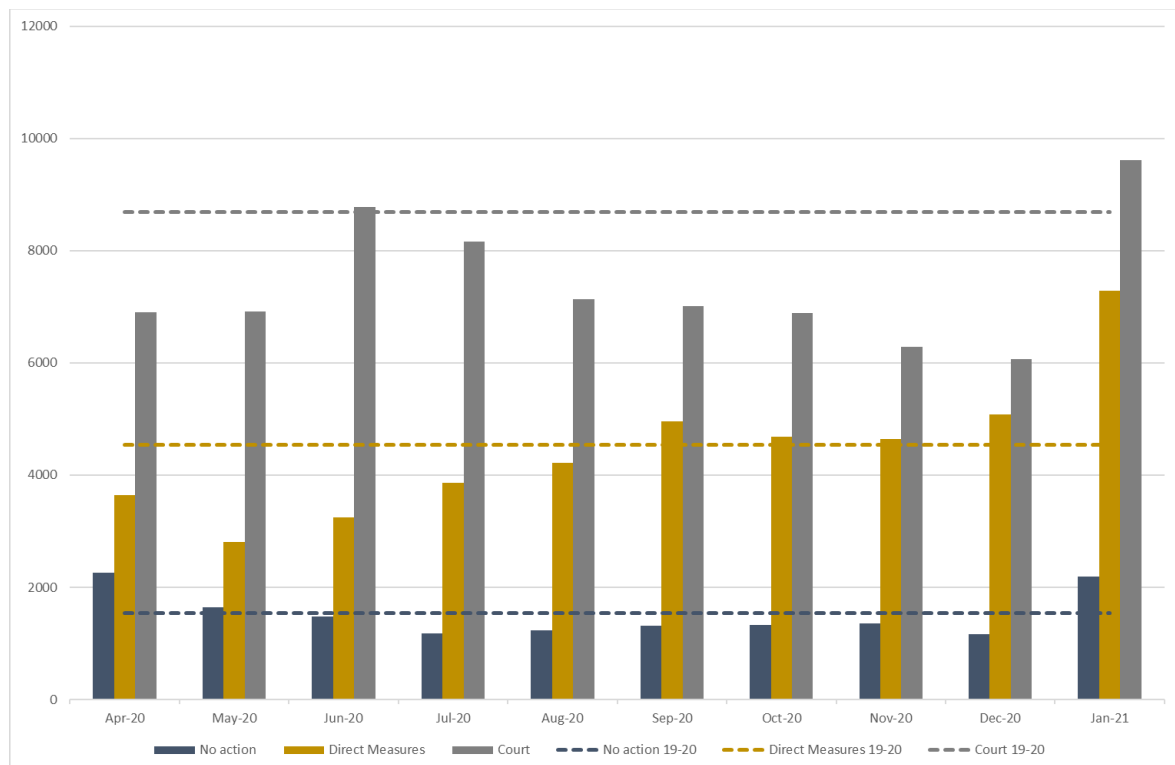
Summary of COPFS First Substantive Markings

There are 3 types of marking decision available to COPFS:

- No Action
- Direct Measures
- Court proceedings

Related to the previous graph showing an increase in reports receiving a FSM in January, the graph below shows increases to above 19-20 levels in all 3 types of marking decision.

Number of cases



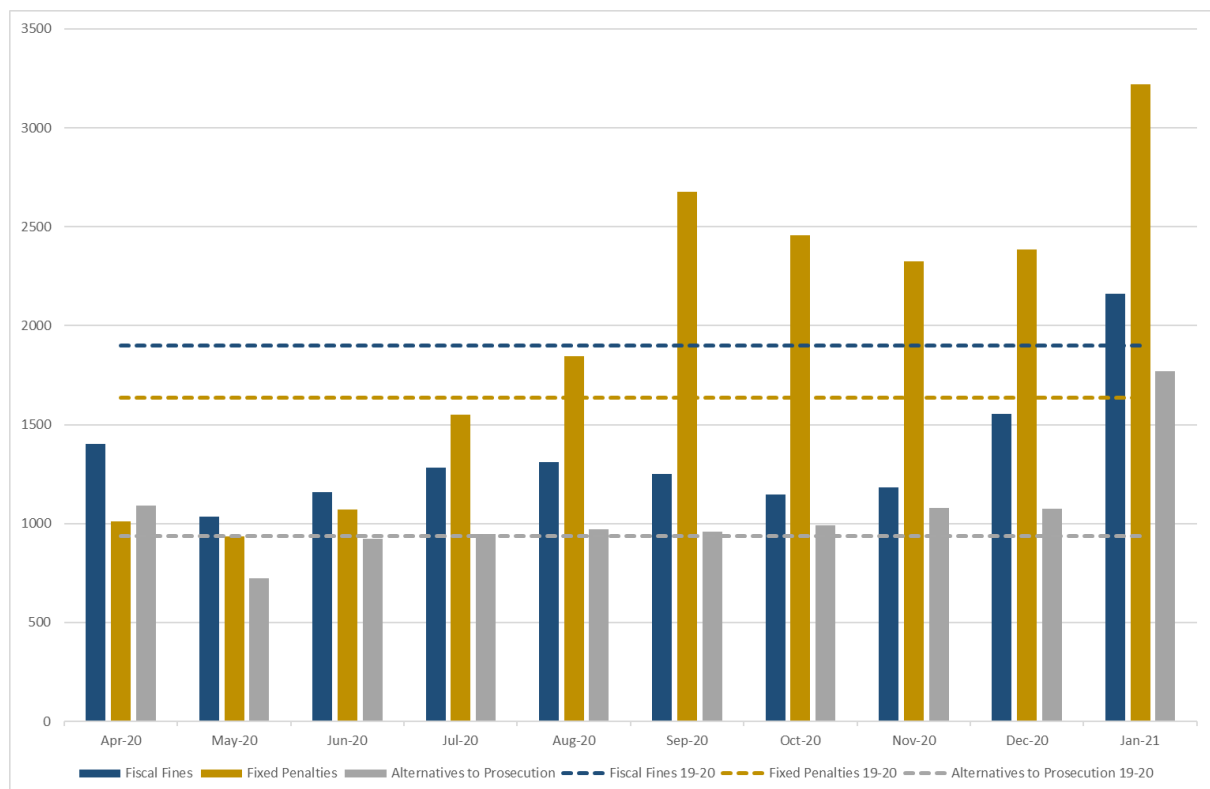
Subjects not marked for court

Alternatives to court include diversion, fiscal fines, fixed penalties, community and work orders. Fiscal fine limits were increased as part of the Coronavirus (Scotland) Act 2020.

In January 2021, for the first time in 2020-21, the numbers of subjects receiving a Fiscal Fine increased to above 19-20 average levels (dotted lines).

The number of subjects given Fiscal fixed penalties increased from May 2020, and remained above 19-20 average levels throughout the end of 2020. Numbers increased to almost double 19-20 average levels in January 2021.

Subjects marked

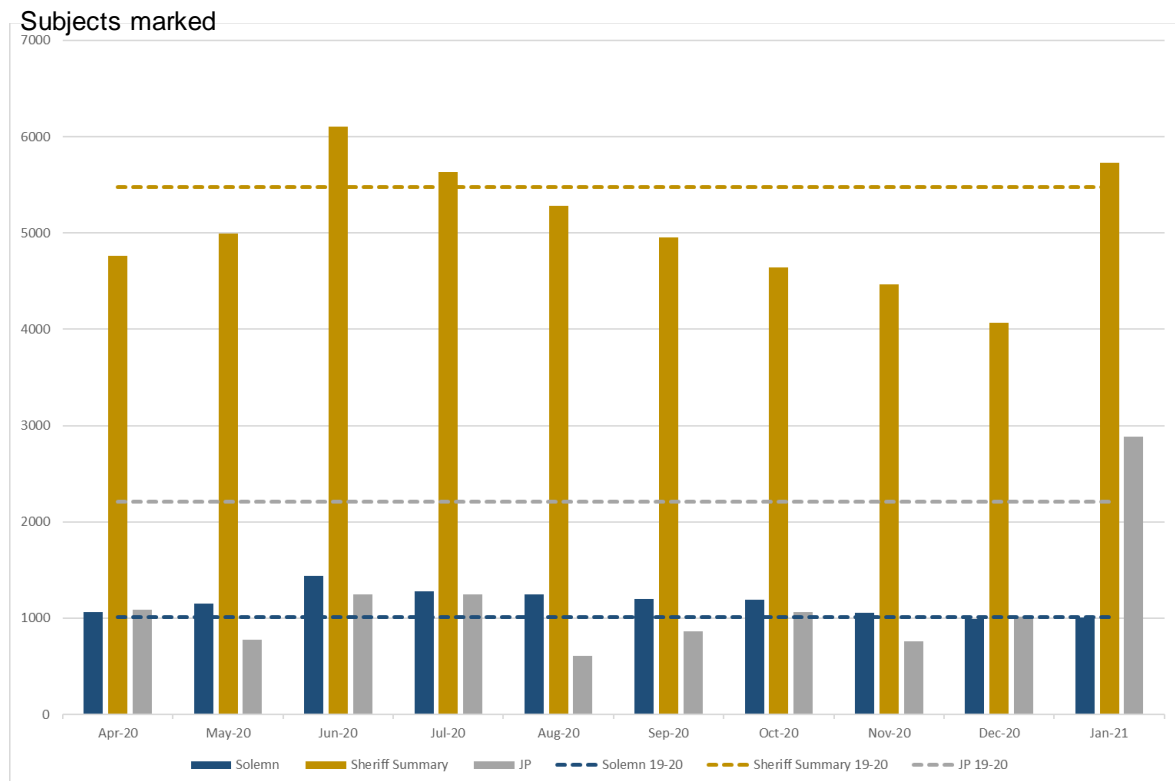


Subjects marked for court

The type of court proceedings appropriate for a case depends on the nature of the crimes or offences involved. The most serious crimes are marked for solemn proceedings, whilst less serious crimes and offences will be marked for Sheriff Summary or JP courts.

The number of people marked for proceedings in:

- Solemn court (High Court or Sheriff & Jury) has been at or above 19-20 average levels since April 2020.
- Sheriff Summary court fell below 19-20 average levels in August and continued to decrease until levels returned to the 19-20 average in January 2021.
- JP Court remained significantly below the 19-20 average until a substantial increase in January 2021.



Fatal Accident Enquiries (as of 31 January 2021)

FAIs with scheduled court dates 41

FAIs with First Notice lodged, awaiting court dates: 2

Source:

Data in this section has come from COPFS Internal Management Information System.

Scottish Courts & Tribunal Service (SCTS)

SCTS update

As a result of the increasing spread of the new variant of COVID-19 across Scotland, the Lord President has announced that during the lockdown period the criminal courts will focus on the most serious trials and the majority of summary trials in the Sheriff Court and Justice of the Peace Court will be adjourned. This will reduce the overall number of criminal trials taking place during lockdown by up to 75% and be implemented from January 12th.

Criminal Registered & Scheduled Trials

Since lockdown, there have been 63,635 criminal registrations in the courts. 293 of these registrations have been COVID-19 related (0.4%).

In January 2021, all types of court registration were lower than 2019-20 averages:

- Indictments registered in the High Court was 24% lower than 19-20 average levels.
- Indictments registered in the Sheriff court (solemn cases) was 17% lower than the 19-20 average.
- Complaints (summary cases) registered in the Sheriff Court was 31% lower than the 19-20 average.
- Complaints registered in the JP court was 48% lower than the 19-20 average.

Cases Registered	19-20 monthly average	January 2021	Change from 19-20 monthly average	Outstanding (scheduled) trials	
				Pre-lockdown	January 2021
Indictments					
High Court	85	65	-20 (-24%)	390	215
Sheriff Court	454	379	-75 (-17%)	497	1091
Complaints					
Sheriff Court	5,478	3,790	-1,688 (-31%)	13,971	28,548
JP Court	2,799	1,469	-1,330 (-48%)	3,497	5,213

At the end of January 2021 there were 35,067 trials outstanding. This compares to 18,355 at the end of 2019-20. In addition, SCTS have forecast that there are another 6,577 cases in the system which are likely to come to trial but have not yet had a trial date set (see SCTS published monthly criminal statistics for a more detail - <https://www.scotcourts.gov.uk/official-statistics>).

Criminal Disposals

In January 2021 there were 3,843 disposals (excluding secondary disposals and the 'other' disposal category) from Scotland's courts. This is 53% of the 19-20 monthly average of 7,278 and 59% lower than December 2020, reflecting the impact of the adjournment of summary court business on 12th January.

Between April 2020 and January 2021 there were 32,391 (44%) fewer disposals compared to the same time the previous year.

If courts had not been subject to lockdown and crime levels had remained the same we could have expected the number of April 2020 to January 2021 court disposals to be similar to April 2019 to January 2020 levels.

From April to January of 2021, there have been 39% fewer custodial sentences and 50% fewer community disposals imposed by the courts than might have been expected under normal circumstances.

To:	Monthly average	Jan	Change	Apr-Jan	Apr-Jan	Change
31 January 2021	2019-20	2021	%	2019-20	2020-21	%
Imprisonment	1,011	699	-31%	10,224	6,259	-39%
Community Disposal (CPO & DTTO)	1,384	836	-40%	14,041	7,003	-50%
Restriction of Liberty Order	296	320	+8%	2,975	2,151	-28%
Fine etc.	3,106	1,126	-64%	31,437	15,916	-49%
Admonished/ Discharged	1,481	862	-42%	14,881	9,838	-34%

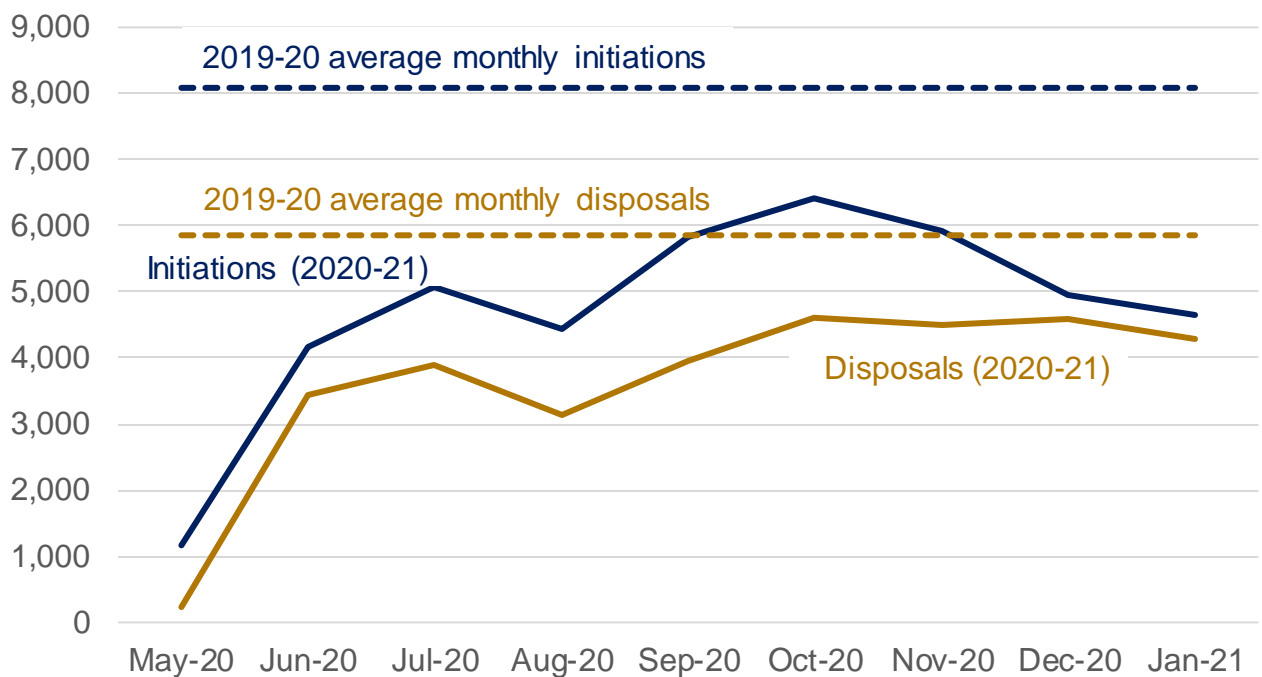
Overall, the number of crimes recorded by the police between April 2020 and January 2021 was 6% lower than the same period in 2019-20. It will take time for these cases to move through the courts system and it is unlikely that many of these cases are included in the disposal figures above. Any changes in crime levels may have associated impacts on volumes of court business and disposals.

Further Information: Latest SCTS published official statistics can be found here: <https://scotcourts.gov.uk/official-statistics>

Sheriff Court Civil Case Volumes

Case initiations and disposals

Initiations and Disposals (**of all types**) in the Sheriff Civil Courts remain low, but are recovering to 2019-20 typical levels (dotted lines) as the courts continue to emerge from lockdown. However, figures recorded in January, similar to December for initiations, were lower than previous months due to fewer court days as a result of the festive period. There was a small drop in disposals in January.



Sheriff Court initiated and disposed cases by procedure

Initiated case numbers for ordinary cause and simple procedure are returning to 2019-20 monthly average levels, although they were lower than previous months in January and December due to fewer court days as a result of the festive period. Summary cause is lower than 2019-20 levels, while small claims have largely been replaced by simple procedure.

Likewise, disposed cases for ordinary cause and simple procedure are returning to 2019-20 levels, with a drop in January for ordinary cause, while summary cause are much lower.

In addition to lower volumes across all procedures, summary cause figures were heavily influenced by the emergency legislation which protects tenants during the pandemic, brought into force in April 2020 as part of [Coronavirus \(Scotland\) Act 2020](#). The provisions of the Act, although temporary in nature, have now been extended until 31 March 2021.





Procedures	Sep-20	Oct-20	Nov-20	Dec-20	Jan-21	2019/20 monthly average
Initiated						
Ordinary cause	2,013	2,000	1,885	1,512	1,304	1,928
Summary cause	384	181	154	186	173	1,132
Small claim	3	1	2	4	0	2
Simple procedure	1,964	2,633	2,282	1,668	1,819	2,695
Total initiated	4,364	4,815	4,323	3,370	3,296	5,758
Disposed						
Ordinary cause	1,271	1,373	1,424	1,367	1,003	1,445
Summary cause	357	335	366	562	411	1,096
Small claim	13	4	2	4	1	5
Simple procedure	1,680	2,194	2,170	2,140	2,364	2,306
Total disposed	3,321	3,906	3,962	4,073	3,779	4,852

1. Figures exclude summary applications.
2. Figures for initiations and disposals do not necessarily refer to the same cases.
3. Excludes Sheriff Personal Injury Court.

Case types

In January 2021, all initiated and most disposed cases were below 2019-20 levels.

- Initiated case types presented are gradually returning to 2019-20 levels, with month to month variation. They were lower for January compared with previous months due to fewer court days as a result of the festive period.
- In January, for disposals, Debt had returned to 2019-20 levels, but Family, Children's Referrals and Personal Injury were lower than 2019-20 average levels. Disposals were similarly affected by fewer court days in January.

Initiated Cases (Jan 21)			Disposed Cases (Jan 21)	
January 2021	Change from 19-20	Case Type	January 2021	Change from 19-20
614	58% of 19-20 average month (1,055 cases)	 Family	589	65% of 19-20 average month (910 cases)
343	57% of 19-20 average month (602 cases)	 Children's Referrals	134	52% of 19-20 average month (260 cases)
2,144	74% of 19-20 average month (2,883 cases)	 Debt	2,532	107% of 19-20 average month (2,368 cases)
265	66% of 19-20 average month (402 cases)	 Personal Injury	175	57% of 19-20 average month (306 cases)

Further Information:

Latest published Civil Justice Statistics can be found here:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/civil-justice-statistics-scotland-2018-19/>

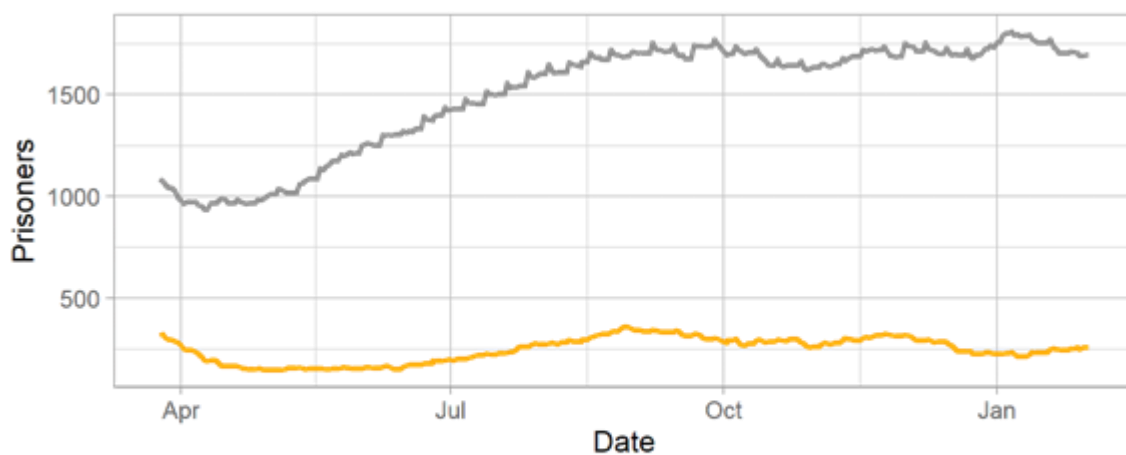
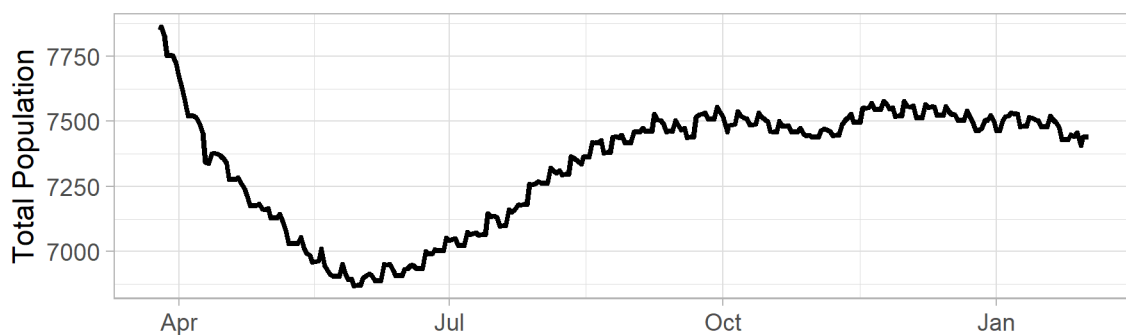
Prisons

Prison population

While the total prison population has fallen slightly with reduced court business, the number of people held on remand remains at a historic high level.

In January 2021 (up until the morning of 1st February):

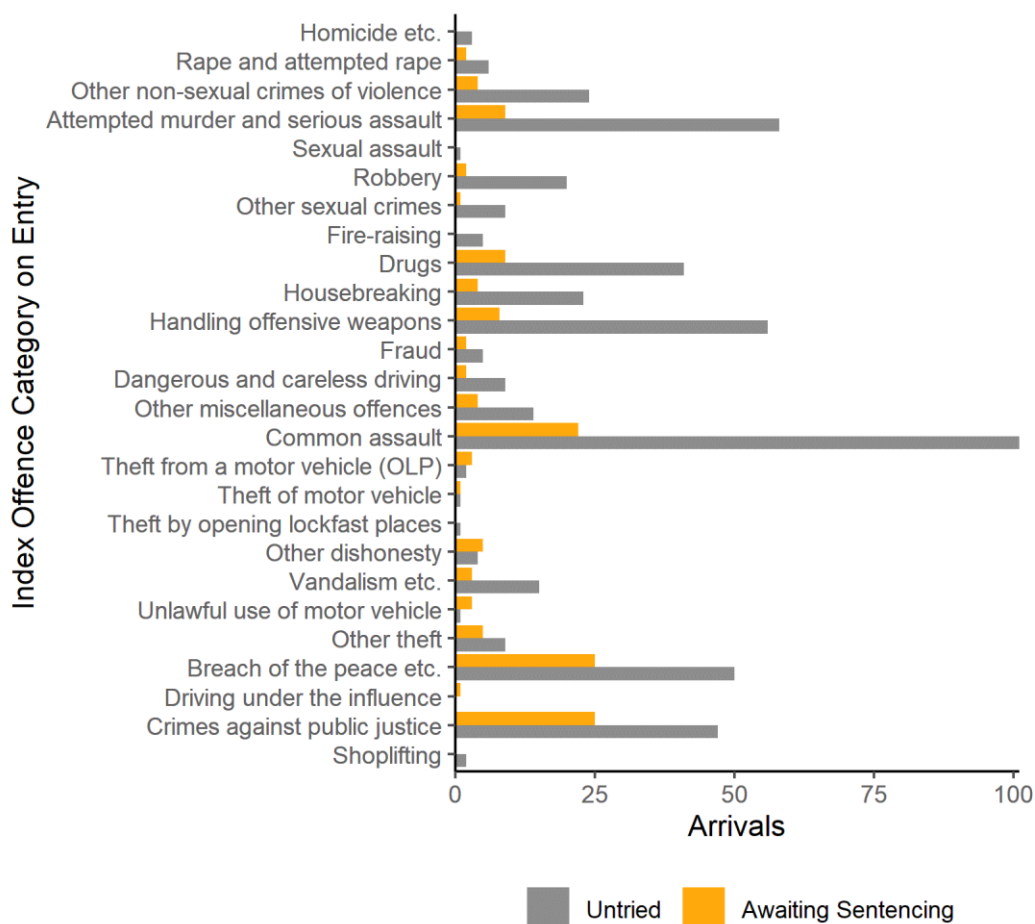
- the population fell by 25 to 7,440
- 1,948 were on remand: 1,693 (23%) untried & 255 (3%) awaiting sentence
- 67% of arrivals in January were untried (546 of 818), and 17% awaiting sentence (140)



Status — Untried — Awaiting Sentence

Remand Arrivals

There were 686 un-sentenced arrivals to prison with known offence types in January, awaiting trial or sentencing for the following alleged offences



Note: Double-counting may occur where an individual is absent from prison for a night in the week and then returns. Where an individual has multiple alleged offence types, the offence towards the top of the list in the chart is used as the index offence.

Revision: The way index offences are identified for remand prisoners changed from December 2020. Offences are now prioritised on the basis of average sentence length from [Criminal Proceedings 2018-19](#). This has increased the proportion where Common Assault, Drugs or Handling Offensive Weapons is the index offence. It has reduced the number of remanded individuals for whom Crimes Against Public Justice and Vandalism are the index offences

Further Information:

Latest published annual prison population statistics can be found here: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-prison-population-statistics-2019-20/>

Sources and Further Information

Sources and further information

The information presented in this pack are compiled from a range of sources – including Official Statistics, management information published by partner bodies, and more recent analysis of administrative data. These are combined to provide users with a summary of the latest impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on Scotland.

It should be noted that where information has come from non-Official Statistics sources, it will be provisional in nature and may be subject to future revision. It's inclusion at this stage is to provide users with more timely and detailed information on how the pandemic has affected different parts of Scotland's Justice system. As such this should be seen as providing a broadly indicative summary – rather than a precise measure of activity.

In due course and as standard practice, many of these measures will be reflected in the associated annual Official Statistics. Links to these related products are provided below, along with management information published by partner organisations.

Police activity:

- Monthly Recorded Crime in Scotland Bulletin. This contains Official Statistics on crimes and offences recorded by the police in Scotland.
- Domestic Abuse Statistics: 2018-19. Official statistics on domestic abuse in Scotland.
- Quarterly Police Scotland Management Information reports. These contain the number of domestic abuse incidents recorded by the police in Scotland and the proportion of these incidents that resulted in the recording of a crime or offence.
- Police Scotland Enforcement and Response Data. Includes data on enforcement activity and demands on policing. As this is drawn from management information it is subject to change.

Courts and prisons data:

- Annual Civil Justice Statistics Bulletin. This contains Official Statistics on civil justice and court reform as recorded by the Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service (SCTS).
- Scottish Prison Population Statistics, 2019-20. Experimental statistics on Scottish prison populations, exploring population levels and composition and change over time.
- SCTS Official Statistics. Includes quarterly data on fines, financial penalty collection rates, and criminal court activity in Scotland.

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If you would like to be consulted about statistical collections or receive notification of publications, please register your interest at <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotstat-register-guidance/>
Details of forthcoming publications can be found at www.gov.scot/statistics

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