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

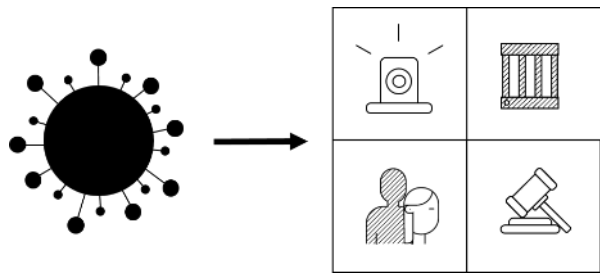
February 2021

Published 25th March 2021

Summary

This pack provides information on the impact of COVID-19 on the Justice system during February 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 7% lower over April 2020 to February 2021 compared to the preceding year.
- The number of incidents remain below 2019-20 levels.
- Domestic abuse incidents were 3% higher in April 2020 to February 2021 compared to the preceding year.
- Coronavirus interventions decreased by 10% between January and February 2021.

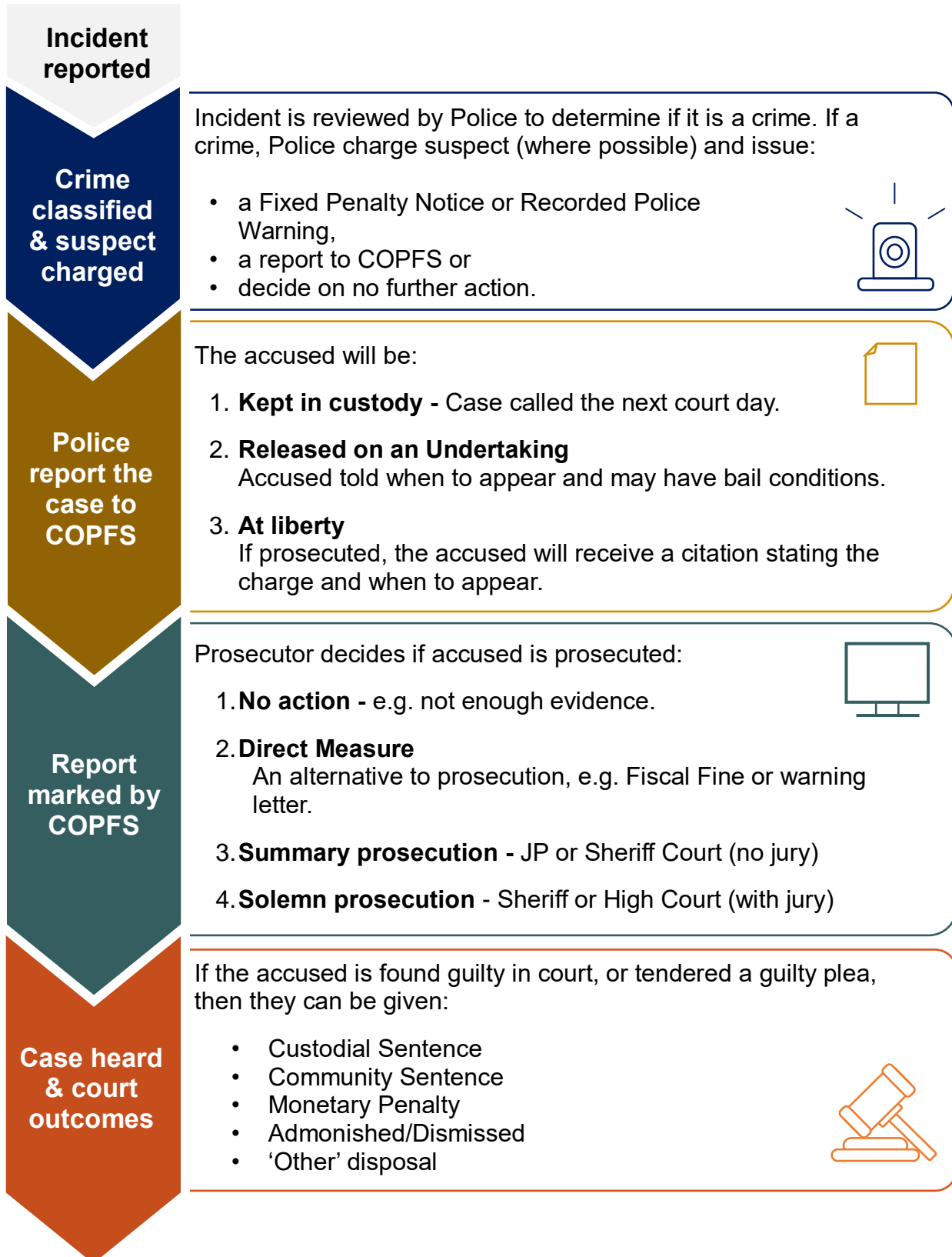
Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS), Courts & Prisons

- 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 initially decreased as court business abated.
- The number of prisoners on remand subsequently rose to its current, historically high, level.

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How crime flows through the Justice System



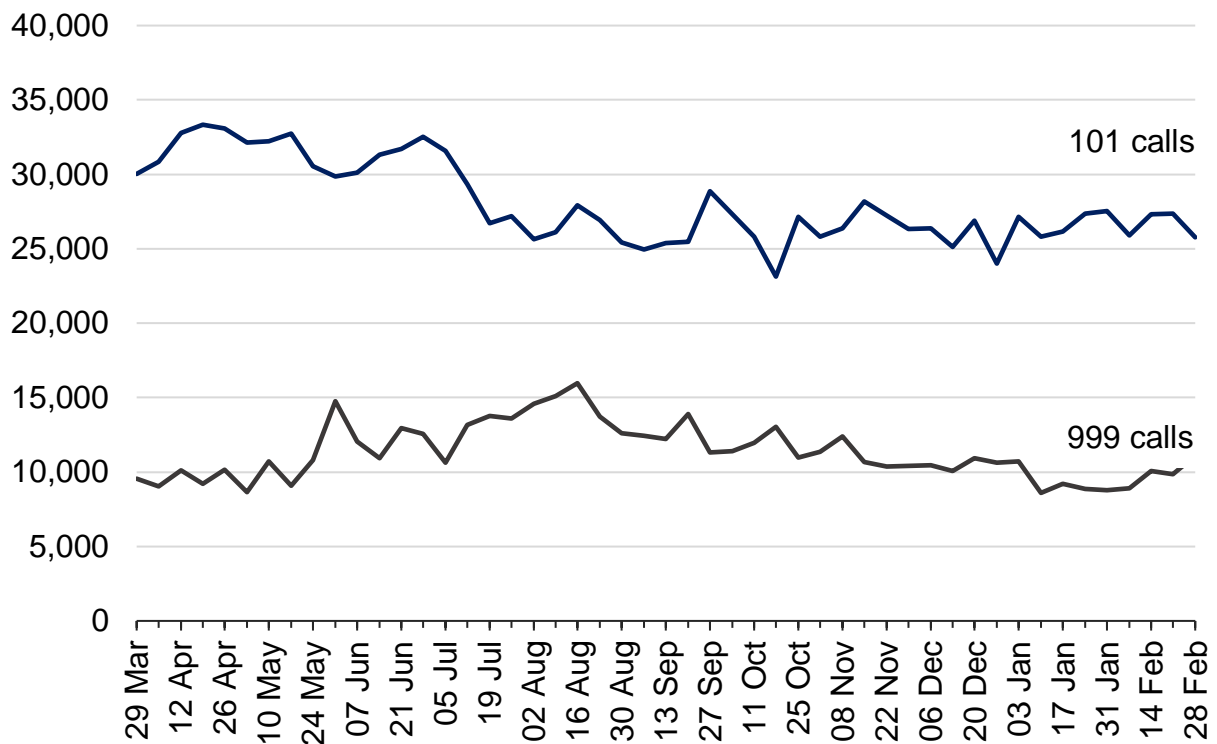
Police Activity (Police Scotland)

101 and 999 call volumes

Total weekly 999 & 101 calls remain below 2019-20 levels

- Both 101 calls and 999 calls have remained relatively stable over the past four months.
- In the week ending 28th February there were 36,878 calls made.
- When combined, calls were lower than the previous week.

Number of calls



(Week ending)

	21 st February 2021	28 th February 2021
101 calls	27,376	25,793
999 calls	9,864	11,085
Total calls	37,240	36,878

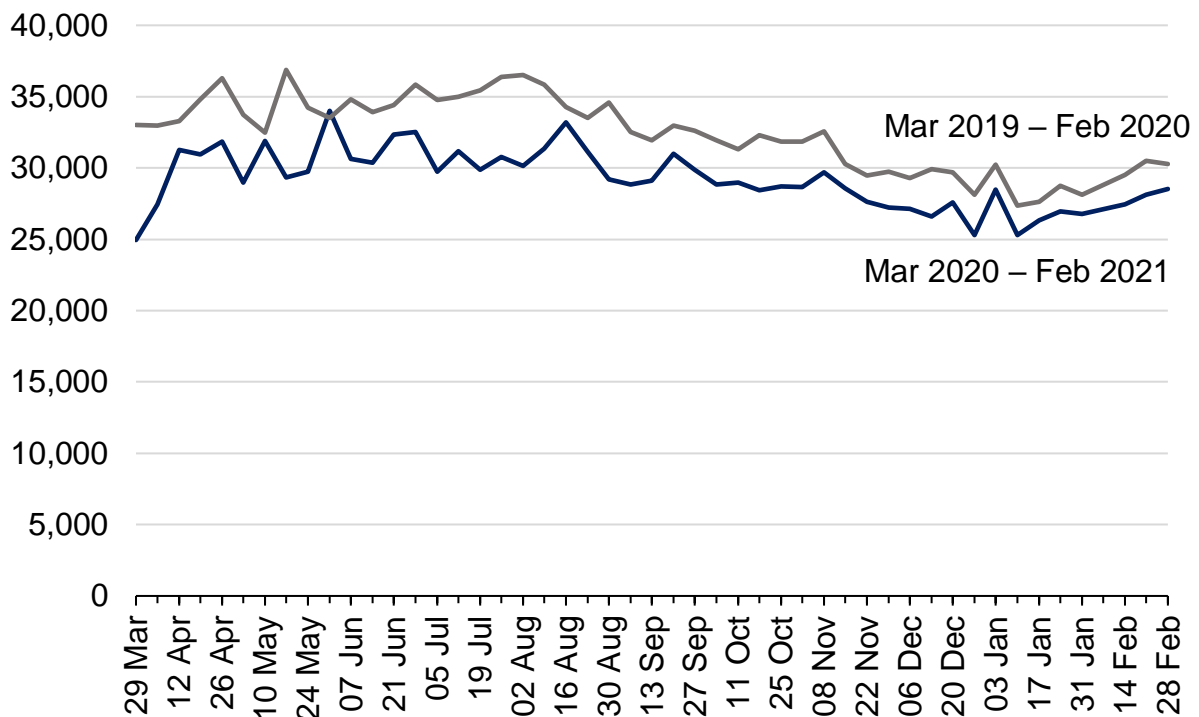
Incidents recorded

Weekly incident numbers remain below 2019-20 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 2020. There was an increase in incidents during that week (w/e Sunday 31st May). However, incident numbers remained below 2019-20 levels in the weeks that followed, and declined from November onwards. Scotland entered a new period of lockdown on 5th January 2021. Since then, incidents have remained comparatively low, although there is evidence of an increasing trend since mid-January.

Number of incidents



In the week ending 28th February:

28,528
incidents recorded



Down 6% compared to an equivalent week in 2020 (30,263 incidents)

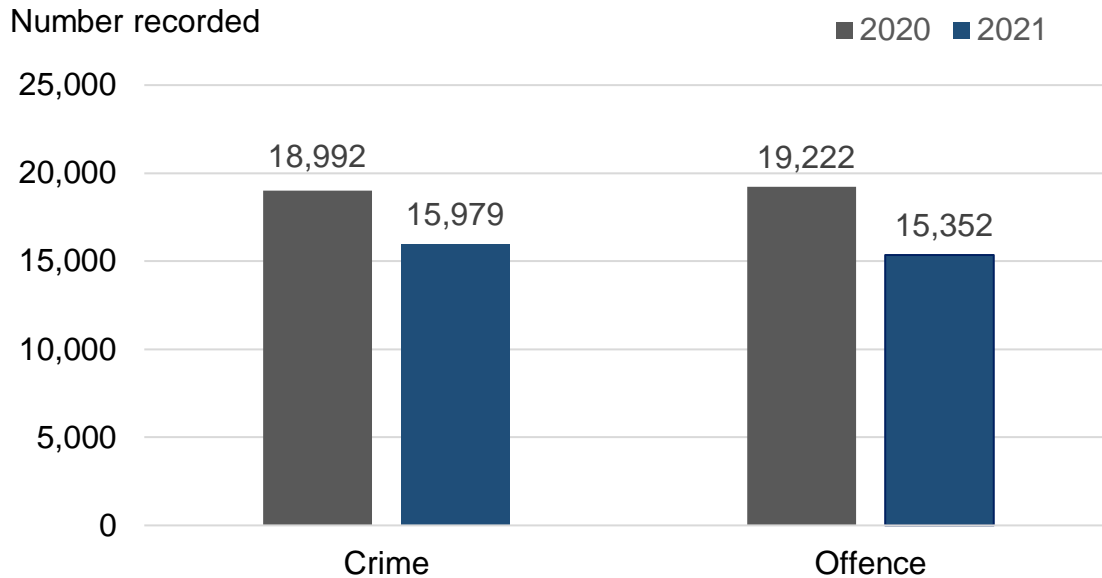
Further information:

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.



February 2021

The number of crimes recorded in 2020-21 continues to trend below 2019-20 levels.

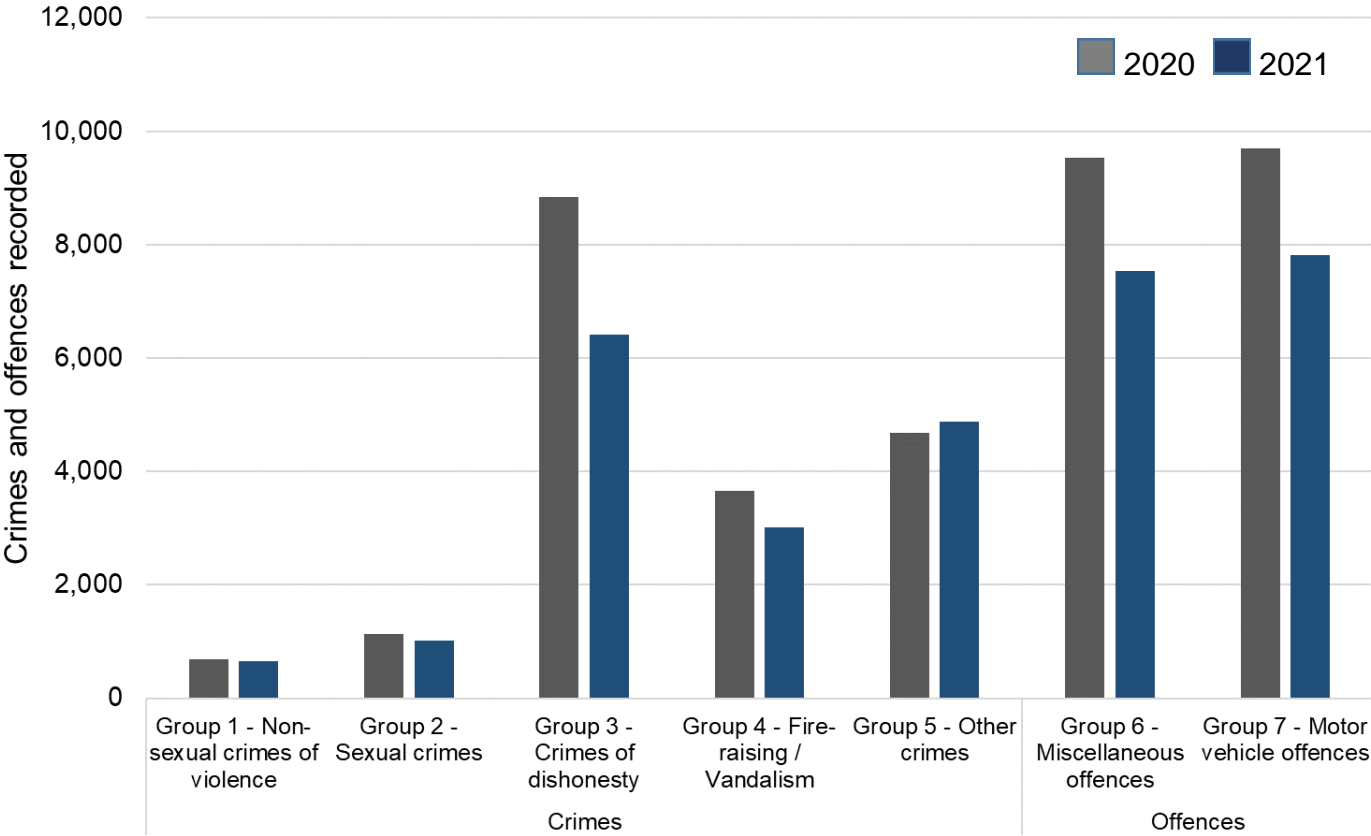
The number of crimes recorded in February 2021 was 16% lower than in February 2020, and the number of offences was 20% lower than in February 2020¹.

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

Other crimes were 4% higher (or 207 crimes). This increase was driven by rises in Crimes against public justice (up 15%, or 229 crimes).

¹ It should be noted that in 2021 February had 28 days compared to 29 in 2020

The following chart shows a breakdown of the crime and offence groups, comparing February 2020 to 2021

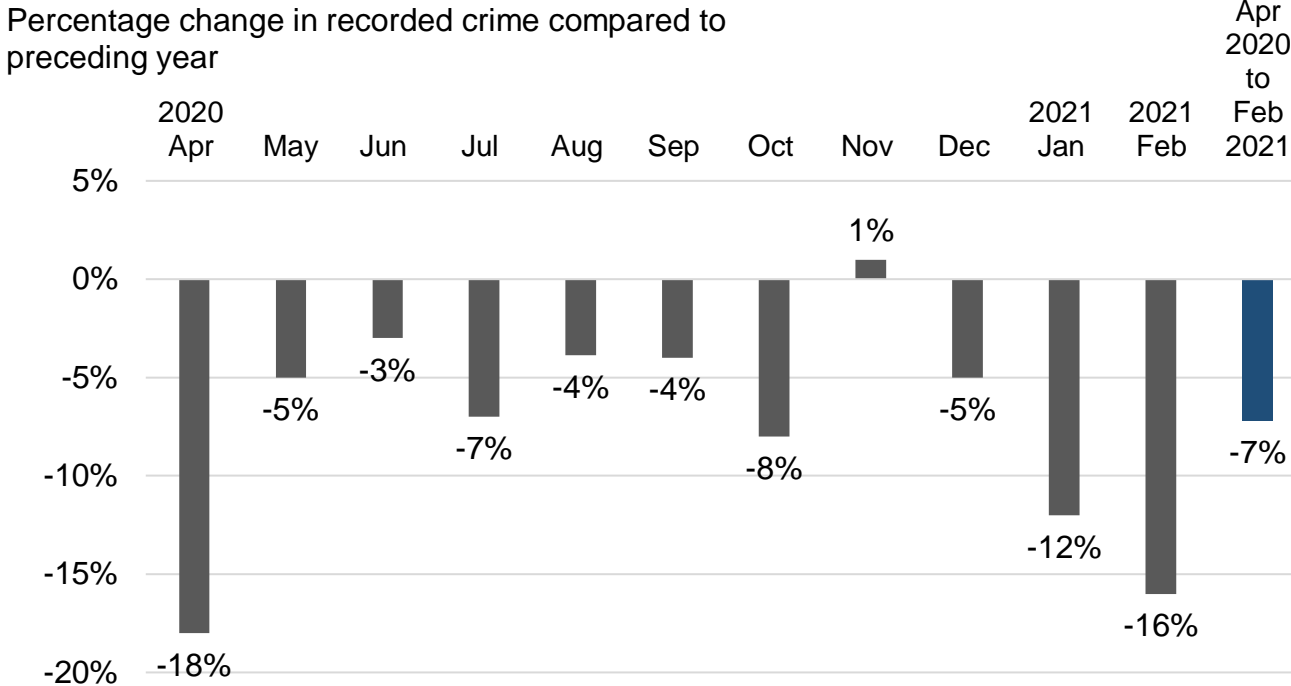


April 2020 to February 2021

In February 2021, crime remained below levels for the preceding year.

When looking across April 2020 to February 2021*, 209,354 crimes were recorded. This was 7% lower than April 2019 to February 2020 (225,559 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.



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

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

The biggest drivers of the 7% reduction over April to February (by volume) were:

Shoplifting
↓ 34% (or 9,635 crimes)

Other theft
↓ 19% (or 7,377 crimes)

Vandalism etc.
↓ 13% (or 5,238 crimes)

The biggest increases of this period were in:

Fraud
↑ 61% (or 6,107 crimes)

Crimes against public justice
↑ 30% (or 5,371 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: February 2021](#).

Coronavirus legislation intervention activity

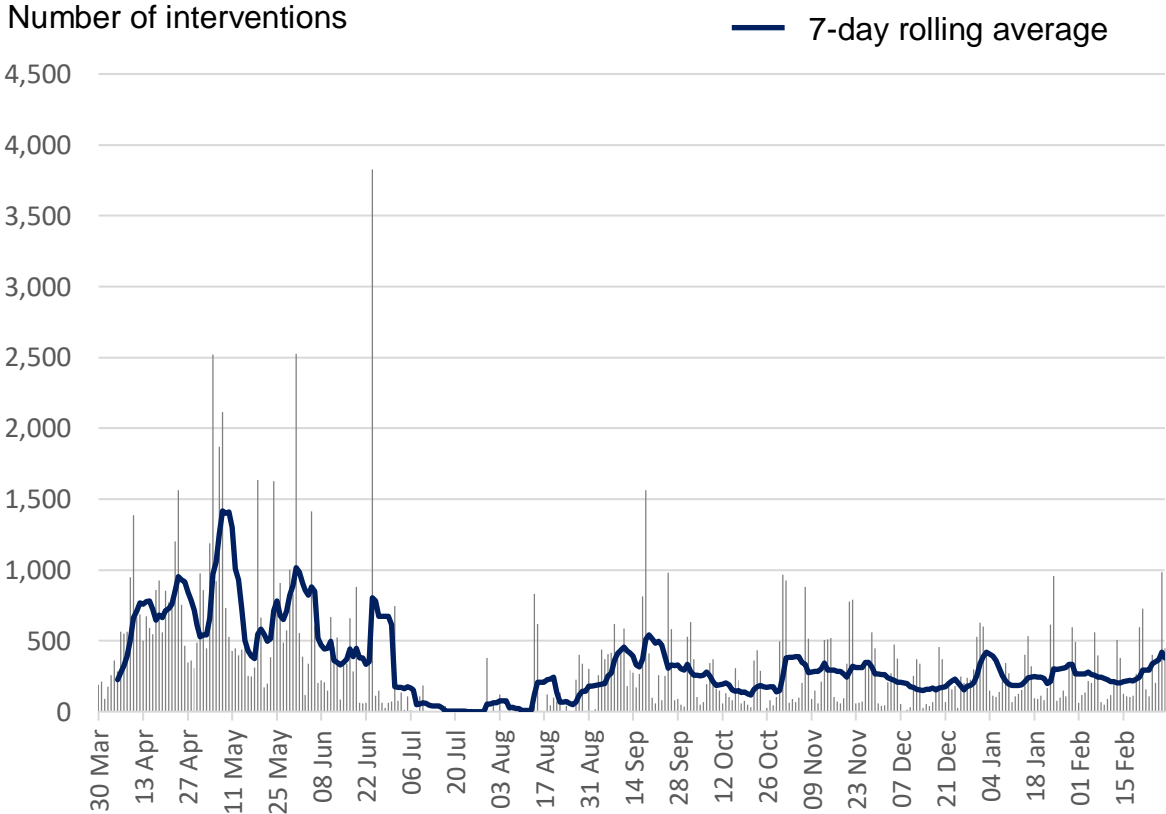
This information is drawn from Police Scotland’s ‘Coronavirus Interventions’ application, which relies on manual input from Police Officers. Due to this manual input, these figures should be viewed as indicative only.

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

The use of interventions decreased in February 2021 and trends remain lower than April to June 2020 levels

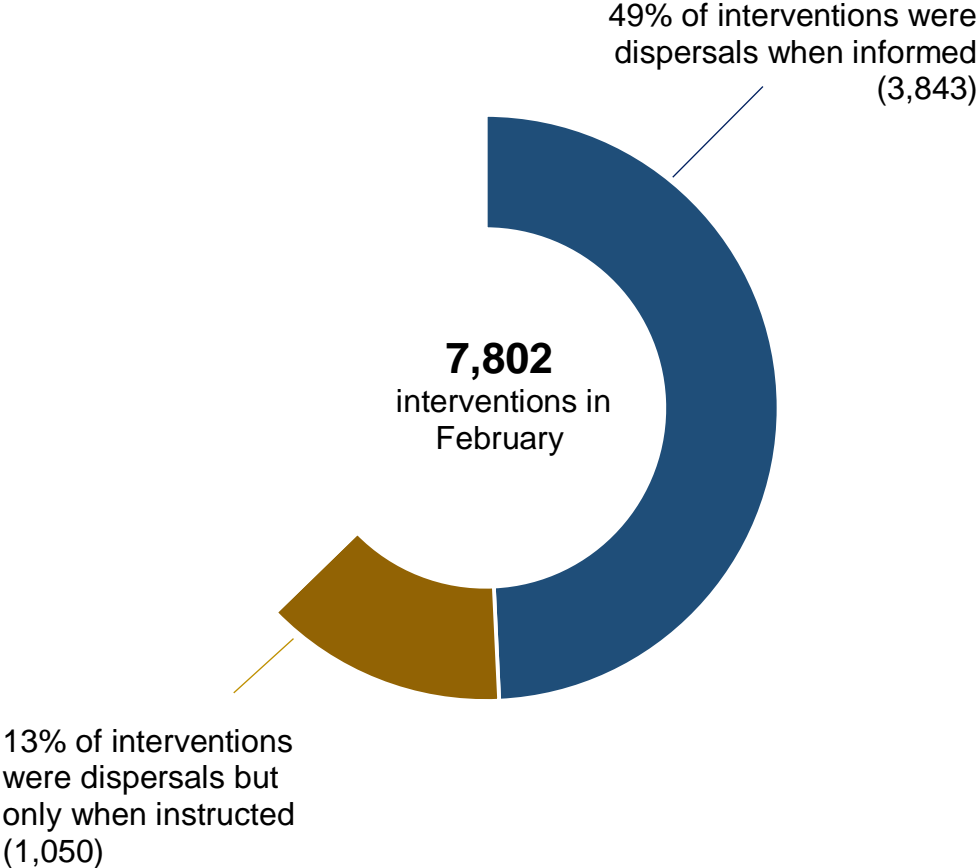
Total use of interventions has decreased by 10% (or 891 interventions) since the previous month (it should be noted that February is a shorter month, however average daily interventions were slightly lower than January).

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



COVID-19 Intervention Activity in February 2021

In February, 63% of interventions made were dispersals. This is a lower percentage than in previous months, and part of a decreasing trend which peaked at 99% in June to August 2020. Conversely, the proportions of FPNs and arrests are increasing.



Of the remaining 37% of interventions:

- 47 were dispersed using reasonable force
- 2,744 were issued a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN)
- 118 were arrested

Further Information:

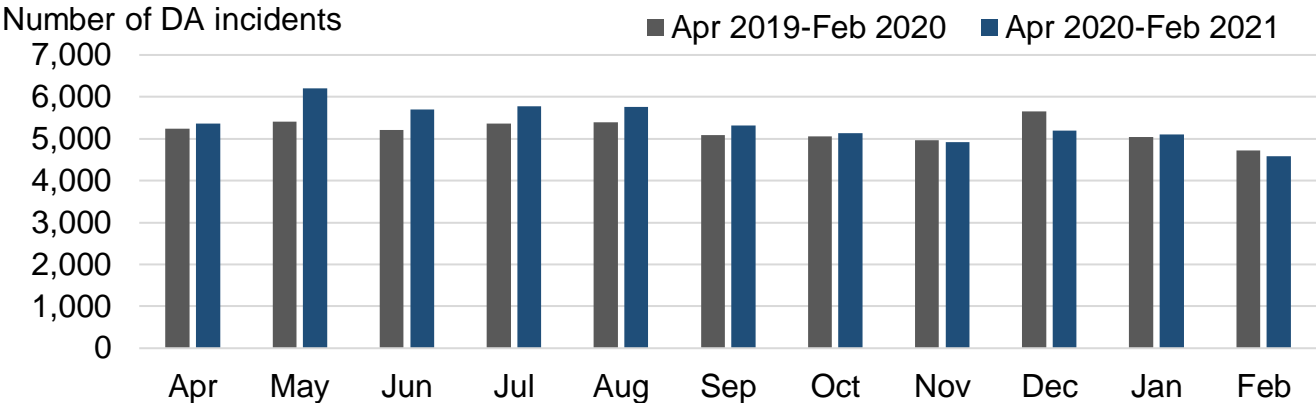
A full breakdown of interventions is available from Police Scotland:
<https://www.scotland.police.uk/about-us/covid-19-police-scotland-response/enforcement-and-response-data/>

Police Recorded Domestic Abuse Incidents


The number of Domestic Abuse incidents recorded in February 2021 was below the level seen in February 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 February 2021, incidents were 3% higher than the equivalent period the previous year.



In February 2021:

4,580 Domestic incidents recorded  Down 3% since last year (4,723 incidents)

In April 2020 to February 2021:

59,031 Domestic incidents recorded  Up 3% since equivalent period last year (57,121 incidents)

The proportion of April 2020 to February 2021 incidents that include the recording of at least one crime or offence was 39.7%. [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 1,419 such crimes recorded by the police in April 2020 to February 2021, compared to 1,580 during the equivalent period the preceding year (down 10%).

Police Recorded Domestic Abuse Incidents per 10,000 population

Across Scotland as a whole, the police recorded 108 domestic abuse incidents per 10,000 population during April 2020 to February 2021.

The local authorities with the highest rates were Dundee City (160), West Dunbartonshire (145), and Clackmannanshire (141).

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

Local authorities with rates above the national average



Dundee City Council	160
West Dunbartonshire	145
Clackmannanshire	141
West Lothian	134
City of Glasgow	133
North Lanarkshire	131
Falkirk	125
Fife	121
North Ayrshire	117
East Ayrshire	116
Midlothian	116
South Lanarkshire	112

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: February 2021](#)

Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS)

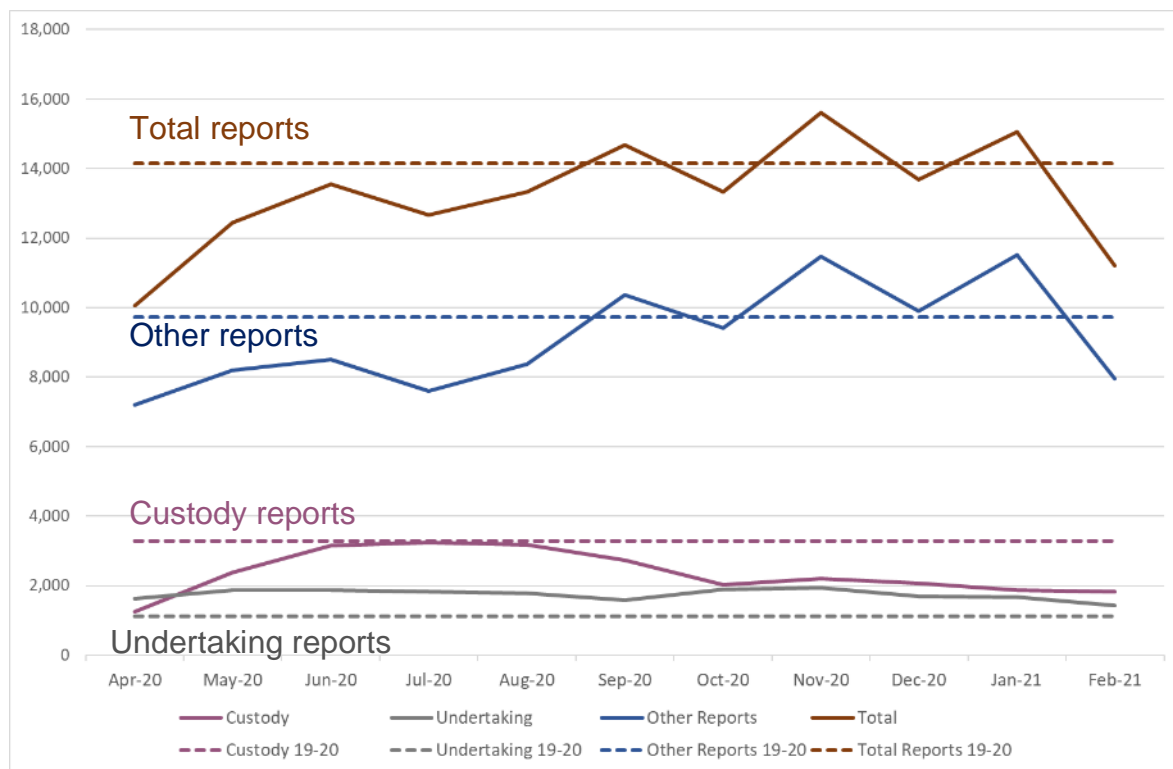
Reports received by COPFS

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 fell in February 2021.

- 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. There has been an decrease in the number of reports received since January 2021.
- Undertaking report numbers remain higher than 2019-20 levels, although these too have been decreasing over recent months.
- 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

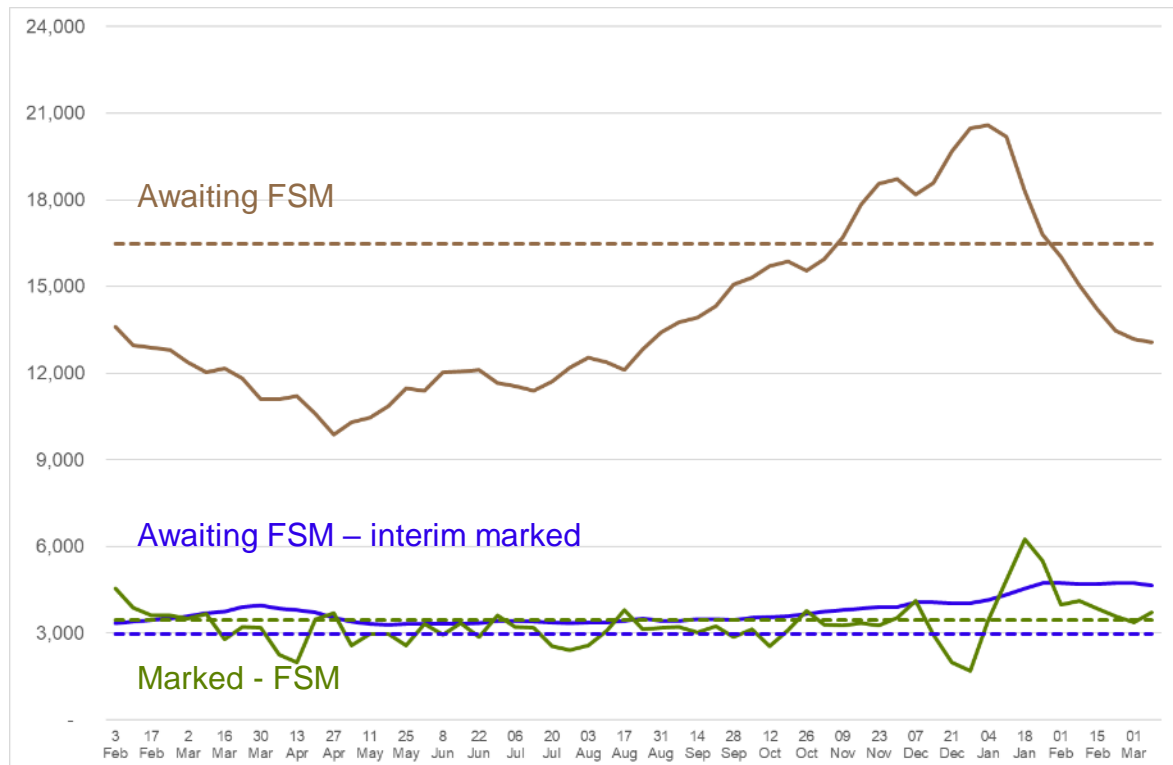


First substantive marking

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 but returned to 19-20 average levels by the end of February. The number of reports awaiting marking is now significantly below 19-20 average levels. The number of reports with an interim marking remains significantly above 19-20 average levels.

Number of reports



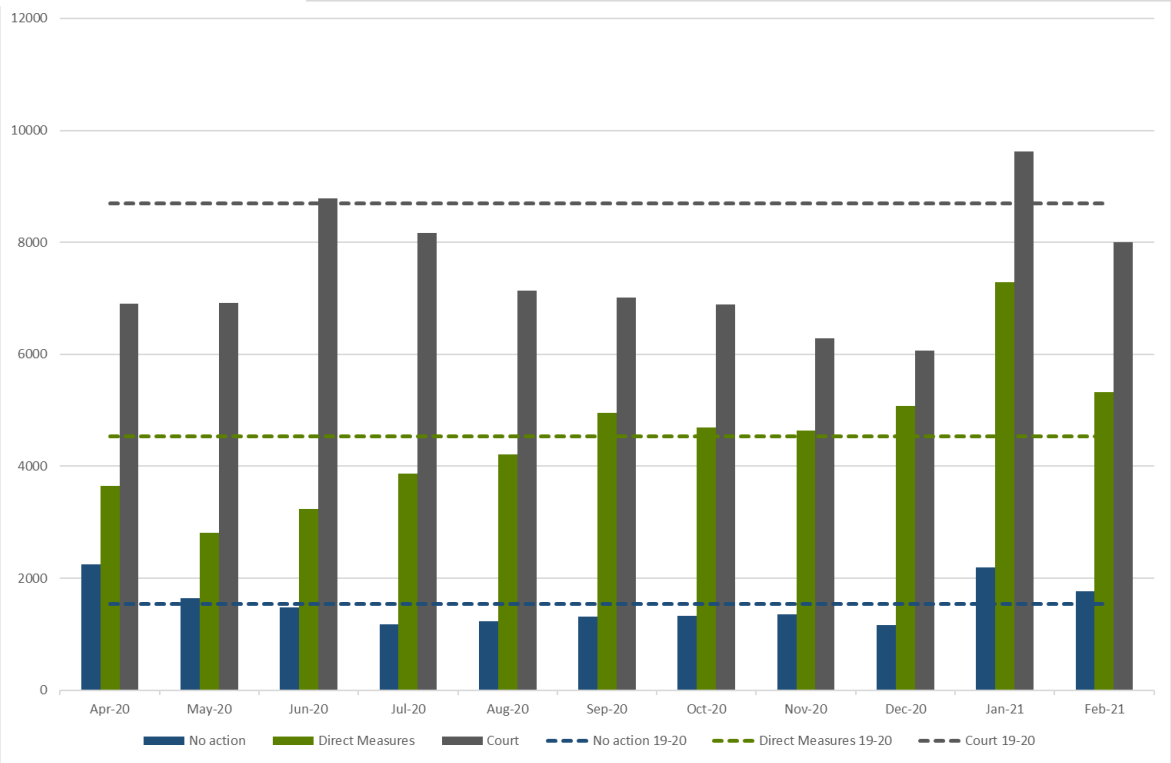
Summary of COPFS First Substantive Markings

There are 3 types of marking decision available to COPFS:

- No Action
- Direct Measures
- Court proceedings

Following an increase in all marking types in January 2021, all marking types decreased in February 2021. Markings for No Action and Direct Measures remain above 19-20 average levels and markings for court are slightly below 19-20 average levels.

Subjects marked



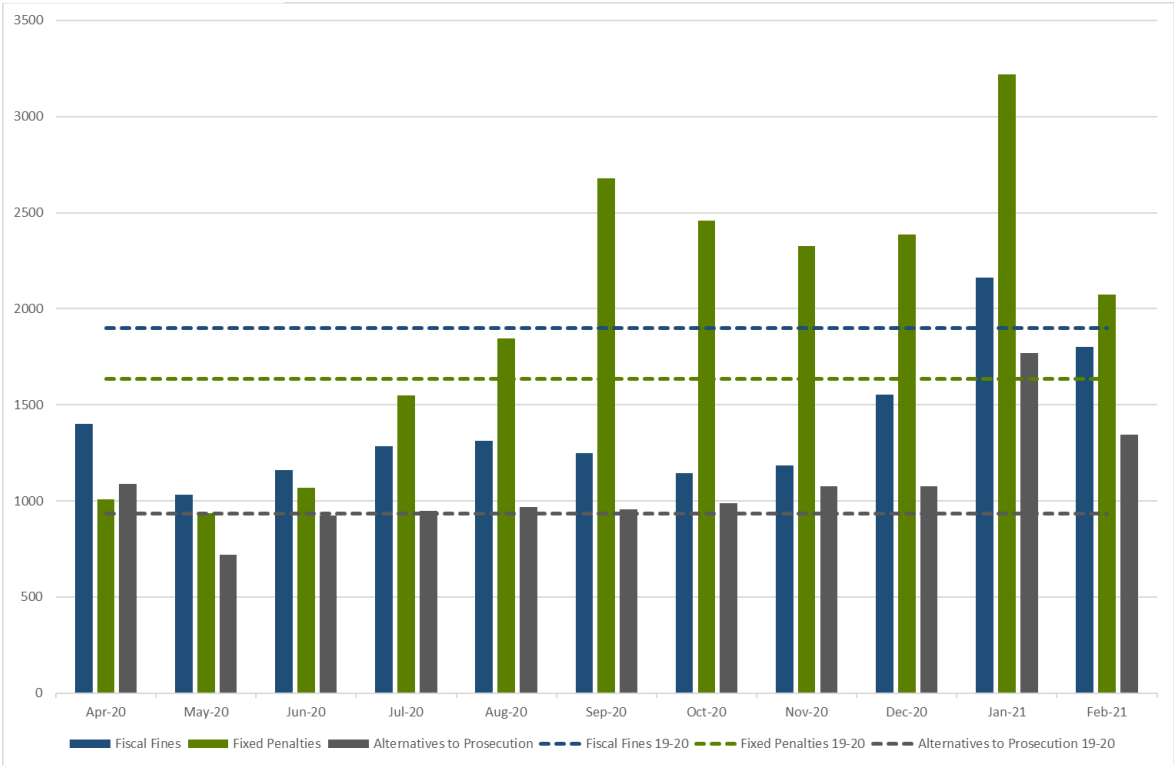
Subjects not marked for court

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). In February 2021 this fell back to just below the 19-20 average.

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 but decreased again in February 2021.

Subjects marked



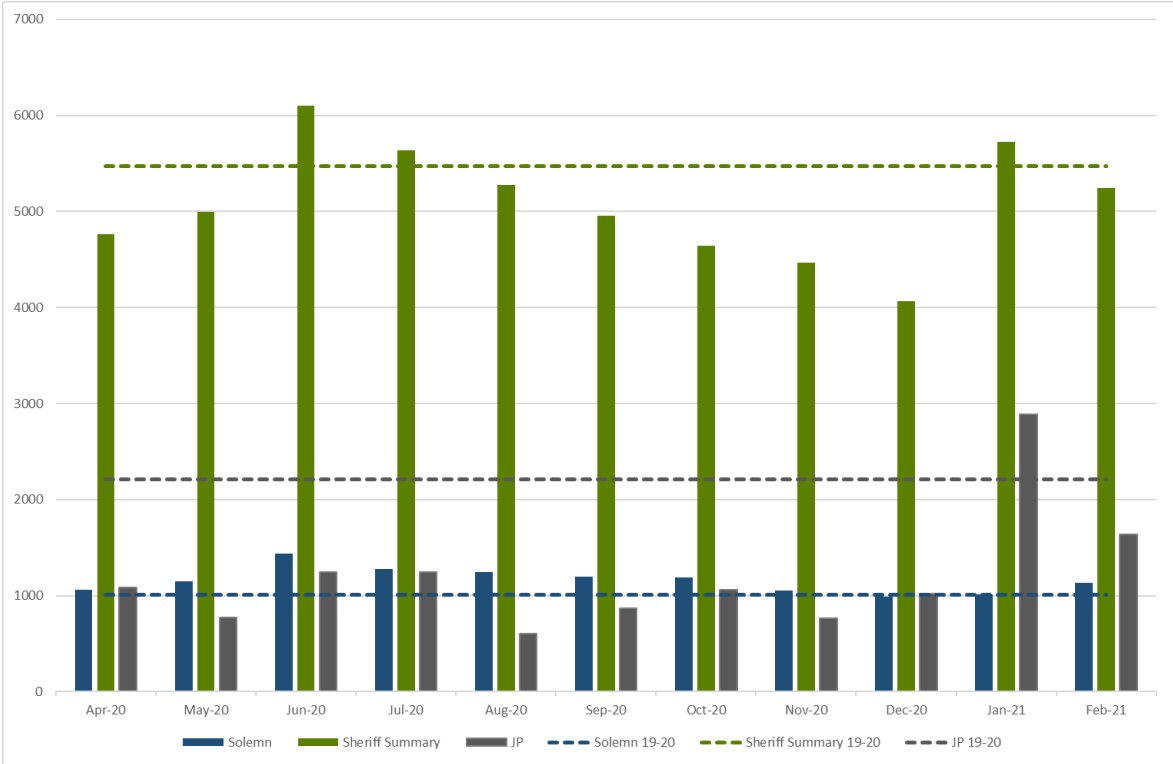
Subjects marked for court

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 early 2021.
- After a significant increase in January 2021, markings for JP court fell back to below 19-20 average levels in February.

Subjects marked



Fatal Accident Enquiries (as of 01 March 2021)

FAIs with scheduled court dates 40
 FAIs with First Notice lodged, awaiting court dates: 0

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 69,100 criminal registrations in the courts. 346 of these registrations have been COVID-19 related (0.5%).

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

- Indictments registered in the High Court were 25% lower than the 19-20 average.
- Indictments registered in the Sheriff court (solemn cases) were 17% lower than the 19-20 average.
- Complaints (summary cases) registered in the Sheriff Court were 33% lower than the 19-20 average.
- Complaints registered in the JP court were 52% lower than the 19-20 average.

Cases Registered	19-20 monthly average	February 2021	Change from 19-20 monthly average	Outstanding (scheduled) trials	
				March 2020	Feb 2021
Indictments					
High Court	85	64	-21 (-25%)	390	247
Sheriff Court	454	378	-76 (-17%)	497	1,211
Complaints					
Sheriff Court	5,478	3,678	-1,800 (-33%)	13,971	29,324
JP Court	2,799	1,345	-1,454 (-52%)	3,497	5,255

At the end of February 2021 there were 36,037 trials outstanding. This compares to 18,355 at the end of 2019-20. In addition, SCTS have forecast that there are another 8,802 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 February 2021 there were 3,209 disposals (excluding secondary disposals and the 'other' disposal category) from Scotland's courts. This is 44% of the 19-20 monthly average of 7,278 and 20% lower than January 2021, reflecting the impact of the adjournment of summary court business on 12th January.

Between April 2020 and February 2021 there were 36,735 (45%) 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 February 2021 court disposals to be similar to April 2019 to February 2020 levels.

From April to February 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	Feb	Change	Apr-Feb	Apr-Feb	Change
28 February 2021	2019-20	2021	%	2019-20	2020-21	%
Imprisonment	1,011	597	-41%	11,154	6,856	-39%
Community Disposal (CPO & DTTO)	1,384	733	-47%	15,513	7,736	-50%
Restriction of Liberty Order	296	293	-1%	3,299	2,444	-26%
Fine etc.	3,106	825	-73%	34,708	16,741	-52%
Admonished/ Discharged	1,481	761	-49%	16,437	10,599	-36%

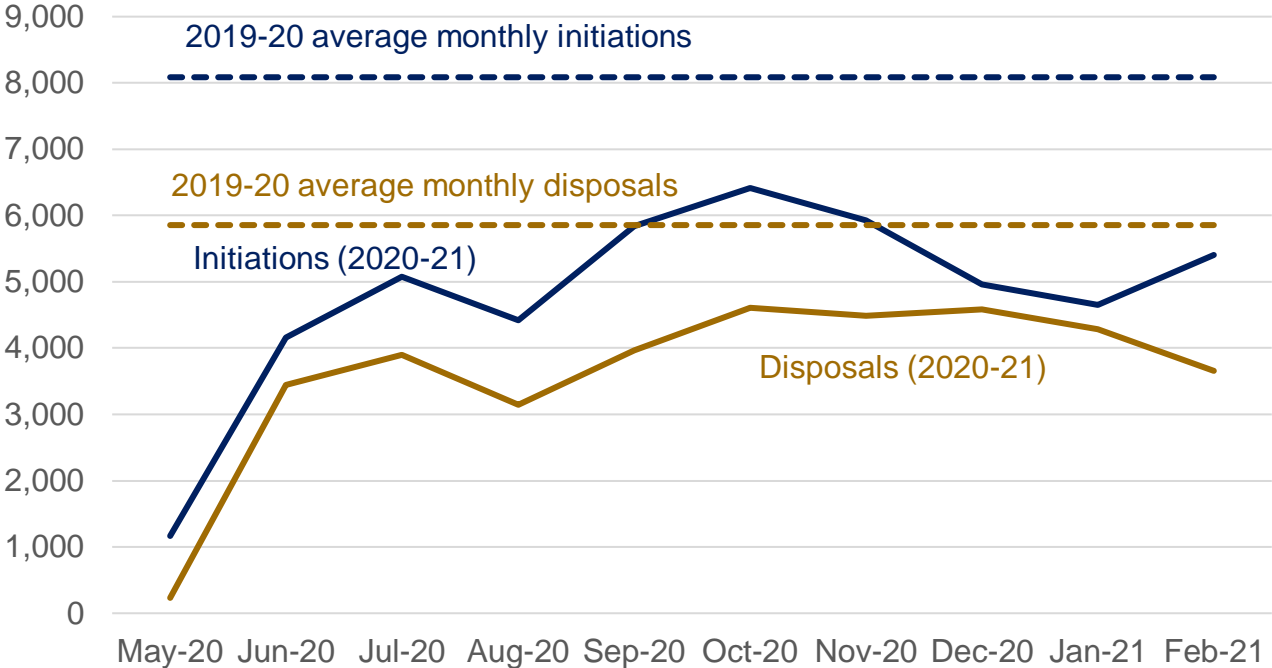
Overall, the number of crimes recorded by the police between April 2020 and February 2021 was 7% lower than the same period in 2019-20. It will take time for these cases to move through the courts system and it is unlikely that many of these cases are included in the disposal figures above. Any changes 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. There was a rise in initiations in February, marking a recovery from the festive period lower numbers. There was a drop in disposals in February.



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. There have been a rise in numbers in February, reversing the decrease seen during the festive period. Summary cause is much 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. In line with the drop in total disposals in February, ordinary cause and simple procedure cases decreased in parallel. Summary cause are much lower than average, but have also decreased in February in line with overall disposals.

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	Oct-20	Nov-20	Dec-20	Jan-21	Feb-21	2019/20 monthly average
Initiated						
Ordinary cause	2,000	1,885	1,512	1,304	1,577	1,928
Summary cause	181	154	186	173	209	1,132
Small claim	1	2	4	0	0	2
Simple procedure	2,633	2,282	1,668	1,819	2,181	2,695
Total initiated	4,815	4,323	3,370	3,296	3,967	5,758
Disposed						
Ordinary cause	1,373	1,424	1,367	1,003	1,047	1,445
Summary cause	335	366	562	411	284	1,096
Small claim	4	2	4	1	2	5
Simple procedure	2,194	2,170	2,140	2,364	1,754	2,306
Total disposed	3,906	3,962	4,073	3,779	3,087	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 February 2021, all initiated and disposed cases were below 2019-20 levels.

- Initiated case types presented are gradually returning to 2019-20 levels, with month to month variation. They are still lower than pre-festive season months in 2020, but have recovered in February.
- In line with overall cases, disposals in February for all case types presented were below 2019-20 average levels.

Initiated Cases (Feb 21)			Disposed Cases (Feb 21)	
February 2021	Change from 19-20	Case Type	February 2021	Change from 19-20
875	83% of 19-20 average month (1,055 cases)	 Family	622	68% of 19-20 average month (910 cases)
358	60% of 19-20 average month (602 cases)	 Children's Referrals	132	51% of 19-20 average month (260 cases)
2,471	86% of 19-20 average month (2,883 cases)	 Debt	1,934	82% of 19-20 average month (2,368 cases)
315	78% of 19-20 average month (402 cases)	 Personal Injury	164	54% 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/>

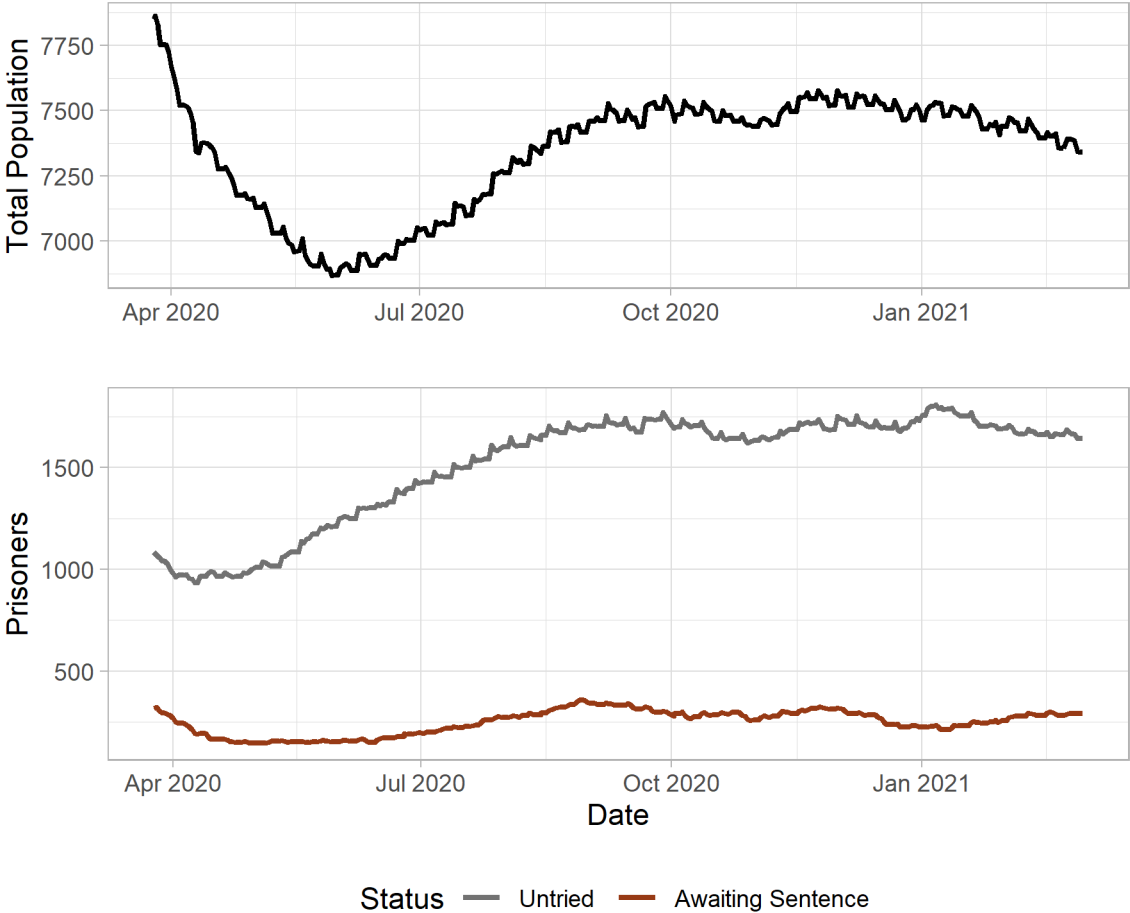
Prisons

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.

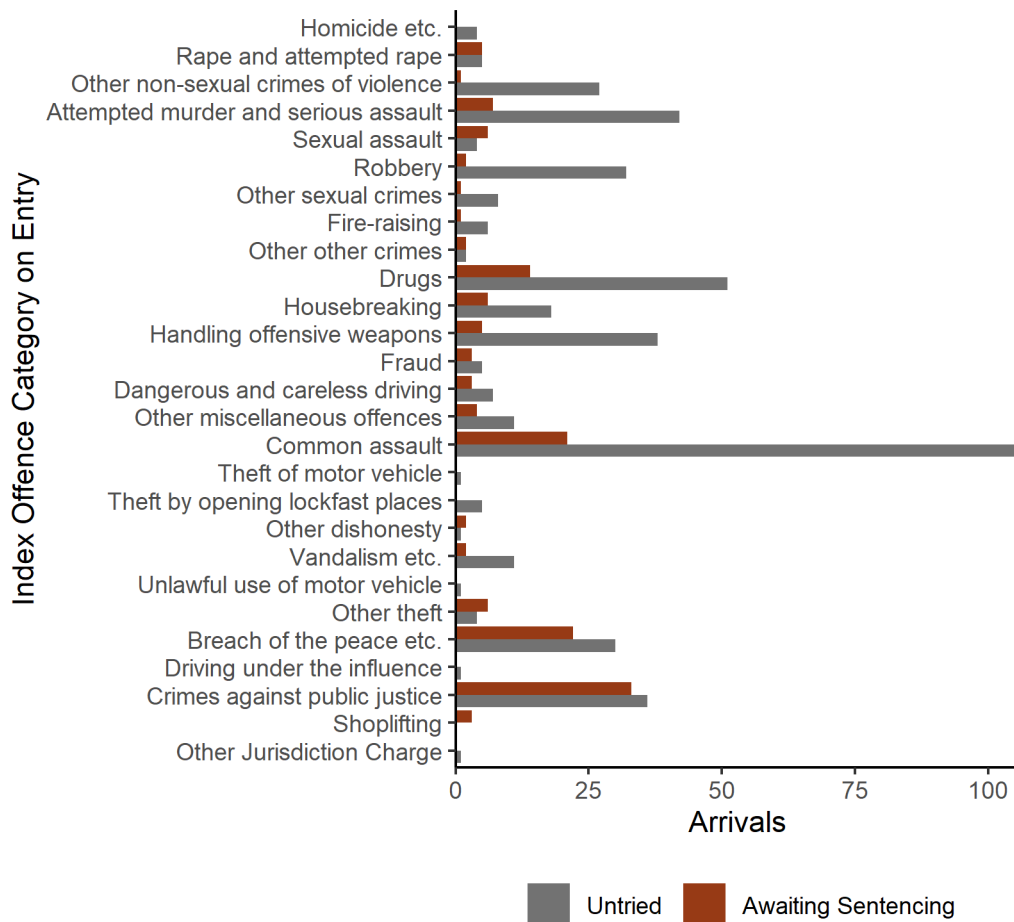
In February 2021 (up until the morning of 1st March):

- the population fell by 99 to 7,341
- 1,948 were on remand: 1,643 (22%) untried & 291 (4%) awaiting sentence
- 66% of arrivals in January were untried (489 of 745), and 20% awaiting sentence (149)



Remand Arrival Offences

There were 638 un-sentenced arrivals to prison with known offence types in February, 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.

Correspondence and enquiries

For enquiries about this publication please contact:

Justice Analytical Services,

e-mail: Justice_Analysts@gov.scot

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