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Levels of self-report offending and drug use among offenders: findings from the Criminality Surveys

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Home Office Online Report 18/05

The views expressed in this report are those of the authors, not necessarily those of the Home Office (nor do they reflect Government policy).

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Executive summary

This report presents the findings from the Prisoner and Community Penalties Criminality Surveys. These surveys are the first large-scale surveys in England and Wales designed to measure the criminal careers of representative samples of sentenced offenders through self-report methodology. The surveys also collected information on drug use patterns thus throwing further light on the drug-crime link.

The surveys were designed to be comparable as far as possible but there are key differences. The Prisoner Criminality Survey (PCS), conducted in 2000, only included male prisoners (N=1,884), while the Community Penalties Criminality Survey (CPCS), conducted in 2002, covered both males and females (N=1,578); 84 per cent were male. It is also likely that the level of offending will be underestimated in the CPCS sample relative to the PCS sample. High rate offenders in the community are probably less likely to participate in the survey, while those who do so may be more reluctant than prisoners to fully disclose their offending because of fear of the consequences.

Self-report offending surveys, like other sources of data on offending, have their limitations (see Box S.1). The various methodological challenges mean one cannot assume the survey estimates are 'exact'. However, such surveys get far closer to the real level of offending than sources based only on offences known to the criminal justice system. They also enable the identification of factors associated with heightened levels of offending, including the link with drug use. As such they add to the knowledge base and, with other data sources, contribute to the evidence on the offender population.

Prevalence and frequency of offending

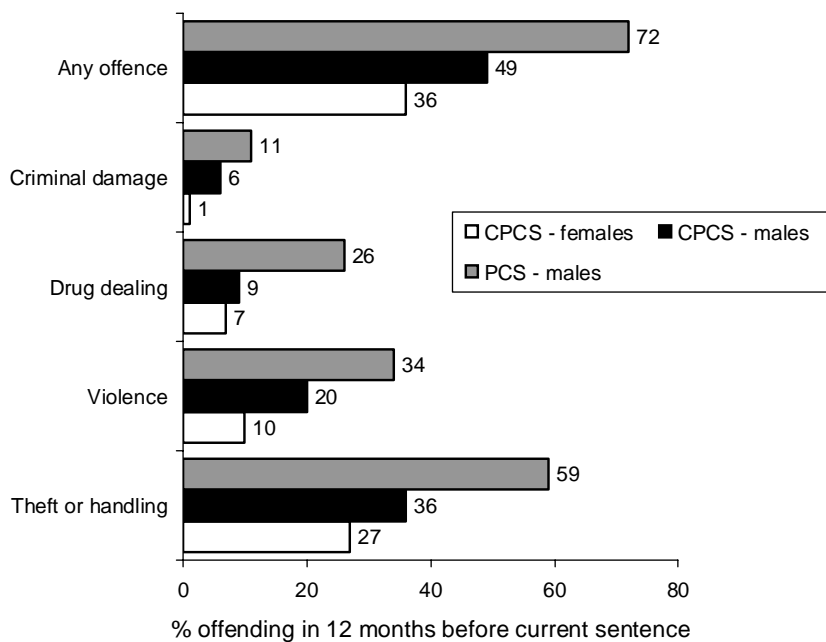
The surveys measured the prevalence and frequency of offending for 14 offence types (see Box S.2) during a reference period of 12 months at liberty prior to the current sentence. The sample included offenders who had been sentenced for a range of offences, not only the 14 asked about in the survey. Therefore it was not expected that all respondents would report committing the 14 offences covered. Some will have committed other offences not covered by the survey during the reference period. However, cross-referencing information on the offence for which they were sentenced and interview responses does suggest some respondents failed to fully disclose their offending behaviour for the 14 offences covered. With this in mind the key results are listed below:

- Almost three-quarters (72%) of male prisoners interviewed said they had committed at least one of the 14 offences during the reference period. The figure was lower among those serving a community sentence at 47 per cent (49% for males; 36% for females).
- Among both prisoners and those serving a community sentence, theft and handling offences were most common, followed by violence (Figure S.1). Males in custody were more likely to have committed each of the 14 offences than their counterparts serving community sentences, though the difference lessened for the most common offences of shoplifting, handling stolen goods and assault. Males serving a community sentence were significantly more likely than their female peers to say they had committed each of the offences, with the exception of shoplifting, stealth theft and drug dealing.
- Around a fifth of active offenders (those admitting at least one of the 14 offences in custody said they had committed six or more of the offence types covered during the reference period. Among those serving a community penalty, offending was more limited – 8 per cent of active males and 3 per cent of active females reported committing six or more offence types.
- However, grouping the offences into four main categories (theft or handling; criminal damage; violence; and drug dealing) shows that many offenders only commit offences within a single

category. Almost a half of active prisoners had only committed offences within one category in the reference period. Those serving community sentences were even more likely to only commit offences in one category – 66 per cent of males and 79 per cent of females. The most common offence profile for all three groups of active offenders was to only commit theft and handling offences.

- Frequency of offending varied considerably across offence types. Shoplifting, handling stolen goods and drug dealing were committed particularly frequently. Overall, a third of *all* prisoners said they had handled stolen goods at least weekly prior to custody, a fifth had shoplifted at least weekly. For those serving a community penalty, the frequency of offending was somewhat lower, though again handling and shoplifting were most frequent (around a tenth of males and females doing so at least weekly).
- The findings from the Criminology Surveys on the variation in offending levels and offence profiles can be used in conjunction with other evidence to help model the potential impacts of different sentencing policies and interventions on levels of re-offending and crime levels in the community.

Figure S.1: Prevalence of offending



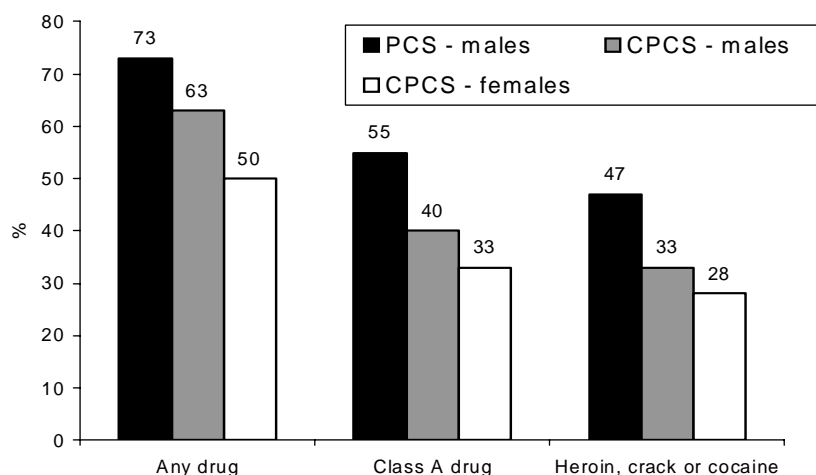
Drug use

Respondents were asked about their drug use in the last 12 months, including frequency of use, injecting behaviour, and whether they considered they had problems in staying off drugs. For prisoners the last 12 months referred to the period before they came into prison for their current sentence, while for those serving community sentences it related to the 12 months prior to interview. Some respondents may have spent some time in custody during this 12-month period for other offences.

- Drug use among offenders was far higher than among the general population even after controlling for age. 73 per cent of prisoners said they had used at least one of the 13 drugs asked about in the last 12 months. Although cannabis was most common – used by 64 per cent; just under a half (47%) reported using heroin, crack or cocaine. Those serving a community sentence were somewhat less likely to say they had used drugs, though still around three in ten had used heroin, crack or cocaine (Figure S.2).
- Twenty-nine per cent of all male prisoners reported using heroin on at least a weekly basis in the 12 months before prison. The figures for cocaine and crack use were 18 per cent and 21 per cent. Frequent use of these drugs was lower among those serving a community sentence.
- Those who were young, White and single were more likely to say they had used heroin, crack or cocaine. Use of these drugs was also associated with social disadvantage. Those who had poor educational attainment, were unemployed, lacked stable accommodation and had experienced time in care as a child were particularly likely to have used these substances.
- Just over a half of male prisoners who reported using drugs in the previous 12 months said they had experienced problems staying off drugs before they came into prison. Drug use was also problematic for a significant proportion of drug users serving a community sentence (43% of males; 39% of females).
- A considerable proportion of problematic drug users were receptive to the idea of receiving treatment. 18 per cent of prisoners who had experienced problems staying off drugs (or felt they would do so on release) were receiving some form of drug treatment while in custody and a further 55 per cent said that they wanted some form of help though they were not receiving any. In the Community Penalties Criminality Survey, 18 per cent of problematic drug users were receiving some form of treatment at time of interview. A further fifth had an unmet need for treatment.
- Although at the time of the surveys there was quite a high level of unmet demand for treatment, there has since been expansion in the treatment provision within the criminal justice system and this continues to develop.¹ In time this might reap considerable dividends in reducing re-offending given the particularly high offence rates of problematic drug users.

¹ See the Updated 2002 Drugs Strategy. Further information can also be found on the National Treatment Agency website and the CJIP (Criminal Justice Interventions Programme) section of the Home Office website.

Figure S.2: Prevalence of drug use in last 12 months



Factors associated with offending

- The surveys show that various socio-demographic and lifestyle factors are associated with higher levels of offending for the offences covered. Those factors associated with problematic drug use are also linked to offending behaviour.
- Drug use itself was also strongly associated with offending, with offending increasing with more problematic patterns of drug use. Over nine in ten prisoners who said they had used heroin, crack or cocaine also reported committing an offence covered by the survey, compared with just 37 per cent of those who had not used any drugs. A similar pattern is evident for those serving community sentences.
- Although the relationship between drug use and offending is complex, for some offenders their drug use clearly contributes to their offending behaviour and is a barrier to them desisting. Over a half (55%) of drug-using prisoners said they had committed offences related to their drug use. Almost four in ten drug users serving community sentences (38% for both males and females) had done so. Those using heroin, crack or cocaine were particularly likely to say they had committed offences due to their drug use, usually to help fund a drug habit.
- There is no clear link between regular use of alcohol and offending behaviour in these studies, though evidence from the CPCS suggests frequency of drunkenness is associated with participation in violence, criminal damage and drug dealing.
- Given that offenders and drug users often face multiple problems e.g. unemployment, unstable accommodation, and lack of family support structures, it is important that a holistic approach is taken in considering the needs of offenders.

Female offenders

- Fewer studies have collected robust, representative information on female offenders than on male offenders. The CPCS helps fill the knowledge gap. It shows that females were less likely to report committing the offences covered by the survey, with the exception of shoplifting, stealth thefts and drug dealing (no significant difference).

- Females were as likely to say they had used the most harmful drugs as their male peers, though were more likely to be receiving or wanting to receive treatment for their drug problems.
- The factors associated with increased participation in offending and drug use for female offenders were on the whole the same as for male offenders, though it is likely that there are other factors and dynamics not measured by the survey that are particularly relevant for female offenders.
- Although the CPCS provides some information on female offenders the sample size precludes any detailed analysis. To further understanding, future surveys should make every effort to include a sufficient number of females for separate analysis and to consider whether the questionnaires adequately address issues that might be of particular importance to understanding female offending.

The Criminality Surveys form the first phase of a comprehensive programme of surveys designed to help provide a better understanding of the extent and nature of offending and identify the impact of different programmes and policies on crime. The Home Office is currently examining the feasibility of undertaking longitudinal studies of prisoners and those given a community sentence to record the types of interventions they receive and the impacts these have on their behaviour. Such surveys will considerably add to knowledge moving beyond the static information available from the Criminality Surveys.

Box S.1: Methodological notes

The PCS and CPCS both had random probability sample designs. The PCS had an achieved sample size of 1,884 male prisoners, a response rate of 90 per cent. The CPCS had an achieved sample size of 1,290 males and 288 females serving one of four community orders (Community Rehabilitation Order; Community Punishment Order; Community Punishment and Rehabilitation Order; and a Drug Treatment and Testing Order). The CPCS response rate was 53 per cent and a non-response weighting model was applied to the data. Face-to-face interviews were conducted on both surveys. The majority of the interview was conducted using computer-assisted techniques, whereby the interviewer read questions (and where applicable answer codes) from a laptop computer and entered responses directly into the computer. Part of the interview involved the completion of a paper *'Life Events Calendar'*.

The surveys are subject to the following limitations that should be considered in interpreting the findings.

Sample coverage – the surveys are of those sentenced to custody or a community sentence at a particular point in time, not all those in prison or serving a community penalty at that time. The PCS covered males sentenced to custody. The sampling frame included Young Offender Institutes but the number of juveniles in the sample is small. The CPCS covered both males and females aged 16 and over sentenced to one of four orders (see above).

Sampling error – the estimates are from a sample and are therefore subject to sampling error. That is they may differ from the figure that would have been obtained if the whole population of interest had been interviewed. The degree of this error can be estimated. Throughout this report the differences identified are significant at the five per cent level i.e. it is 95 per cent certain that the difference exists in the population.

Non response bias – the CPCS has a low response rate and despite the use of non-response weighting to correct for this it may still be that those who did not take part differed in key respects to those who did. It seems likely that those most likely to have higher offending rates did not participate, either being ineligible because they were in breach of their order or otherwise being difficult to contact or refusing to participate.

Accuracy of responses – respondents may be unwilling or unable to provide honest and accurate answers and this may vary across different groups. In particular it is likely that those serving community sentences were somewhat less forthcoming than those in prison.

Box S.2: Offence categories

Theft and handling Domestic burglary Commercial burglary Thefts of vehicle (including attempts) Thefts from vehicle (including attempts) Theft of a bicycle (including attempts) Shoplifting Stealth theft from person (i.e., pickpocketing) Handling stolen goods	Criminal damage Criminal damage or arson
	Violent offence Personal robbery Commercial robbery Assault
	Drugs offence Dealing in cannabis Dealing in other drugs

1. Introduction

This report presents the key findings from the first large-scale, national surveys conducted in England and Wales to measure the offending careers of representative samples of *known* offenders.

The Prisoner Criminality Survey (PCS) covered 1,884 male prisoners sentenced to custody during February and March 2000. The Community Penalties Criminality Survey (CPCS) covered 1,578 males and females sentenced to a community order in February and March 2002. The main objectives of the surveys are listed below:

- Information on offending levels among known offenders while at liberty, including incidents that do not come to the attention of the criminal justice system. This contributes to the understanding of the likely impacts of various policy initiatives designed to address offending behaviour and reduce crime.
- Information on patterns of drug use by offenders, including the identification of problematic drug users, and access to treatment.
- Evidence on the relationship between offending behaviour and various demographic, social, economic, and lifestyle factors, including drug use. This helps identify the characteristics of different types of offender.

The surveys are part of a programme of work designed to measure levels of self-reported offending and drug use among various groups in the population. Two other surveys have been conducted. One is the 2003 Offending, Crime and Justice Survey (OCJS) (Budd *et al.*, 2005), a household population survey of people aged from 10 to 65 in England and Wales. Another is the Arrestee Survey which will provide information on drug use and offending among arrestees taken into police custody (this builds on the NEW-ADAM survey of arrestees previously conducted).²

Survey design

The PCS and CPCS were designed to provide comparable self-report data on offending and drug use among known offenders sentenced to custody or community penalties. This chapter outlines the key design features of the surveys. Further details are in Appendix B.

The Prisoner Criminality Survey

The PCS was conducted by BMRB Social Research in spring 2000. A random probability sample was selected from male prisoners who received custodial sentences in February and March 2000 (excluding sex offenders). The sampling frame included juveniles aged from 15 to 17 sentenced to establishments run by the Prison Service but because establishments holding juveniles tend to be smaller they are somewhat underrepresented in the final sample.³ The survey comprised a main sample, designed to be representative of the population of interest, and a booster sample of offenders who had been convicted of domestic burglary, theft of a motor vehicle or theft from a motor vehicle. The booster sample was included to ensure sufficient numbers of respondents who had committed these particular offences. The samples were combined for analysis purposes

² Further details about the programme are available at: <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/offending1.html>.

³ Secure Training Centres and Local Authority Secure Children's Homes are not included.

and weighting applied to correct for different probabilities of selection. In total 1,894 interviews were achieved, a response rate of 90 per cent; 1,884 interviews are used for analysis purposes.

The Community Penalties Survey

The CPCS was conducted by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) in spring/summer 2002. A random probability sample was selected of both males and females sentenced in February and March 2002 to either a Community Rehabilitation Order (CRO), a Community Punishment Order (CPO), a Community Punishment and Rehabilitation Order (CPRO), or a Drug Treatment and Testing Order (DTTO) (all of these orders are only applied to offenders aged 16 and over). Certain groups of particular interest were over-sampled. These were women, Black and minority ethnic offenders, those sentenced to a DTTO, and those convicted of five offences of most interest (theft of or from a motor vehicle, domestic burglary, non-domestic burglary, and assault). Weighting was applied to correct for different probabilities of selection. In total 1,581 interviews were achieved, a response rate of 53 per cent (1,578 interviews were used for analysis purposes). Given the low response rate ONS developed a non-response weighting model to reduce possible biases.

The following points apply to both surveys.

- The samples are of those sentenced to custody or a community sentence at a particular point in time – not of all those in prison or serving a community penalty at that time. The PCS, for example, is representative of male prison receptions not all male prisoners in custody during February/March 2000. The profile of receptions as opposed to the prison population will differ – for example the prison population will have a higher proportion of long-term prisoners than receptions.
- The achieved weighted samples are generally representative of the populations sampled, but prisoners given shorter sentences are somewhat underrepresented. This is because those who had completed their sentence before interviewers were able to make contact were not available for interview.
- Those sentenced for sex offences were not included in the samples. In part, this was because of difficulties in gaining access to such offenders. Also, any sexual offences against children that might be disclosed in the course of an interview would have to be reported to the authorities.⁴ Complete confidentiality could therefore not have been given which would be likely to have an adverse impact on responses.
- The core questionnaire on offending and drug use was the same in both surveys, though the CPCS also had a few additional modules (e.g. experiences of supervision).
- Interviews were conducted face-to-face using interviewer-administered computer assisted techniques (CAPI). Although there is evidence that self-completion methods encourage higher levels of reporting of socially undesirable behaviours, these were considered too problematic given the lower than average literacy levels in the populations covered. The use of self-completion was tested in the feasibility stage of the PCS, but it was found that prisoners preferred interviewer administration. Respondents also said that the mode of administration would not influence how honest they were in their responses.

Differences between the surveys

Although the surveys were designed to provide comparable data for those sentenced to custody and community penalties, there are some key differences.

⁴ Of course those sentenced for sexual offences may have committed other offence types, including those asked about in the surveys. Conversely, offenders included in the sample frame may have at some time committed sexual offences.

- The PCS only covered male prisoners, while the CPCS covered males and females. The comparable analysis in the majority of this report thus only covers male offenders. Females serving community penalties are dealt with separately in Chapter 6.
- The PCS response rate is extremely high. This is in line with other prison-based surveys where levels of contact are high and most prisoners agree to interview. In contrast the CPCS suffered from a low response rate. This was mainly due to high levels of non-contact with offenders persistently breaking appointments or no longer regularly visiting the probation office.
- Feasibility work indicated that while prisoners freely admit to their previous offences on the basis that they have nothing to lose by doing so, those serving community penalties tend to be more reluctant to reveal the true extent of their offending for fear of the consequences. It is impossible to quantify this effect but it should be considered in comparing the results.

Sample profile

Appendix C outlines the socio-demographic characteristics of the PCS and CPCS samples. Compared to the general household population, the samples are characterised by their relative youth, lack of educational attainment, and low levels of employment. This is in line with other surveys of sentenced offenders (Walmsley *et al.*, 1992; Mair and May, 1997). Low levels of educational and employment capital are likely to mitigate against offenders finding gainful employment – which is a key factor in reducing re-offending (Social Exclusion Unit, 2002). The surveys also show that six per cent of prisoners and four per cent of offenders serving community sentences could be classified as homeless or living in temporary accommodation – another factor that can impact on the likelihood of re-offending. Offenders also had particularly disadvantaged backgrounds – 27 per cent of prisoners and 16 per cent of those serving community sentences had spent time in Local Authority Care as a child. The high proportion of offenders who have been in care is also in line with previous studies (Walmsley *et al.*, 1992; Mair and May, 1997).

Limitations

The PCS and CPCS are the first large-scale self-report offending surveys of sentenced offenders in England and Wales. They provide a fuller picture of offending among *known* offenders than hitherto available. They are, however, subject to certain limitations.

- *Sampling error* – based on only a sample of the population of interest, the estimates will be subject to sampling error. That is the results obtained may differ from those that would be obtained if the entire population had been interviewed. Statistical theory enables the degree of error to be calculated. Throughout this report where differences between groups are discussed these are statistically significant at the five per cent level (i.e., it is 95 per cent certain that the difference exists in the population) unless otherwise specified.
- *Non-response bias* – this is mainly an issue for the CPCS given the low response rate. Despite the use of non-response weighting to correct for this, it may still be that those who participated differed in key respects to those who did not take part. It is likely that those still offending are (a) less likely to comply with supervision and be available for interview and (b) less likely to agree to participate if available. Thus offending levels among the CPCS respondents are likely to be lower than would have been observed with a fuller sample.
- *Accuracy of responses* – respondents may be unwilling or unable to provide accurate responses, and this may vary across the different groups. This is discussed further in Chapter 3.
- *Incomplete offence coverage* – the surveys asked about 14 ‘mainstream’ offence types, such as burglary, robbery, assault, and vehicle-related thefts (see Box 1.1); they do not cover all offences (e.g. sexual offences, motoring offences, and fraud and forgery).

- *Incomplete sample coverage* – the PCS is restricted to male prisoners. The CPCS included females but the sample size is relatively small which places limits on the analyses possible.

Box 1.1: Offence categories

Theft and handling Domestic burglary Commercial burglary Thefts of vehicle (including attempts) Thefts from vehicle (including attempts) Theft of a bicycle (including attempts) Shoplifting Stealth theft from person (i.e., pickpocketing) Handling stolen goods	Criminal damage Criminal damage or arson
	Violent offence Personal robbery Commercial robbery Assault
	Drugs offence Dealing in cannabis Dealing in other drugs

Structure of report

- Chapter 2 discusses the development of self-report offending surveys as an important tool in understanding offending behaviour. It places the Criminality Surveys in the context of this other research.
- Chapter 3 discusses offending by male offenders. It reports on the prevalence and frequency of offending for the 14 ‘mainstream’ offences.
- Chapter 4 discusses findings relating to patterns of drug use among male offenders.
- Chapter 5 explores the impact that social, demographic, and lifestyle factors have on offending behaviour.
- Chapter 6 summarises the key findings on offending and drug use for females serving community sentences.

2. The Criminology Surveys in context

This section discusses how the Criminology Surveys contribute to the understanding of offending and crime. It discusses why the surveys were developed and places them in the context of other sources of information and research, particularly other self-report studies.

Administrative statistics on offenders, offences and crime

Most data on offenders, offences and crime is collected through the agencies of the criminal justice system. The police record crimes committed (see Dodd *et al.*, 2004), the courts provide information on convictions (see Criminal Statistics 2002) and the Prison Service provides data on the prison population (see Prison Statistics, 2003). All these data are limited to offences (and offenders) that are processed through the system – bearing in mind that many offenders and offences are never processed at all. It has been estimated, for example, that only two per cent of offences (as measured by the British Crime Survey – see below) result in conviction (Barclay and Tavares, 1999). Many offences are never even reported to the police, often because they are seen to be too minor, while those that are reported are not always recorded if the police consider there to be insufficient evidence that a crime has been committed (Dodd *et al.*, 2004). Moreover, not all crimes recorded by the police result in an offender being identified and convicted (Dodd *et al.*, 2004).

Data from the courts show the number of people convicted of different offences and the sentences they are given. For example, in 2000 (the year the PCS was conducted) about 98,000 male defendants were sentenced to immediate custody, while in 2002 (the year of the CPCS) around 158,000 males and 28,000 females were given some form of community sentence. Sentencing data are used to monitor throughput from the courts to the prison and probation services. It can be used to identify sentencing trends and to inform the resources required. However, it says very little about offenders themselves, apart from their age and sex profile, and nothing about their offending careers.

Conviction data are held for individual offenders on the Home Office's Offenders Index (OI). While this enables exploration of the nature of criminal careers from the point of view of conviction history, it does not include offences that do not result in a conviction. The OI is also restricted to a subset of offence types ('standard list' offences) so does not provide a full conviction history.⁵ Moreover, it only includes age and sex details of the offender, making it impossible to identify other factors associated with particular offending patterns.

Police recorded crime statistics provide a measure of crime committed in England and Wales though are limited to those incidents that the police know about and record. They do not include information about offenders.

It has long been recognised that administrative data sources alone are unable to answer key questions. How much crime is there? How many offenders are there? What proportion of offenders come into contact with the criminal justice system? Does the criminal justice system deal with the most serious and prolific offenders? Do sentences reduce the likelihood of re-offending?

Victimisation surveys and self-report offending surveys were developed to fill some of these key information gaps, although they too have certain limitations.

⁵ There are other technical difficulties which mean the OI does not provide a comprehensive account of 'known' offending. For example, offences 'taken into consideration' are not included.

Victimisation surveys

Victimisation surveys were developed to give a 'truer' estimate of the level of crime. They ask a sample of the population to recall incidents of crime against them or their household in a specific time period. The British Crime Survey, the national victimisation survey for England and Wales, has provided estimates of the number of crimes against adults and households for more than twenty years. It does not cover crimes against commercial or public bodies or children and only covers certain more common offences against adults and households. The 2003/04 BCS indicates that there were 11.7 million offences (of the type covered by the survey) against households and adults (Dodd *et al.*, 2004). For those offence types that can be compared with police recorded crime figures, the BCS measured nearly three times as many crimes. Moreover, using the 1997 BCS figures as a baseline, the number of convictions is only two per cent of the number of offences (Barclay and Tavares, 1999). This demonstrates the extent to which data from criminal justice agencies undercount the true level of crime. Although conducted less frequently, there have also been victimisation surveys designed to measure crime committed against businesses and organisations (Mirrlees-Black and Ross, 1995; Taylor, 2004).

Victimisation surveys are invaluable in providing a better measure of the amount of crime people experience, whether or not it is reported to, or recorded by the police. They also provide important information on the types of area, household, individual or business who are most prone to crime. However, they say little about offenders. It is not known whether the overall crime count is driven by a small number of highly prolific offenders, or is a result of a large pool of offenders each committing a small number of offences. Nor do they say anything about offender characteristics or motivations. They are also restricted to offences with an identifiable victim and exclude offences such as drug dealing and handling stolen goods.

Self-report offending surveys

Self-report offending surveys were developed to measure the extent and nature of offending. The methodology is based on the simple premise of directly asking people about their offending behaviour. They can be broadly classified into surveys of the general population and surveys of offenders known to the criminal justice system.

General population surveys

General population self-report offending surveys are usually based on random samples of people selected from households or schools. They exclude the homeless, and people resident in institutions, such as prisons or care homes. The samples will include offenders known to the criminal justice agencies, those who have offended but evaded the system, and non-offenders. The aim of these surveys is to estimate the extent of criminality in the general population, identify the number of offences committed by those who admit to offending, and to assess the factors associated with heightened risk of becoming an offender.

The 2003 Offending, Crime and Justice Survey, the most recent large-scale, national self-report offending survey for England and Wales, estimated that 41 per cent of 10- to 65-year-olds had committed a 'core' offence⁶ in their lifetime, but only ten per cent had committed an offence in the last year; five per cent were serious or prolific offenders.⁷ The survey also confirmed that young people, especially males, are most likely to be active offenders and that relatively few offences result in criminal sanctions (Budd *et al.*, 2005).

⁶ Core offences include burglary, vehicle-related thefts, miscellaneous thefts (e.g., from work), criminal damage, robbery, assault, and drug selling.

⁷ Serious offences are theft of a vehicle, burglary, robbery, theft from a person, assaults resulting in injury and selling Class A drugs. Prolific offenders are those committing six or more offences in a year.

For a review of general population self-report offending surveys, see Farrington, 2003.

Criminal justice system surveys

Some self-report offending surveys are restricted to those in contact with the criminal justice system, whether arrestees or those serving custodial or community sentences. A key advantage that these surveys have over general population surveys is that by default the sample only includes offenders or suspected offenders. This means that a much smaller overall sample size is required for meaningful analysis of criminal careers.

Surveys of arrestees

A number of countries, including England and Wales, have conducted surveys of arrestees under the auspices of the International Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring Programme. These surveys have been used to assess the prevalence of drug use among offenders and to provide evidence to inform understanding of the links between drug use and crime. The surveys first began in the United States in the 1980s, with the first full study in England and Wales (*NEW ADAM*) being launched in 1999 (Bennett, 2000). The England and Wales programme has since been reviewed, with a new, nationally representative survey – the Arrestee Survey – commencing in 2003. Although the focus is on drug use, the surveys also ask about offending during the period before arrest. Reference to results from *NEW ADAM* are made throughout this report where relevant. Results from the Arrestee Survey will be available in due course.

Surveys of prisoners

In the late 1970s, the Rand Corporation in the United States pioneered the use of self-report offending surveys among prisoners to examine the frequency of offending immediately prior to to custody (Chaiken and Chaiken, 1982; Greenwood, 1982; Peterson and Braiker, 1980; Rolph *et al.*, 1981). The Rand Second Inmate Study covered 2,200 prisoners in three US states and found rates of offending to be skewed. The vast majority of prisoners had very low offending rates, but a minority had extremely high rates (Chaiken and Chaiken, 1982). The estimates produced by this Rand study have been used to inform debate on the incapacitation impact of custody, to assess the impact of selective incapacitation strategies whereby high rate offenders are targeted, and to underpin cost-benefit analyses of the use of custodial sentences. However, Rand's methodology has been subject to criticism, as have the assumptions used in the original calculations (Cohen, 1986; Visher, 1986; Horney and Marshall, 1991). Crucially, it has been shown that different measurement approaches and assumptions can have considerable impact on estimates of the offending rate (Horney and Marshall, 1991). While debate continues about the 'best' approach, the Rand studies have nonetheless served to illustrate the variation in offending rates and, given this, that assessments of the likely impact of sentencing policies will need to be cautious. They also suggest that the *relative* impact of different sentencing measures can be more realistically assessed than their *absolute* impact.

Following the pioneering work of the Rand Corporation there have been other US-based studies (e.g. Horney and Marshall, 1991) and surveys in other countries, such as Australia (Makkai and Payne, 2003).

The Prisoner Criminality Survey is the first national study in England and Wales to focus specifically on collecting information on offending careers among those serving custodial sentences. Previous prisoner surveys have looked at physical and mental health issues (Gunn *et al.*, 1991; Bridgwood and Malbon, 1995; Singleton *et al.*, 1998), drug use (Maden *et al.*, 1992; Singleton *et al.*, 1999), the impact of custody on employment and training opportunities and family life, and the prospects of resettlement into the community on release (Hamlyn and Lewis, 2000; Caddle and Crisp, 1997; Niven and Olagundoye, 2002). The National Prisoner Survey conducted

in 1991 collected information about prisoners' background characteristics and their views on prison regimes (Walmsley *et al.*, 1992).

Surveys of offenders in the community

Fewer self-report offending surveys have been undertaken of offenders given community sentences. In part this has been because prisoner surveys seemed to offer more in the way of estimating the impact of incarceration on crime levels. Those serving sentences in the community are still free to offend. Even so, knowing the offending rates of those on community sentences is very helpful in assessing what the the impact on crime would be if imprisonment was given instead. Moreover, being able to map offending profiles of offenders in the community is important in assessing the potential impact of community interventions on individual offending rates and aggregate crime levels.

The majority of UK research on community sentences has focused on small-scale studies evaluating the impact of specific interventions. These often use reconviction data, although have also interviewed offenders about their views. Undertaking a large-scale survey of offenders in the community presents difficult challenges in sampling and securing response. The only national survey in England and Wales before the CPCS was the 1994 Probation Survey (Mair and May, 1997). This was commissioned by the Home Office to examine experiences of probation and offenders' views of its effectiveness in tackling their problems and helping them cease offending. It did not ask about offending careers.

The Criminality Surveys

The Prisoner and Community Penalties Criminality Surveys thus represent the first attempt in England and Wales to use self-report methodology to collect detailed information about the offending careers of sentenced offenders.

The PCS was conducted in 2000, followed by the CPCS in 2002. A considerable amount of feasibility and development work was undertaken before the full PCS was commissioned. This focused on questionnaire design and mode of administration. A further feasibility study was undertaken prior to the CPCS mainly to examine the sampling approach and the practical issues of interviewing offenders in the community. While all efforts were made to ensure the surveys were methodologically sound, they are subject to the limitations discussed in Chapter 1.

Despite acknowledged limitations, both the PCS and CPCS fill a key knowledge gap – providing better information on actual levels of offending among sentenced offenders – and will contribute to assessments of the potential impact of different interventions.

3. Offending history

The main objective of the Criminality Surveys is to provide better information on the recent offending patterns of known offenders through self-report methodology. This chapter first explains the approach to measuring offending, and discusses key methodological issues. It then presents findings on the prevalence and frequency of offending across a range of 14 different offence types.

The focus in this chapter is on male offenders. The results for females sentenced to a community penalty (females were not included in the PCS) are in Chapter 6.

Measuring offending

As discussed in Chapter 2, the criminal justice system collects information on offenders and offences that are known to justice agencies. An objective of the Criminality Surveys was to capture fuller information on the offending histories of sentenced offenders over a given period, including offences that never came to official attention.

Offenders were asked how frequently they had committed 14 types of offence during a 12-month reference period. The offences asked about fell under four broad categories – theft and handling; criminal damage; violence and drug dealing. These offences are relatively high volume but it is important to note that not all offence types are covered by the survey. Appendix D lists the offence 'screener' questions included in the survey.

The reference period was a maximum of 12 months at liberty in the period before sentence.⁸ A paper calendar was used to help respondents define their reference period and was then used as a visual aid while respondents were being asked about their offending. The calendar indicated some key general events or dates (e.g. Easter) to help prompt recall. Further details are in Appendix B.

As discussed in Chapters 1 and 2, self-report offending surveys are not without limitations. The following issues need to be considered in interpreting the results presented in this chapter.

- Respondents may well have committed offences other than the 14 covered. The offending estimates therefore underestimate the 'true' extent of *all* offending.
- The 14 offence screener questions were carefully tested to ensure respondents understood the terms used. However, it is possible that some incidents were double counted if they appeared to correspond with more than one offence screener question.⁹
- Respondents were required to select from a banded frequency scale to indicate their frequency of offending for each offence type.¹⁰ This approach was taken because it was felt that it would be difficult for respondents to recall an exact number of incidents. However, given that offending may be sporadic or vary in intensity over time, some respondents may have found it difficult to fit their offending pattern into the frequency

⁸ This was the 18-month period before March 2000 in the PCS and the 24-month period before March 2002 in the CPCS. The period was extended on the CPCS to allow more respondents to have 12 months at liberty. 20 per cent of PCS males and 1 per cent of CPCS males were at liberty for less than 12 months and thus had a shorter reference period.

⁹ For example, in one incident an offender could have stolen a vehicle, abandoned the vehicle and stolen items from it. This incident could potentially be mentioned under theft of a vehicle and theft from vehicle screeners.

¹⁰ The frequency scale ranged from 'less than once a month' to 'more than once a day'. Those who said less than once a month were asked exactly how many times in their reference period; those who said more than once a day were asked how many times per day.

scale. This would require them to 'average out' their offending over a period up to 12 months. This is a cognitively difficult task and perhaps even more so for offenders lacking in basic skills. Some commentators (e.g. Cohen, 1986) have suggested that there is a tendency for offenders to report their offending frequencies during high rate periods, which are likely to be more memorable, as 'typical'.¹¹

- Respondents may not have been willing or able to accurately report their offending for various reasons. Some may have simply forgotten incidents, or have been unsure whether or not they fell within the reference period, while others may have deliberately concealed incidents or, perhaps less likely, exaggerated their offending. Interviewers said that they felt most respondents tried to answer honestly and did not, on the whole, conceal their behaviour. However, interviewers' ability to assess honesty is open to question and it is of concern that relatively high proportions did not admit to offences for which they had been convicted (see below for fuller discussion).

Given the influence of these various factors it is difficult to assess whether, in general, the surveys overestimate or underestimate offending (for those offences covered). It seems likely though that they underestimate participation (i.e. the proportion admitting to an offence) due to some offenders failing to disclose their offending, while overestimating the frequency of offending among those who do admit offences (because of the tendency for offenders to think about high rate offending periods and the possibility of double counting incidents). It also seems likely that offenders in the community were less forthcoming than those in prison because of their concerns about possible repercussions. While estimates are therefore not 'exact', it is likely that they give a reasonable picture of the relative results for the different crime types and the variability in offending among different types of offender.

It should also be remembered that, given the time interval between arrest and final disposal, the reference period is likely to include time post-arrest. It may well be that an arrest episode and the likelihood of conviction impacted on offending behaviour during at least part of the reference period. It is likely that some of those on bail, in particular, may stop, or reduce, their offending. Patterns of offending prior to arrest may well differ to those post-arrest. It is not possible to establish this from the surveys.

Participation in offending

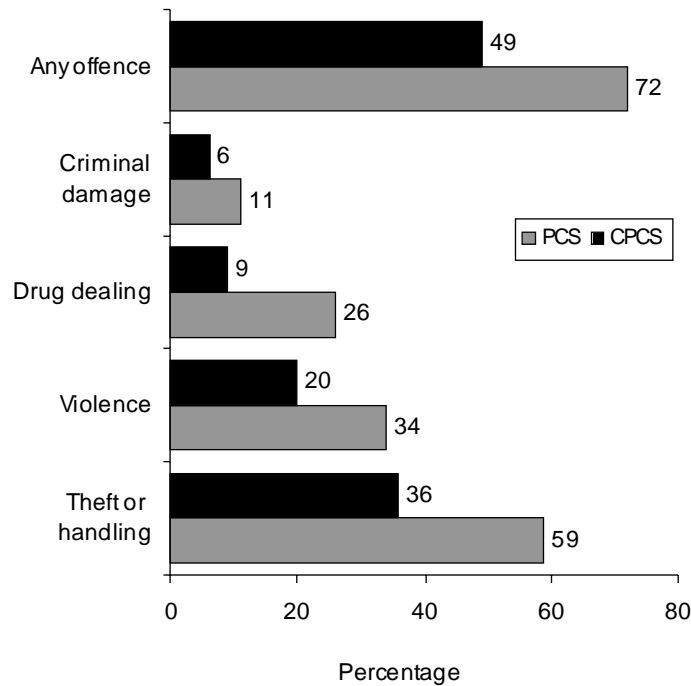
Overall, 72 per cent of prisoners said they had committed at least one of the 14 offences asked about during the reference period. Fifty-nine per cent said they had committed a theft or handling offence; 34 per cent a violent offence; 26 per cent a drug dealing offence and 11 per cent criminal damage. The prevalence of offending was far lower among males given a community sentence – overall 49 per cent reported they had committed at least one of the offences (Figure 3.1).

Across all 14 offence types prisoners were more likely to report committing an offence than those on a community sentence, though the differential varied by offence type (Table A3.1). Male prisoners were over three times as likely to admit to a burglary, vehicle-related theft or robbery. The difference was less pronounced for the more common offences such as shoplifting, handling stolen goods and assault.

¹¹ The Criminology Surveys were designed to test this. For a selected number of offences respondents were also asked to report their offending frequency on a month-by-month basis. The three PCS offences were theft of a vehicle and from a vehicle and domestic burglary; the CPCS additionally covered commercial burglary and assault. To help respondents accurately recall their offending they were first asked about their circumstances and significant personal events during the reference period. Unfortunately, implementation errors during the PCS interview mean that it is not possible to draw any conclusions from the data. Examination of the CPCS data suggests no discernible impact, but as those in the CPCS admitted to a lower rate of offending, and are thus more likely to be able to recall their behaviour, one cannot assume the same would apply to PCS sample.

Looking at the specific offence types, handling stolen goods was the most common offence among both prisoners (50%) and those serving a community sentence (29%), followed by assault and shoplifting (both 28% in the PCS; 18% and 19% in the CPCS). Around a fifth of male prisoners reported committing each of the following – burglary of a domestic dwelling, burglary of a commercial property, theft of a motor vehicle, theft from a motor vehicle and dealing in drugs other than cannabis. Among those serving a community sentence, all offences – with the exception of handling, shoplifting and assault – were committed by less than a tenth.

Figure 3.1: Percentage admitting to committing offence in reference period



That just over a quarter of PCS males and a half of CPCS males said they had *not* committed any of the 14 offences is of some concern. Of these, a substantial proportion had been sentenced for offences not covered by the survey (e.g. motoring offences, fraud and forgery) and it may well be that they had genuinely not committed the offences asked about. However, 154 PCS males and 197 CPCS males who had actually been sentenced for one of the offences asked about claimed not to have committed any of the 14 offences. In a number of these cases it may have been that the offence for which they were sentenced took place before the reference period (or that they were innocent of the offence for which they were convicted). However, it seems likely that a number failed to disclose their offences to interviewers. Further analysis of these respondents showed that the majority of the 197 CPCS males had been convicted of violence (n=121). This was also the most common conviction among the 154 PCS respondents (n=42), followed by drug dealing (n=33).

Similar surveys in the United States have also identified relatively high levels of possible concealment. For example, reanalysis of the second Rand Inmate Survey found around three in ten convicted robbers and burglars reported they had not committed any robberies (or burglaries) in the past one to two years (Visher, 1986). Following the approach taken in the Rand survey, ‘concealers’ have been included in the analysis reported upon here and their claims to have not committed any offences in their reference period accepted.

Diverse or specialist offenders?

The extent to which offenders specialise in particular offences is an important empirical question. The data collected in the Criminology Surveys allowed an exploration of this in several ways.

At the simplest level the number of offence types committed during the reference period was examined. Among those who had committed at least one of the 14 offences in the reference period, the majority had committed more than one offence type (71% of PCS males; 54% of CPCS males). A significant minority of prisoners, around a fifth, said they had committed six or more types. This was far lower among those serving a sentence in the community, at eight per cent (Table A3.2).

The above results suggest many offenders engage in different types of offence. However, given that some offence types are similar, for example domestic burglary and commercial burglary, an examination was also made of the extent to which offenders committed offences across the four main offence categories of theft and handling, criminal damage, violence and drug dealing. Almost a half (48%) of prisoners who had committed at least one of the 14 offences had only committed offences within a single category. Twenty-nine per cent had offended across two categories; 17 per cent across three categories and just six per cent across all four. Among those serving community sentences who had committed at least one of the offences covered, two-thirds (66%) said they had only committed offences within a single category (Figure 3.2).

Figure 3.2: Number of offence categories committed by active male offenders

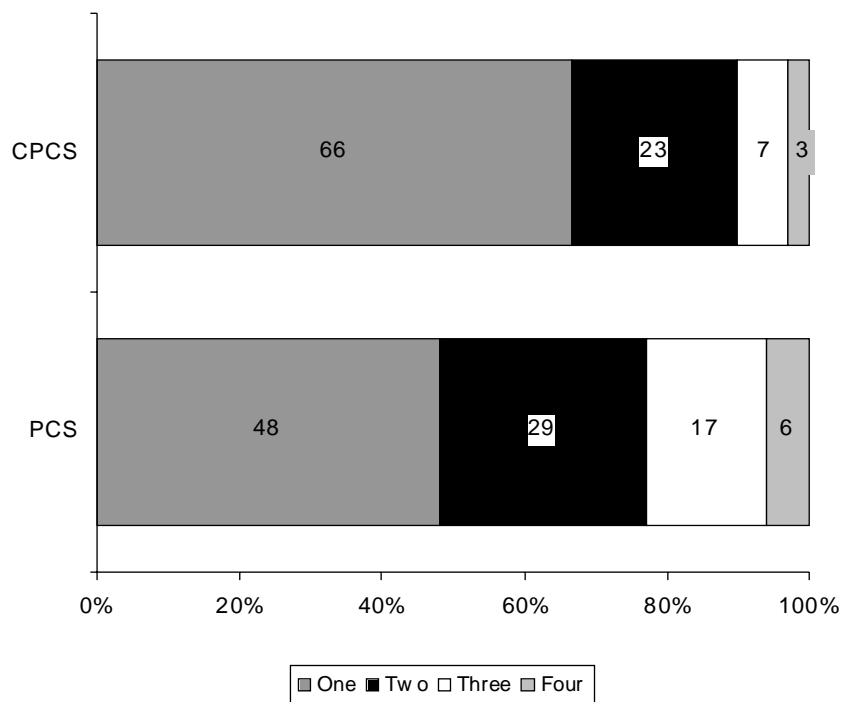


Table 3.1 shows the most common offending patterns among those admitting to an offence. Theft and handling only was by far the most common pattern. Table A3.3 gives full breakdown.

Table 3.1: Main offending patterns among active offenders

	PCS – males	CPCS – males
Offending profile	%	%
Theft/handling only	32	44
Theft/handling and violence	13	12
Theft/handling, drugs and violence	11	3
Theft/handling and drugs	11	8
Violence only	11	18
<i>Base n</i>	1,436	548

Notes:

1. Source: Prisoner Criminality Survey (2000) and Community Penalties Criminality Survey (2002).
2. Based on those who had committed at least one of the 14 offences.

Thus the evidence shows that while some offenders are unspecialised, many only commit offences within one category (at least within the reference period), with the most common offence profile being to only commit theft and handling offences. Those serving custodial sentences tended to have more varied offending patterns.

Frequency of offending

Those who admitted an offence were asked how frequently they had committed it over their reference period. As discussed earlier some caution is required in interpreting the results because of the difficult cognitive task involved and the potential for various forms of recall error.

Frequency of offending varied considerably across offence types, with some offences being committed only rarely, while others happened on a weekly basis. Those who admitted committing drug dealing, shoplifting and handling stolen goods did so most frequently. In contrast the majority of those who had assaulted someone said they had done so less than once a month. This general pattern held for those in custody and serving community penalties, though prisoners who had committed an offence were more likely to have done so frequently than their counterparts in the community. Thus those in custody were not only more likely to say they had committed each of the offences covered but also to have done so regularly (Table A3.4).

Table 3.2 shows the percentage of *all* respondents (including those who said they had not committed the offence) who had committed each offence at least weekly. On this basis, a third (34 per cent) of male prisoners reported handling stolen goods at least weekly prior to custody, with a fifth shoplifting at least weekly. Around a tenth or more were committing vehicle-related thefts, burglary or drug dealing at least weekly. Far fewer of those serving community sentences were identified as regular offenders in the reference period – the highest figures being for shoplifting and handling stolen goods, with around one in ten saying they committed these offences at least weekly. (See also Table A3.5)

Table 3.2: Percentage of respondents who had committed each offence at least once a week

	PCS – males		CPCS – males	
	% committing at least once a week	Base n	% committing at least once a week	Base n
Theft and handling				
Domestic burglary	9	1,874	1	1,279
Commercial burglary	8	1,874	1	1,280
Theft of a motor vehicle	12	1,876	1	1,279
Theft from a motor vehicle	12	1,864	2	1,278
Theft of a bicycle	3	1,868	1	1,281
Shoplifting	20	1,868	12	1,272
Handling stolen goods	34	1,851	13	1,270
Stealth theft	1	1,875	<1	1,281
Criminal damage				
Criminal damage	3	1,874	<1	1,281
Violence				
Assault	4	1,870	1	1,275
Personal robbery	2	1,873	<1	1,279
Commercial robbery	2	1,877	<1	1,281
Drug dealing				
Dealing in cannabis	12	1,871	4	1,277
Dealing in other drugs	16	1,865	4	1,279

Notes:

1. Source: Prisoner Criminality Survey (2000) and Community Penalties Criminality Survey (2002).
2. Based on all male respondents.

Levels of co-offending

There is relatively little robust information on co-offending. The PCS collected information for three offences only – domestic burglary, theft of a vehicle and theft from a vehicle. For each of these, offenders were asked how often they committed the offence with others and when they did so how many co-offenders were usually involved. Table 3.3 shows that a significant proportion of those who committed these offences always or usually did so with other people. This demonstrates that co-offending is, at least for these offences, relatively common and this needs to be taken into account in assessing the likely impact of sentencing and crime reduction policies. (Table A3.6 presents CPCS co-offending results.)

Table 3.3: The extent of co-offending

	Domestic burglary	Theft of a vehicle	Theft from a vehicle
How often commit offence with others	%	%	%
Always with others	34	39	26
Usually with others	12	16	16
Occasionally with others	12	17	20
Always alone	41	28	37
Usual number of co-offenders	%	%	%
None	42	29	39
One	41	40	39
Two	12	17	15
Three	4	10	5
Four	1	2	1
Five or more	1	2	1
Base n	538	541	475

Notes:

1. Source: Prisoner Criminality Survey (2000).

Implications of the findings

The Criminology Surveys were designed to provide better information on the levels of offending among convicted offenders prior to sentence. In doing so, they give an indication of the potential impact of sentences on reducing crime (in terms of those offences covered) if they are effective in preventing further offending either through deterring or rehabilitating individual offenders or incapacitating them through custody.¹²

The Criminology Surveys suggest that while many male sentenced offenders had not committed any of the offences covered or had done so relatively infrequently, a substantial proportion had offended frequently prior to sentence, particularly in relation to shoplifting and handling stolen goods. Moreover, those sentenced to custody were on the whole more likely to include frequent offenders than those given a community sentence.

¹² Sentencing also serves other purposes, including deterring potential offenders from offending and punishing offenders.

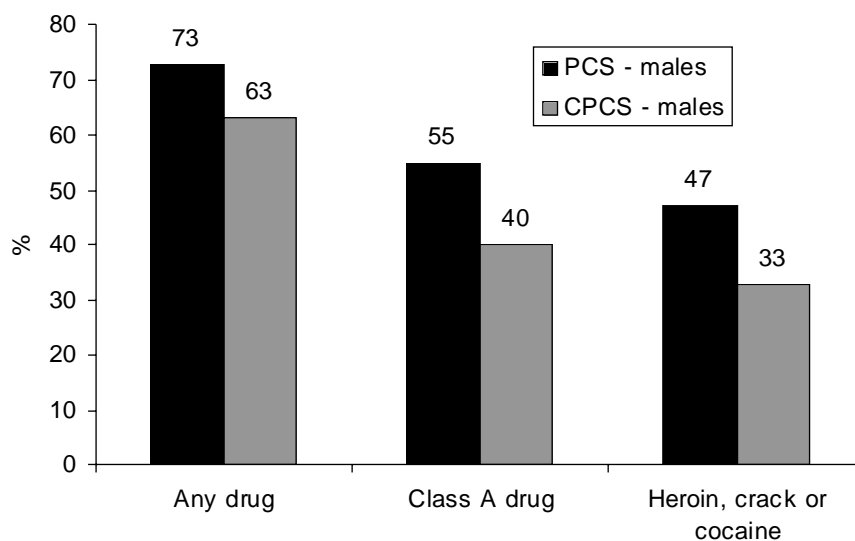
4. Drug use

This chapter describes the drug use of prisoners in the 12 months prior to custody, and of those serving community sentences in 12 months prior to interview.¹³ It examines the prevalence and frequency of drug use, including the identification of problematic drug use, and the extent of unmet need for drug treatment.¹⁴ Again the findings here relate only to males – the results for females serving a community sentence are described in Chapter 6. Chapter 5 goes on to discuss the links between drug use and offending.

Prevalence of drug use

The PCS and CPCS asked respondents about their use of 13 drugs during the 12-month reference period. Almost three-quarters of prisoners (73%) said they had used at least one of these drugs during this time. Cannabis was most commonly used (64% saying they had used in the reference period). However, the use of Class A drugs was also relatively common. Over half of prisoners (55%) reported using a Class A drug (heroin, crack, cocaine, methadone, LSD, magic mushrooms and ecstasy) and almost half (47%) said they had used the most harmful drugs – heroin, crack or cocaine. Levels of drug use were somewhat lower among males sentenced to a community penalty – 63 per cent using any drug; 40 per cent a Class A substance and 33 per cent heroin, crack or cocaine (Figure 4.1). Indeed males on a community sentence were significantly less likely to report using all of the drugs covered, with the exception of amyl nitrite, steroids and solvents, than those sentenced to custody (Table A4.1).

Figure 4.1: Prevalence of drug use in the last year



¹³ It should be noted that some respondents, in the PCS and CPCS, may have spent some time in custody during the reference period for other offences.

¹⁴ Findings from the PCS are also given in Home Office Research Study 267 (Ramsay, 2003). This presents findings from seven research studies concerned with prisoners' drug use and treatment, including a follow-up study of PCS respondents measuring the changing nature of drug use before, during and after custody.

Of those who had used heroin, crack or cocaine in the last year just over a half in both surveys said they had used heroin and cocaine or crack. Around a fifth had only used cocaine (20% in PCS; 24% in CPCS) and just over a tenth only heroin (12% in PCS; 13% in CPCS).

The prevalence of drug use among convicted offenders, particularly Class A substances, is far higher than in the general population. Figures from the British Crime Survey¹⁵ show that overall 14 per cent of males aged from 16 to 59 had used cannabis in the year preceding the survey, five per cent had used a Class A substance and three per cent heroin, crack or cocaine. Even after controlling for age the use of drugs is far higher among convicted offenders than in the general population (see Table A4.2). The prevalence of drug use among prisoners and those serving community penalties is more in line with figures from samples of arrestees. Results from the first two years of the NEW ADAM survey found 80 per cent of arrestees had used an illicit drug in the last 12 months; 57 per cent a Class A substance and 48 per cent heroin, crack or cocaine (Bennett and Holloway, 2004). It should be noted that these figures are not directly comparable to those from the Criminality Surveys and should not be taken as evidence that drug use is higher among arrestees than sentenced offenders.¹⁶

Number and combination of drugs used

Those sentenced to custody were more likely to have a varied drug use profile, than those serving a community penalty. A half (51%) of male prisoners who had used drugs in the 12 month reference period admitted using four or more drug types. This equates to 37 per cent of the sample. Among male drug users serving sentences in the community 35 per cent had used four or more substances (22% of the sample). (Table A4.3.)

Drug users were classified into the following groups:

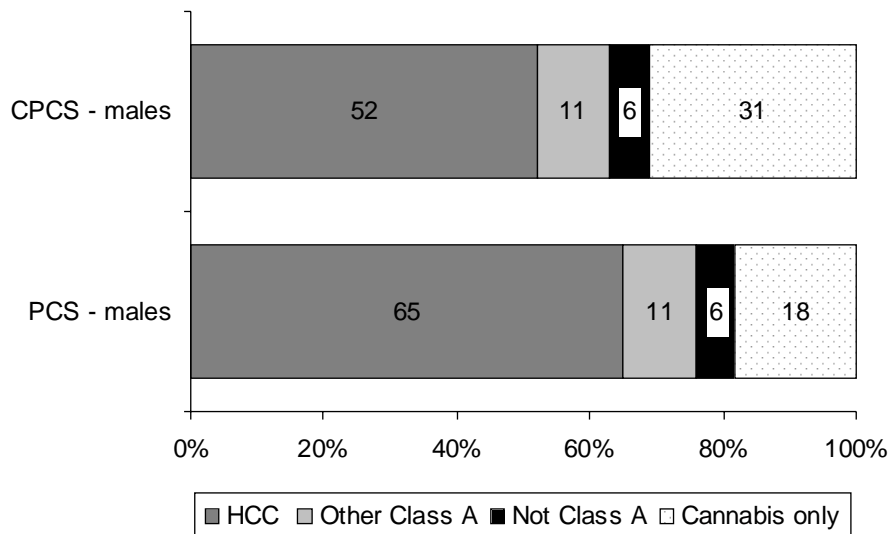
- used most harmful Class A substances (heroin, crack or cocaine – HCC);
- used other Class A substances (not heroin, crack or cocaine);
- only used non Class A substances (but not those who used cannabis only);
- only used cannabis.

Figure 4.2 shows the results. The groups differ on the extremes. Among the custodial sample 65 per cent of drug users were in the most harmful group, compared with 52 per cent of those serving community sentences. Conversely, CPCS drug users were far more likely to only use cannabis than those sentenced to custody (31% versus 18%). (See also Table A4.4.)

¹⁵ The British Crime Survey is a general household survey primarily designed to measure criminal victimisation in England and Wales. However, it also includes a self-report module on drug use and is the main measure for monitoring levels of drug use among the general population, particularly young people aged from 16 to 24.

¹⁶ NEW ADAM results are based on a fuller list of drugs which might account for higher reporting levels. It is also likely that the approach adopted in NEW ADAM meant drug users were disproportionately interviewed relative to non-users. In part this is because the study was based in a small number of urban centres where drug use is more likely to be concentrated. Also arrestees who were drunk were often not interviewed although eligible and this group tend to be less likely to use drugs.

Figure 4.2: Drug use profile of users



Frequency of drug use

A high proportion of drug users in the samples said they had consumed drugs on a very frequent basis. This was particularly apparent for cannabis and heroin users. Almost nine in ten cannabis users in the PCS used the drug at least once a week; seven in ten males in the CPCS. In both surveys around nine in ten heroin users said they used heroin at least once a week, with around eight in ten doing so every day or nearly every day (Table A4.5).

Across drug types, with the exception of methadone, frequent use was higher among using prisoners than those serving community sentences.

Overall, 29 per cent of *all* male prisoners had used heroin on at least a weekly basis in the 12 months before prison. Twenty-one per cent had used crack and 18 per cent cocaine on at least a weekly basis. The respective figures for those serving sentences in the community are 19 per cent, nine per cent and five per cent.

Measures of problematic drug use

Problematic drug use is usually defined as a person who experiences social, psychological, physical or legal problems related to his/her use of illicit drugs. Several potential measures of problematic drug use can be derived from the Criminality Surveys, though they do not necessarily fully meet the definition as outlined above.

First, information on type of drugs used and frequency of use can be employed to indicate patterns of problematic drug use. For example, frequent use of the most harmful substances could be indicative of problematic use, though not all those who use even the most harmful substances frequently will necessarily experience problems. As discussed above, 47 per cent of male prisoners and 33 per cent of males serving community sentences reported using heroin, crack or cocaine in the previous year, with 29 per cent and 19 per cent using heroin at least weekly.

Second, injecting drugs can be viewed as problematic given the heightened health risks, though not all drugs which might be linked to problems are injected. Respondents who had used

amphetamines, cocaine, crack, heroin or methadone were asked if they had injected the drug. A quarter (23%) of *all* prisoners said they had injected at least one of these five drugs in the 12-month reference period; 17 per cent of those serving community penalties. Heroin was the most commonly injected drug – 19 per cent of PCS males and 16 per cent of CPCS males had injected heroin (Table A4.6).

Third, respondents were asked to self-identify problematic use, though not all of those who are experiencing problems will necessarily admit to this in a survey. Both PCS and CPCS respondents were asked whether they had experienced any problems trying to stay off drugs. The CPCS asked about the last 12 months, while the PCS asked about the time before coming to prison without giving a specific time period.

A half (53%) of prisoners who had used drugs said they had experienced problems staying off drugs before coming into custody (39% of all male prisoners). This was most common among Class A drug users (65%), particularly those who had used heroin, crack or cocaine (72%). Only 14 per cent of those who had only used non-Class A drugs reported problems. Among heroin, crack or cocaine users who said they had experienced problems, 42 per cent had taken all three drugs in the reference period. Among heroin, crack or cocaine users who did not report problems only eight per cent said they had used all three drugs, while over half (56%) had only used cocaine.

Males serving sentences in the community were somewhat less likely to have had experienced problems staying off drugs – 43 per cent of drug users had experienced problems (27% of all males in the sample). Again figures were far higher for those who used heroin, crack or cocaine, at 69 per cent.

Finally, drug users were asked if their drug use was linked to their offending. Overall, 55 per cent of drug-using prisoners (40% of sample) and 38 per cent of drug users in the CPCS (24% of sample) said they had committed an offence related to drug taking. This is further addressed in Chapter 5.

Factors associated with heroin, crack or cocaine use

The PCS and CPCS show that drug use is highly prevalent among sentenced male offenders. Moreover, a considerable proportion could be considered as problematic drug users given the measures available. Previous research has indicated that certain characteristics are associated with higher levels of drug use. Here characteristics associated with reported heroin, crack or cocaine use are identified. The patterns are similar for injecting behaviour or self-identified problems. The full results are given in Tables A4.7 to A4.10. Table 4.1 below summarises the most at-risk groups. The following groups had the highest rate of heroin, crack or cocaine use.

- **Young adults** aged up to 35 were more likely to have used heroin, crack or cocaine than their older counterparts. In both surveys, those aged from 21 to 29 were most likely to have used these substances.
- **Single** people were far more likely to have used heroin, crack or cocaine than other groups.
- **White** respondents were more likely to have used heroin, crack or cocaine than Black and minority ethnic groups.
- Prisoners who **left school early** or had **no qualifications** were more likely to have used heroin, crack or cocaine. In the CPCS only the former was associated with use of these substances.
- The **unemployed** or those otherwise unable to work because of **sickness/disability** were about twice as likely to have used heroin, crack or cocaine as those in employment prior to sentence. There was no clear pattern in terms of length of unemployment.

- Those who were **homeless** before sentence had particularly high levels of heroin, crack or cocaine use, followed by those living in bedsits or shared accommodation.
- Those who had spent some time in **Local Authority care** as a child had higher levels of use than those who had not had this experience (this was not statistically significant for CPCS males at the 5% level but was at 10%).

These results, like other studies (e.g., Niven and Olagundoye, 2002), show that 'hard' drug users are likely to have multiple problems – lack of employment, accommodation, and poor family support structures – and these may influence their ability to desist from offending and drug use. Thus, to be effective, drug treatment may well have to be complemented with measures that address other needs. Harper and Chitty (2004) review the effectiveness of drug treatment programmes and discuss the need for multi-modal approaches to address the multiple criminogenic needs offenders often exhibit.

Table 4.1: Groups most likely to have used heroin, crack or cocaine

<i>% using heroin, crack or cocaine</i>	PCS –males	CPCS – males
21-25	56%	41%
26-29	59%	40%
White	50%	35%
Single	57%	41%
Homeless	72%	69%
Living in besit or room with shared facilities	58%	42%
Finished education before age of 15	61%	41%
Unemployed	62%	45%
Sick, disabled and unable to work	51%	41%
In Local Authority Care as a child	61%	40%
All	47%	33%

Notes:

1. Source: Prisoner Criminality Survey (2000) and Community Penalties Criminality Survey (2002).

Treatment needs

The Prison and Probation Services have developed strategies to address the drug use problems that are so prevalent in the offender population. The aim is to put in place effective treatment programmes to reduce drug use, thereby reducing health risks and the risk of re-offending. For

further details see the revised National Drug Strategy for England and Wales at <http://www.drugs.gov.uk/NationalStrategy>.

The Criminology Surveys demonstrate that a high proportion of offenders are problematic drug users, with some groups having particularly high levels of use. Here the variation in drug use across sentence type and offenders own views on whether they require treatment are examined.

Use of the most harmful substances (heroin, crack and cocaine) was high among all prisoners, including those given short sentences (Table A4.11). As one would expect all those respondents sentenced to a DTTO had used drugs in the 12 months before interview, with all but one per cent having used the most harmful drugs. Those on the other community orders were far less likely to say they had used heroin, crack or cocaine – but still a significant minority did so (CPO – 17%; CRO – 36%; CPRO – 22%). Developing programmes that can be accessed by offenders given short-term prison sentences or a range of community sentences is therefore important.

The 56 per cent of drug-using prisoners who said they had experienced problems trying to stay off drugs before sentence or felt they were likely to do so post-release (40% of the sample) were asked if they would like to receive treatment to help them stay off drugs. Of this group of self-identified problematic drug users, just under a fifth said they were actually receiving treatment, but a further 55 per cent said they would like treatment if available. In the CPCS just under a fifth (18%) of those who said they had problems trying to stay off drugs in the last 12 months said they wanted treatment, while just over a fifth (21%) were already receiving some form of treatment. The level of unmet treatment need was therefore relatively high among drug users, although it should be noted that the surveys were conducted at a time when services were in the early stages of development and interviews were conducted soon after sentence, perhaps before an offender had had an opportunity to start a programme. A follow-up study of PCS respondents during their time in custody and post-release examined experiences of treatment in more detail. This found that only a minority of those with treatment needs had received a CARAT assessment¹⁷ or detoxification (Bullock, 2003).

Implications of findings

The surveys confirm that drug use among offenders is extremely high. Importantly though, they show that a considerable proportion of problematic drug users were open to receiving treatment. Although at the time the surveys were conducted there was considerable unmet need for treatment, programmes have since developed and provision continues to expand. Evaluating the effectiveness of treatment programmes will be important. The international evidence suggests treatment programmes within prisons can be effective (Bullock, 2003). As yet only limited evidence is available on the effectiveness of programmes in England and Wales but this is expanding and initial evidence is generally positive (see Martin *et al.*, 2003).

¹⁷ The CARAT service is a multi-agency approach to tackling prisoners' drug problems. CARAT workers conduct assessments, develop care plans and make referrals to appropriate interventions in prison. They can also provide a period of post-release support.

5. Factors related to offending

Chapter 3 presented overall findings on the prevalence and frequency of offending among males commencing a custodial or community sentence. This chapter explores to what extent socio-demographic and lifestyle characteristics are associated with offending. It examines participation in the four offence categories covered by the survey (theft and handling stolen goods; violent offences; criminal damage and drug dealing). The factors identified are those that are associated with a high proportion of respondents saying they had committed the offence categories. Again analysis is restricted to males.

Prior research has established the types of risk factors related to offending. The Criminology Surveys focus on the socio-demographic and lifestyle factors previously identified. The surveys allow an examination of the extent to which these factors are associated with offending in a large, representative sample of convicted offenders. It cannot be concluded from the data whether these factors 'cause' offending. It should also be noted that the surveys did not cover psychological variables which are also relevant in this field.

The new Offender Assessment System (OASys) used by the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) utilises information about offenders' socio-demographic status and lifestyle to inform the assessment of the risk of re-offending and the needs of the offender. The aim is to help NOMS tackle offending through the effective targeting of interventions. (Details on OASys are available on the Home Office website – <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk>). The results of the Criminology Surveys contribute to the understanding of the risk factors linked to offending.

Socio-demographic characteristics

The socio-demographic characteristics that are associated with higher levels of offending are detailed below (see also Tables A5.1 to A5.5). The patterns are generally similar across the custodial and community samples. Some of the factors identified as being associated with high levels of offending are factors that cannot be changed through interventions (e.g. ethnicity), while others are factors that appropriate interventions can potentially help address (e.g. unemployment). As discussed above, though, it cannot be assessed from the data whether these factors directly impact on offending behaviour, are a consequence of offending or simply coexist with offending. It is also important to recognise that willingness to admit to offending may vary across types of offender.

- The prevalence of offending was strongly associated with age. **Younger respondents** were more likely to report having committed an offence covered by the surveys than older respondents. Male prisoners aged under 21 were more likely to have committed the offences than older prisoners. This held across the four offence categories. In the CPCS those under the age of 26 were most likely to say they had committed an offence.
- **White males** were most likely to say they had committed one of the 14 offences in both surveys. Among the prisoner sample, Black respondents were next most prevalent, with respondents of Asian origin being least likely to admit to an offence (61% and 44% – though this difference is not statistically significant due to small sample sizes). This pattern held for all offence categories, with the exception of drug dealing which was at similar levels across the groups. Among those serving a community penalty a different picture emerges. Respondents of Asian origin were more likely to say they had committed an offence than Black respondents, though this difference is only significantly different for violent offences.

That White males were more likely to admit to the offences covered by the survey than Black and minority respondents in part reflects the fact they were more likely to have been sentenced for the one of these offences than Black or minority ethnic respondents. It is,

however, difficult to unpick the patterns further because of the small number of Black and minority ethnic respondents interviewed.

- Those who were **single** or **with no financial dependants**¹⁸ were most likely to say they had offended. This held for prisoners and those serving sentences in the community.
- Prisoners who **left full-time education before the age of 15** were most likely to report committing an offence in the reference period. This pattern also applied to those serving sentences in the community, though not with respect to criminal damage and drug dealing. There was no clear relationship between level of educational qualification and offending history, though respondents with post-secondary school academic qualifications were least likely to have offended.
- Prisoners who had been in **Local Authority Care** as children were far more likely to have committed the offences covered than other prisoners. In the CPCS those who had been in care only had significantly higher participation rates for theft and handling offences.
- Those who were **unemployed or unable to work due to sickness or disability**¹⁹ were far more likely to say they had offended than those who were employed prior to sentence. This held for prisoners and those serving sentences in the community. The differences were most pronounced for theft and handling offences and drug dealing. Levels of violence and criminal damage were similar across employment status groups. Unemployment and offending may well be mutually reinforcing with offending leading to unemployment and unemployment contributing to higher levels of offending.
- Those who were living in relatively stable accommodation that they owned or self-contained rented accommodation were least likely to report committing an offence.²⁰ Those in **less stable accommodation** or who were **homeless** were more likely to have committed an offence covered. Although numbers are small the results suggest that the homeless are most likely to offend, though this is mainly driven by their participation in theft and handling incidents. These patterns apply for both surveys. Again homelessness and offending may have a mutually reinforcing relationship.

Alcohol

Previous studies have shown excessive alcohol consumption to be associated with offending in the general population, particularly in relation to assaults (Richardson and Budd, 2003). The Criminology Surveys asked respondents about how frequently they drank alcohol. Using this measure there was a complex relationship between alcohol use and offending, with different patterns for different offence types (Table A5.6). For violent offences, frequent drinkers were most likely to have committed an offence (this was the case in both surveys). However, for theft and handling, infrequent drinkers and abstainers were as likely to offend as the most frequent drinkers, if not more so. Overall, those who drank moderately were least likely to say they committed an offence covered by the survey.

¹⁸ PCS asked about marital status at time came into prison and financial dependants before prison. CPCS asked about marital status and financial dependants at time sentenced.

¹⁹ PCS asked about employment status in the four weeks before came into prison. CPCS asked about the four weeks before held on remand or sentenced.

²⁰ PCS asked about accommodation in the four weeks before came into prison. CPCS asked about the four weeks before held on remand or sentenced.

The Community Penalties Criminality Survey included additional questions on frequency of drunkenness and measures of dependency. The results suggest participation in violence, criminal damage and drug dealing increase with frequency of drunkenness. However, there is no clear pattern for theft and handling.

Drugs

The link between drug use and crime has been researched in various studies. The issue is complex with the findings being heavily influenced by the types of offender and/or drug user under study.

For example, the Offending, Crime and Justice Survey, the general population self-report offending survey, found drug use to feature in a very small proportion of all crimes committed and only one per cent of drug users said they had committed a crime to fund their habit (Budd *et al.*, 2005). This reflects the type of offenders (often minor) and drug users (often recreational) picked up in the general household population. General household surveys are poor at picking up prolific drug offenders who are a small part of the population.

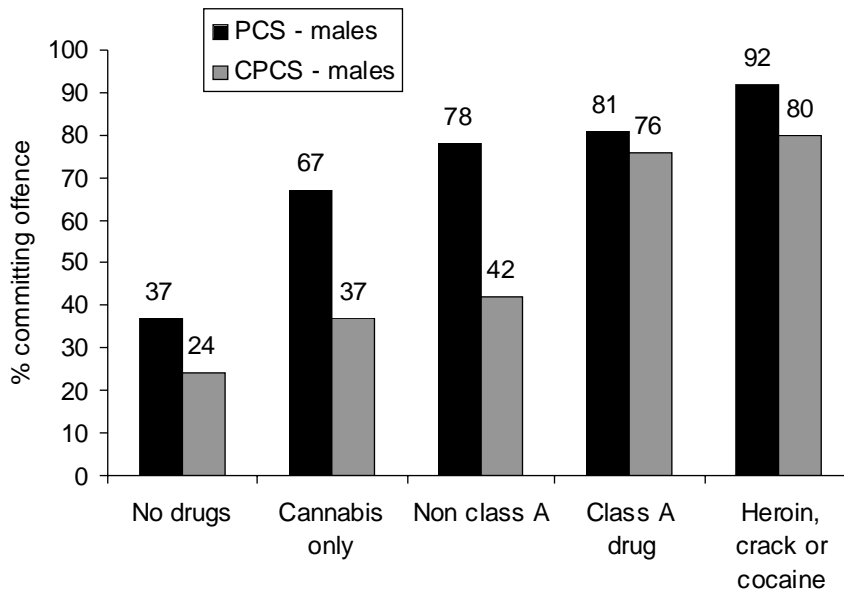
On the other hand, the NEW ADAM Survey found that arrestees who had used heroin, crack or cocaine were more likely to have committed acquisitive offences than other arrestees, with offending rates almost six times higher (Bennett and Holloway, 2004).

The results from the Criminality Surveys are in line with NEW ADAM. Drug users identified in the surveys were far more likely to say they had committed the offences covered than those who had not used drugs. Eighty-six per cent of prisoners who had used drugs said they had committed an offence covered, compared with just over a third (37%) of those who had not used drugs²¹. The differential is similar for those serving sentences in the community – 64 per cent vs 24 per cent.

Looking at drug use in more detail shows a clear increase in involvement in offending with more problematic patterns of drug use (Figure 5.1). Over nine in ten prisoners and eight in ten of those serving sentences in the community who had used heroin, crack or cocaine said they had committed the offences covered. However, there were some differences concerning different types of offence. Theft and handling and drug dealing offences were strongly associated with drug use status; violence and criminal damage less so (Table A5.7).

²¹ That 63 per cent of prisoners who said they had not used drugs had also not committed the 14 offences appears rather high. Examining these 231 cases in more detail shows that around 158 had been sentenced for an offence not asked about in the survey. It is therefore plausible that these offenders had not committed any of the 14 offences asked about. However, 73 respondents had been sentenced for an offence measured by the survey and it is therefore possible these respondents concealed their offending, and perhaps their drug use, during the interview.

Figure 5.1: Percentage committing an offence by drug use profile



Criminal background

Respondents were asked at what age they first committed offences of the type covered by the survey. For prisoners the mean age of onset was 17; for those in the community the mean age of onset was slightly later at 19. However, there was considerable variation within the samples with a considerable minority starting offending before the age of 16. Eighteen per cent of prisoners said they first offended before the age of 13, with a further 34 per cent beginning between the ages of 13 and 15. For males serving sentences in the community the figures are 13 per cent and 28 per cent respectively. The peak age of onset (i.e. the most common age at which offending started) was 15 for prisoners (13% started offending at this age; 11% at age 14 and 10% at age 16). For the community penalties sample, age of onset peaked between the ages of 14 and 17 with around ten per cent beginning at each age in this range.

Farrington (1997) reports that research based on conviction records generally shows the peak age of onset for officially recorded offending to be between 13 and 16, though the 'true' onset of offending behaviour will be earlier than this. Self-report offending data from the Offending, Crime and Justice Survey (OCJS) gives a mean age of onset of 15, with onset peaking between the ages of 10 and 14. The Criminology Surveys thus give a somewhat later picture of onset. It is probable that this in part reflects the nature of the question asked – a single question at the end of the interview asking for the age of onset for the 'types of offence' covered in the interview. The OCJS, by contrast, asked age of onset for each specific offence covered which is likely to elicit more accurate responses. The offence coverage of the surveys also differs somewhat.

Previous research has found early onset of offending to be associated with a long criminal career, though whether early onset is associated with becoming a serious and prolific offender is less clear (Farrington, 1997). The results from the Criminology Surveys show that those who began offending after the age of 17 were less likely to have committed the offences covered by the survey in the last 12 months. However, there was no clear association between onset below this age and offending in the reference period. There were no significant differences in overall participation among those under the age of 18 and patterns differed by offence type.

Implications of the findings

This chapter has identified the factors associated with higher levels of participation in the offences covered by the surveys. The patterns are not always straightforward with some factors being associated with some types of offending (e.g. theft and handling) but not others (e.g. violence).

Large-scale surveys are inevitably a blunt instrument to pick up the factors that directly or indirectly contribute to offending and those that may be barriers to offenders desisting. However, they do indicate those characteristics that are most strongly associated with offending across random samples. Table 5.1 lists the characteristics associated with particularly high overall participation in offending (i.e. a high proportion in the group admit to at least one of the 14 offences) across the two surveys. Many of these are reflected in the new OASys risk assessment system and are in line with other research evidence. For a review of recent research and further details of the OASys system see Harper *et al.*, 2004.

Table 5.1: Factors associated with high levels of offending

	PCS – males % offending	CPCS – males % offending
Aged		
15-20	91	58
21-25	81	64
26-29	74	na
Ethnicity		
White	75	52
Family status		
Single	81	59
No financial dependants	78	55
Been in Local Authority Care	88	56
Education		
Finished education at 14 or under	86	68
No qualifications	78	na
Employment		
Unemployed	84	63
Sick/disabled and unable to work	77	51
Accommodation		
Homeless	90	70
Bedsit/shared facilities	83	na
Other unstable accommodation	78	56
Consumed alcohol		
Not at all	76	51
Less than once a month	78	53
Drugs		
Used heroin, crack or cocaine	92	80
Injected drugs	95	88
Had problems staying off drugs	94	82
Age began offending		
Below 13	84	67
13-15	86	58
16-17	na	57
All males	72	49

Notes:

1. Source: Prisoners Criminology Survey (2000) and Community Penalties Criminology Survey (2002).
2. na means the factor was not associated with higher risks in the survey.

Drugs-crime link

Although the Criminology Surveys confirm there is a strong association between drug use and levels of offending among known offenders, this does not necessarily mean one causes the other.

Many of the factors in Table 5.1 were also identified in Chapter 4 as being associated with use of the most harmful drugs – heroin, crack and cocaine. It is quite plausible that drug use and offending arise in the same group of individuals with similar underlying characteristics rather than that one causes the other. However, where offending and drug use do co-occur they may be mutually reinforcing – regular use of the most addictive substances resulting in offenders committing more crimes to fund their habit, while more funds from crime could lead to increased drug use.

To gain an understanding as to whether respondents consider there to be a link between their drug use and offending, those who had used drugs were directly asked if their offending and drug use were linked.²² Over half (55%) of prisoners who had used drugs (40% of the sample) said they had committed an offence related to drug taking in the 12 months prior to sentence. For those using heroin, crack or cocaine the figure was 74 per cent, rising to 94 per cent among those who used heroin almost every day or more. A similar pattern holds for males serving community sentences – 38 per cent of those who had used drugs said this was linked to their offending, rising to 63 per cent of those who used heroin, crack or cocaine and 90 per cent who used heroin almost daily (Table A5.8).

Respondents who felt that their drug use and offending were related were asked what proportion of their offences were linked to their drug use and what the nature of the link was. Two thirds of prisoners who considered their drug use and offending to be linked said that all of their offences were drug-related. A further 19 per cent said that most of their offences were. The respective figures for CPCS males were similar at 64 per cent and 18 per cent. The most common reason given for the link by far was that offences were committed to gain the money to buy drugs (Table 5.2). Eighty-seven per cent of prisoners who considered their drug use and offending to be linked (35 per cent of all prisoners) said they had committed offences because they needed money to buy drugs or that drugs were one of the things they could buy with money made through the crimes they committed. Eighty-two per cent of CPCS drug-related offenders said they committed offences to get money to buy drugs (19% of all).

Table 5.2: Extent and nature of drug-related offending among those who said their drug use and offending were related

Percentages	Drug-related offenders	
	PCS – males	CPCS – males
Proportion of offences related to drugs	%	%
All	66	64
Most	19	18
About a half	5	7
Some	9	12
	100	100
How offending related to drugs		
Effect on judgement	35	31
Need for money to buy drugs	82	80
Drugs one thing could buy with money from crime	22	13
Stole drugs	4	4
Other connection	9	9
<i>Base n</i>	870	218

Notes:

1. Source: Prisoners Criminology Survey (2000) and Community Penalties Criminology Survey (2002).
2. Based on those who said offending and drug use were related.

²² In the last 12 months [before you went to prison], did you commit any offences which were connected to your taking drugs or wanting money to buy drugs?

The NEW ADAM study of arrestees found that 60 per cent of those who had used drugs and committed acquisitive crimes considered there to be a link between their drug use and offending (Bennett and Holloway, 2004).

6. Female offenders

Females form a small proportion of the known offender population. In 2002, females accounted for eight per cent of sentenced offenders received into custody²³ and 16 per cent of those starting a community penalty (CPO, CRO or CPRO).²⁴ While self-report offending surveys of the general household population show the differential in offending levels between males and females to be somewhat less than indicated in official statistics, they confirm that females are far less likely to offend than males (Budd *et al.*, 2005).

The 2000 Prisoner Criminality Survey excluded female prisoners. However, 288 females were interviewed in the 2002 Community Penalties Criminality Survey. This chapter presents the key results. Due to the relatively small sample size, it is not possible to explore differences within the female sample in any great detail. Appendix C discusses the socio-demographic profile of the sample.

Offending behaviour

As explained in Chapter 3 respondents were asked whether or not they had committed 14 different offence types during the 12 months prior to sentence.²⁵ Overall, 36 per cent of females serving a community sentence said they had committed at least one of the 14 offences during the reference period. This is significantly less than the 49 per cent of males on community sentences who admitted to at least one of these offences, even though female respondents were somewhat more likely to have been sentenced for one of the offences asked about (see Table C.1). This might suggest that female respondents were on the whole less forthcoming than male respondents during the interview. However, interviewers were more likely to view female offenders as very honest and very accurate during the interview, though this may reflect more their own preconceptions about male and female offenders than be based on any 'evidence' collected during the interview. Moreover, conviction history data indicate that male offenders have more prolific offending histories than female offenders. Prime *et al.*, (2001) report that 25 per cent of males who were convicted before the age of 46 had accumulated four or more court appearances, while only eight per cent of females who were convicted had done so.

Although, it is not possible to identify whether males and females differed in their willingness and ability to recall their offending histories, that this is a possibility should be considered in interpreting the results.

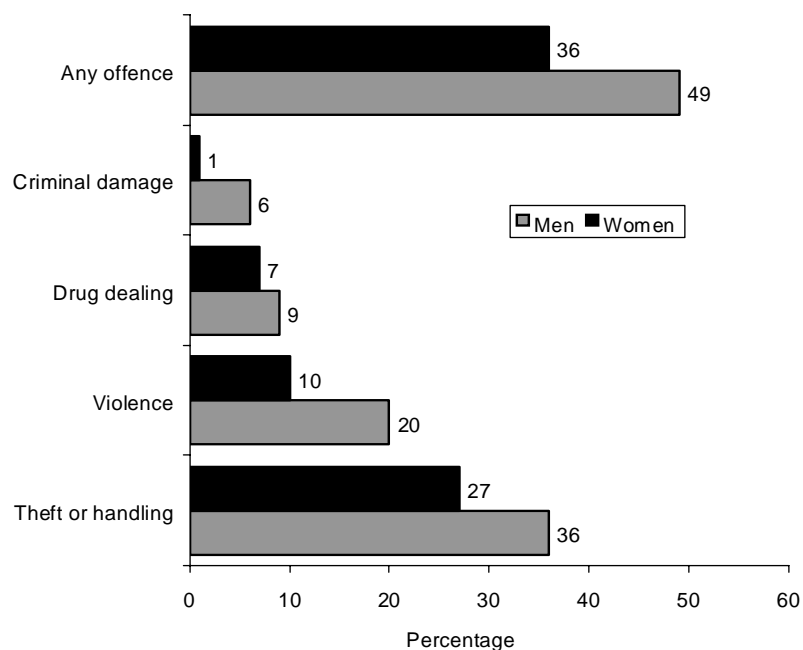
With this in mind, the most common offences by far for females were shoplifting (committed by 22%) and handling stolen goods (20%). A tenth said they had committed an assault. All other offence types were reported by five per cent or less (Table A3.1). Males sentenced to a community penalty were significantly more likely to say they had committed most offences, with the exception of shoplifting, stealth theft and drug dealing. Figure 6.1 shows the results for the four main offence categories. There are insufficient females admitting to the individual offences covered to allow examination of the frequency of offending.

²³ Based on receptions into Prison Service Establishments (Prison Statistics England and Wales 2002).

²⁴ Less robust information is available for DTTOs. However, based on the information available 18 per cent of those commencing DTTOs were female (Probation Statistics England and Wales, 2002).

²⁵ All females had a reference period of 12 months.

Figure 6.1: Percentage admitting to committing offence in reference period, by sex (CPCS)



Female offenders were somewhat more specialised in their offending than males. Among females who admitted at least one of the 14 offences, just three per cent had committed six or more offence types (the equivalent figure for males being 8%). Similarly 79 per cent of females who had committed an offence had only committed offences within one of the four main categories, compared with 66 per cent of males. Over half of female offenders said they had only committed a theft or handling offence, a fifth had only committed violence (Table A3.3).

Drug use

A half of CPCS females admitted to using an illicit drug in the 12 months before interview. This is significantly lower than among males in the sample (63% said they had used drugs), though drug use among female offenders is still considerably higher than in the general female population. For example, the 2002/03 British Crime Survey estimates that 19 per cent of females aged from 16 to 29 in the general household population had used an illicit drug in the last year. Among 16- to 19-year-old females in the CPCS the figure is 61 per cent.

The lower level of reported drug use among females compared with males is mainly attributable to their lower levels of cannabis, ecstasy and cocaine use. Women did not differ significantly to males in their reported use of heroin and crack. Overall, a third of females said they had used a Class A substance and 28 per cent the most harmful substances (heroin, crack or cocaine). The figures for males were not significantly different at 40 per cent and 33 per cent. That there are not significant differences for these substances, which attract more social stigma than say cannabis, could indicate that females are as forthcoming as males in self-report offending surveys.

The above patterns are reflected in the profile of female and male drug users (Figure 6.2). While 31 per cent of male drug users in the CPCS had only used cannabis, just 21 per cent of female drug users fell into this category. A similar proportion of drug users had used heroin, crack or cocaine (52% of males; 56% of females).

Injecting a drug was also at similar levels for females and males (Table 6.1). Although, overall, males were more likely to say they had had problems staying off drugs in the last 12 months than females, when restricted to users the figures are similar (43% versus 39%).

Interestingly, female drug users were somewhat more likely to say they were currently receiving treatment than males (28% versus 20%). Females were also more likely to say they wanted treatment even if they were not currently receiving it (24% vs 17%). This suggests at least some of the higher treatment rate among females is due to their motivation to change and seek treatment.

Figure 6.2: Drug use profile among drug users, by sex (CPCS)

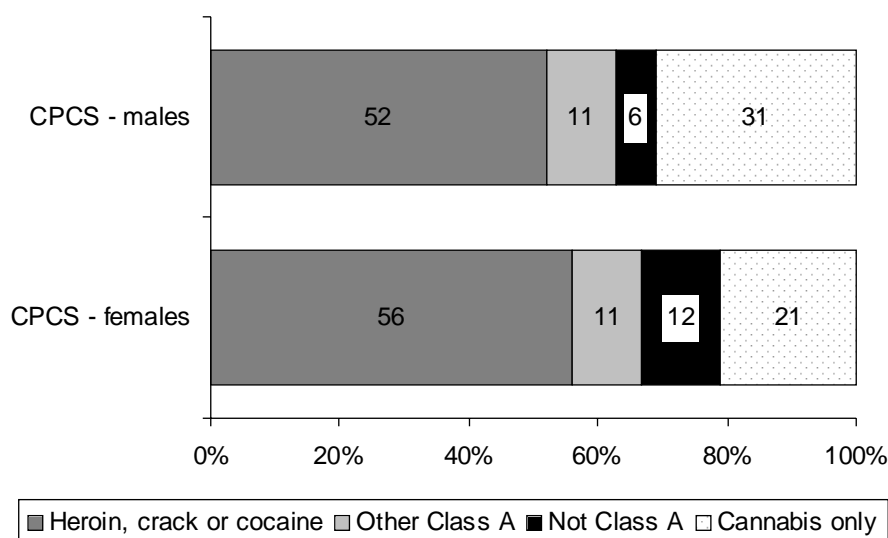


Table 6.1: Drug use measures, by sex (CPCS)

Percentages	Males	Females
Used any drug	63%	50%
Used Class A drug	40%	33%
Used heroin, crack or cocaine	33%	28%
Injected any drug	17%	14%
Problems staying off drugs	27%	19%
Base n	1,312	249

Notes:

1. Source: 2002 Community Penalties Criminality Survey.

Factors associated with offending and drug use

Due to the small sample size it is not possible to examine the factors associated with offending and drug use in the same level of detail as for males. For some characteristics categories have to be combined so that figures are based on reasonable sample sizes; even so at times they are still too small for statistically significant differences to be detected.

Table 6.2 lists the socio-demographic and lifestyle characteristics associated with drug use and offending (as measured by the percentage using heroin, crack or cocaine and the percentage admitting committing at least one of the 14 offences covered). The factors are largely the same as for males. Problematic drug use is particularly associated with offending (as is also the case for males) – with 71 per cent of those who had used heroin, crack or cocaine admitting to at least one offence. Overall, 38 per cent of drug-using females said they had committed offences that were related to their drug use (the same proportion as for male drug users).

Table 6.2: Factors associated with offending and drug use among females

	% offending	Base n	% using heroin, crack or cocaine	Base n
Aged				
15-25	42	104	31	106
26-29	57	36	45	36
Ethnicity				
White	38	245	31	245
Family status				
Single	47	149	33	151
Cohabiting	45	52	35	52
Been in Local Authority Care	42	46	36	242
Education				
Finished education before age 17	40	219	na	na
No qualifications	44	112	36	113
Employment				
Unemployed or sick/disabled & unable to work	44	152	40	156
Accommodation				
Unstable accommodation ²	46	82	40	84
Consumed alcohol				
Felt drunk two or more times	45	118	31	118
Drugs				
Used heroin, crack or cocaine	71	73	na	na
Had problems staying off drugs	81	54	na	na
All females	36	286	28	288

Notes:

1. Source: Community Penalties Criminality Survey (2002).
2. Living in other than in home-owned or rented by respondent.

Implications of findings

There is less information available on the offending and drug use patterns of female offenders than male offenders. In part this is because random samples of known offender populations pick up relatively few females. The CPCS goes some way to filling this gap by over-sampling females. However, the number of females included in the sample is still relatively small which places limits on the analysis and how confident one can be in the results.

The CPCS indicates that females were less likely to have participated in the offences covered than males, with shoplifting and handling stolen goods being particularly dominant in the picture of female offending. Similarly, females were less likely to have taken illegal drugs, though they had levels of hard drug use on a par with their male counterparts.

The factors associated with high risk of offending and drug use were on the whole the same for females and males. While the survey shows considerable similarities between male and female offenders there are some key differences. Females generally had less varied offending and drug use behaviour. They also had different socio-economic profiles to males, being more likely to be caring for dependent children and less likely to be in employment. Moreover, there are likely to be other dynamics not measured by the survey that are particularly important in female offending. For example, relationships with male offenders might be a barrier to females desisting. There is some indication of this with cohabiting females being high risk (not a factor for males) but the survey does not collect sufficient information to test this hypothesis.

Harper *et al.*, (2004) review the evidence available on the offending patterns and criminogenic needs of female offenders.

Appendix A: Additional tables

The following conventions apply :

'Base n' refers to the number of respondents (unweighted) upon which the figures are based. All analysis excludes Don't know/refusals unless otherwise specified.

<1 indicates a figure less than 0.5%

'-' indicates there were no cases in the category

'**' indicates that the base n is less than 30 and so results are not presented. Results based on fewer than 100 cases should be treated with caution.

Table A3.1: Prevalence of offending among all respondents

Percentage committing each offence type	PCS – males	CPCS –males	CPCS –females	All CPCS respondents
Theft and handling	59	36	27	35
Burglary	30	9	3	8
- domestic	20	4	3	4
- commercial	20	6	1	6
Theft of a vehicle	22	7	<1	6
Theft from a vehicle	19	6	1	6
Theft of a bike	12	5	1	4
Shoplifting	28	19	22	20
Handling stolen goods	50	29	20	27
Stealth theft	4	2	1	2
Criminal damage	11	6	1	5
Criminal damage	11	6	1	5
Violent offences	34	20	10	18
Assault	28	18	10	17
Robbery	13	3	1	3
- personal	8	2	1	2
- commercial	7	1	-	1
Drug dealing	26	9	7	9
Cannabis	15	6	3	5
Other drugs	19	7	5	7

Notes:

1. Source: Prisoner Criminality Survey (2000) and Community Penalties Criminality Survey (2002).

Table A3.2: Number of offences committed

	PCS – males		CPCS – males	
	Based on all PCS males	Based on those who admitted an offence	Based on all CPCS males	Based on those who admitted an offence
	%	%	%	%
None	27	NA	50	NA
One	16	23	20	39
Two	12	16	12	25
Three	9	13	6	11
Four	8	12	4	7
Five	7	10	1	3
Six	5	7	1	3
Seven	4	5	1	3
Eight	2	3	1	1
Nine	2	3	1	1
Ten	1	1	<1	1
Eleven	1	1	-	-
Twelve	<1	<1	-	-
Thirteen	<1	<1	-	-
At least one	4	6	2	3
Unknown	1	NA	2	3
Base n	1,884	1,472	1,290	581

Notes: 1. Source: Prisoner Criminality Survey (2000) and Community Penalties Criminality Survey (2002).

Table A3.3: Offending profile among active offenders

Percentages	PCS – males	CPCS – males	CPCS – females	CPCS – all
Number of offence categories	%	%	%	%
One	48	66	79	68
Two	29	23	15	22
Three	17	7	3	7
Four	6	3	-	2
Offence profile	%	%	%	%
Theft and handling only	32	44	54	45
Theft/handling and violence	13	12	6	11
Theft/handling, violence and drug dealing	11	3	3	3
Theft/handling and drug dealing	11	8	9	8
Violence only	11	18	18	18
Theft/handling, violence, drug dealing and criminal damage	6	3	-	2
Drug dealing only	5	2	6	3
Theft/handling, violence and criminal damage	4	2	-	2
Theft/handling and criminal damage	3	1	<1	1
Drug dealing and violence	2	1	1	1
Theft/handling, drug dealing and criminal damage	1	2	-	2
Criminal damage only	1	3	2	3
Violence and criminal damage	1	1	-	1
Drug dealing and criminal damage	-	<1	-	<0.5
Drug dealing, violence and criminal damage	<1	-	-	-
<i>Base n</i>	1,436	548	95	643

Notes:

1. Source: Prisoner Criminality Survey (2000) and Community Penalties Criminality Survey (2002).
2. Based on those who had committed at least one of the 14 offences.

Table A3.4: Frequency of offending by offence type among those who admitted each offence

<i>Percentages</i>	Less than once a month	At least once a month	At least once a week	Every day or almost every day	Total	Base n
PCCS – males						
Theft and handling						
Domestic burglary	45	12	27	16	100	534
Commercial burglary	39	19	32	9	100	475
Theft of a vehicle	33	15	33	19	100	536
Theft from a vehicle	22	18	38	22	100	460
Theft of a bicycle	45	29	20	6	100	287
Shoplifting	17	12	31	41	100	570
Handling stolen goods	16	14	31	39	100	430
Stealth theft	40	32	22	6	100	89
Criminal damage						
Criminal damage	50	20	19	11	100	241
Violent offences						
Assault	69	18	12	2	100	536
Personal robbery	49	23	23	5	100	168
Commercial robbery	52	26	14	9	100	173
Drug dealing						
Cannabis	11	7	18	63	100	291
Other drugs	10	7	24	60	100	379
CPCS – males						
Theft and handling						
Domestic burglary	66	5	26	3	100	43
Commercial burglary	60	24	12	3	100	66
Theft of a vehicle	59	26	11	4	100	65
Theft from a vehicle	44	19	24	13	100	63
Theft of a bicycle	69	19	11	2	100	50
Shoplifting	24	12	29	35	100	187
Handling stolen goods	40	16	22	22	100	311
Stealth theft	*	*	*	*	100	23
Criminal damage						
Criminal damage	82	12	6	-	100	65
Violent offences						
Assault	88	10	3	-	100	222
Personal robbery	*	*	*	*	100	19
Commercial robbery	*	*	*	*	100	12
Drug dealing						
Cannabis	15	12	32	41	100	55
Other drugs	29	6	26	39	100	55

Notes:

1. Source: Prisoner Criminality Survey (2000) and Community Penalties Criminality Survey (2002).

Table A3.5: Frequency of offending by offence type among all male respondents

	Never	Less than once a month	At least once a month	At least once a week	Every day or almost every day	Total	Base n
PCS – males							
Theft and handling							
Domestic burglary	80	9	2	5	3	100	1,874
Commercial burglary	80	8	4	6	2	100	1,874
Theft of a vehicle	78	7	3	7	4	100	1,876
Theft from a vehicle	81	4	4	7	4	100	1,864
Theft of a bicycle	88	6	4	2	1	100	1,868
Shoplifting	72	5	3	9	11	100	1,868
Handling stolen goods	50	8	7	15	20	100	1,851
Stealth theft	96	2	1	1	<1	100	1,875
Criminal damage							
Criminal damage	89	6	2	2	1	100	1,874
Violent offences							
Assault	72	20	5	3	<1	100	1,870
Personal robbery	92	4	2	2	<1	100	1,873
Commercial robbery	93	4	2	1	1	100	1,877
Drug dealing							
Cannabis	85	2	1	3	9	100	1,871
Other drugs	81	2	1	5	12	100	1,865
CPCS – males							
Theft and handling							
Domestic burglary	96	3	<1	1	<1	100	1,279
Commercial burglary	93	4	2	1	<1	100	1,280
Theft of a vehicle	93	4	2	1	<1	100	1,279
Theft from a vehicle	94	3	1	2	1	100	1,278
Theft of a bicycle	95	3	1	1	<1	100	1,281
Shoplifting	81	5	2	6	7	100	1,272
Handling stolen goods	71	11	5	6	6	100	1,270
Stealth theft	98	1	<1	<1	-	100	1,281
Criminal damage							
Criminal damage	94	5	1	<1	-	100	1,281
Violent offences							
Assault	82	16	2	1	-	100	1,275
Personal robbery	98	1	<1	<1	<1	100	1,279
Commercial robbery	99	1	<1	<1	-	100	1,281
Drug dealing							
Cannabis	94	1	1	2	2	100	1,277
Other drugs	93	2	<1	2	3	100	1,279

Notes:

1. Source: Prisoner Criminality Survey (2000) and Community Penalties Criminality Survey (2002).

Table A3.6: The extent of co-offending among active male offenders

	Theft of a vehicle	Theft from vehicle	Domestic burglary	Commercial burglary	Assault
How often commit offence with others			CPCS – males		
	%	%	%	%	%
Always with others	49	36	34	35	15
Usually with others	11	7	9	7	5
Occasionally with others	9	8	21	24	16
Always alone	31	49	36	34	64
Usual number of co-offenders					
	%	%	%	%	%
None	31	49	36	34	64
One	29	30	40	40	9
Two	14	12	22	21	9
Three	12	2	2	3	6
Four	9	6	-	-	2
Five or more	6	1	-	2	10
<i>Base n</i>	62	62	44	66	215

Notes:

1. Source: Community Penalties Criminality Survey (2002).

Table A4.1: Prevalence of drug use in the last 12 months among all respondents

Percentages	PCS – males	CPCS – males	CPCS – females	CPCS – all
Drug type				
Amphetamines	26	17	14	17
Cannabis	64	57	38	54
Cocaine	32	19	11	18
Crack	31	19	16	19
Ecstasy	30	22	14	21
Heroin	31	22	22	22
LSD	10	4	1	3
Magic mushrooms	8	5	2	5
Methadone	15	10	9	10
Tranquillisers	23	10	11	10
Amyl nitrite	6	8	3	7
Steroids	2	2	-	2
Glues/solvents	2	1	1	1
Any drug	73	63	50	61
Any Class A drug	55	40	33	39
Heroin, crack or cocaine	47	33	28	32
<i>Base n</i>	1,884	1,312	249	1,561

Notes:

1. Source: Prisoner Criminality Survey (2000) and Community Penalties Criminality Survey (2002). Base n shown is for 'any drug'. It will vary slightly for the different drug types due to different levels of don't know and refusal.

Table A4.2: Prevalence of drug use among males in BCS, PCS and CPCS, by age

	Cannabis	Class A	Heroin, cocaine or crack	Any drug
Males 16-18				
BCS 2002/03	27	5	2	28
PCS 2000	87	61	48	89
CPCS 2002	60	34	24	66
Males 19-24				
BCS 2002/03	36	15	10	39
PCS 2000	78	67	55	85
CPCS 2002	69	48	36	73
Males 25-29				
BCS 2002/03	26	10	7	28
PCS 2000	66	64	57	76
CPCS 2002	61	46	41	68
Males 30-35				
BCS 2002/03	15	6	4	17
PCS 2000	55	51	48	68
CPCS 2002	52	42	37	61
Males 36-59				
BCS 2002/03	6	1	1	6
PCS 2000	36	27	21	44
CPCS 2002	40	24	23	47

Notes: 1. Source: Prisoner Criminality Survey (2000) ; Community Penalties Criminality Survey (2002); British Crime Survey 2002/2003.

Table A4.3: Number of drugs used in the last 12 months

Percentages	PCS – males	CPCS – males	CPCS – females	CPCS – all
Number of drug types used (based on all respondents)				
	%	%	%	%
None	27	37	50	39
One	15	22	17	21
Two or three	20	19	17	18
Four or five	19	12	11	12
Six or more	18	10	5	9
Total	100	100	100	100
<i>Base n</i>	1,879	1,276	288	1,564
Number of drug types used (based on all drug users)				
	%	%	%	%
One	21	35	33	34
Two or three	28	30	35	30
Four or five	27	20	22	20
Six or more	24	16	10	15
Total	100	100	100	100
<i>Base n</i>	1467	730	133	863

Notes:

1. Source: Prisoner Criminality Survey (2000) and Community Penalties Criminality Survey (2002).

Table A4.4: Drug use profile

Percentages	PCS – males	CPCS – males	CPCS – females	CPCS – all
Drug use profile (based on all respondents)	%	%	%	%
No drugs used	27	37	50	39
Only cannabis used	13	19	10	18
Only non-Class A substances (not only cannabis)	4	4	6	4
Class A substances (not heroin, crack or cocaine)	8	7	6	7
Heroin, crack or cocaine used	48	33	28	32
Total	100	100	100	100
<i>Base n</i>	1,884	1,319	249	1,568
Drug use profile (based on drug users)	%	%	%	%
Only cannabis used	18	31	21	29
Only non-Class A substances (not only cannabis)	6	6	12	7
Class A substances (not heroin, crack or cocaine)	11	11	11	11
Heroin, crack or cocaine used	65	52	56	53
Total	100	100	100	100
<i>Base n</i>	1,472	735	133	868

Notes:

1. Source: Prisoner Criminality Survey (2000) and Community Penalties Criminality Survey (2002).

Table A4.5: Percentage using drug at least once a week in the last 12 months, based on users of the drug

Percentages	PCS – males		CPCS – males		CPCS – females		CPCS – all	
	%s	<i>Base n</i>	%s	<i>Base n</i>	%s	<i>Base n</i>	%s	<i>Base n</i>
Amphetamines	53	535	20	172	47	38	24	210
Cannabis	86	1302	69	649	65	106	68	755
Cocaine	56	646	27	211	*	28	27	239
Crack	69	653	47	198	58	44	49	242
Ecstasy	51	629	32	238	12	36	30	274
Heroin	92	666	88	204	80	55	87	259
LSD	12	212	8	35	*	2	8	37
Magic mushrooms	8	160	-	46	*	5	-	51
Methadone	59	309	72	88	*	23	70	111
Tranquillisers	68	473	48	95	*	29	48	124
Amyl nitrite	25	116	13	83	*	7	12	90
Steroids	46	32	*	19	*	0	*	19
Glues/solvents	33	38	*	12	*	1	*	13

Notes: 1. Source: Prisoner Criminality Survey (2000) and Community Penalties Criminality Survey (2002).

Table A4.6: Percentage of respondents who injected drugs

	PCS – males	CPCS – males	CPCS – females	CPCS – all
Percentage who injected the following:				
Amphetamines	9	6	3	6
Cocaine	6	4	3	4
Crack	7	5	3	5
Heroin	19	16	14	15
Methadone	2	1	0	1
Any of above	23	17	14	17
<i>Base n</i>	1,884	1,290	288	1,578

Notes:

1. Source: Prisoner Criminality Survey (2000) and Community Penalties Criminality Survey (2002). Based on all respondents.

Table A4.7: Prevalence of drug use in last 12 months and problematic use, by socio-demographic characteristics (Prisoner Criminality Survey, males)

Percentages	Drug user	Any Class A	Heroin, Crack or Cocaine	Injecting behaviour	Problem staying off drugs	Base n
Age group						
15-20	89	65	50	15	39	455
21-25	82	64	56	28	45	530
26-29	76	66	59	34	48	328
30-35	68	51	47	27	57	315
36 or older	44	26	21	11	43	256
Ethnicity						
White	74	58	50	26	41	1,639
Black	64	37	32	4	30	148
Asian	50	32	28	1	20	62
Marital status						
Married	41	74	20	9	16	158
Cohabiting	75	45	47	24	41	633
Separated/divorced/widowed	48	67	31	16	26	139
Single	83	34	57	27	45	954
Accommodation before custody						
Owned	35	24	21	6	13	141
Rented (self-contained)	74	56	47	24	41	864
Bedsit/room with shared facilities	81	67	58	38	54	119
Hostel, bed and breakfast or on streets	91	76	72	58	71	113
Living with adult relatives	77	57	47	14	32	539
Care background						
Been in care as a child	87	70	61	34	52	580
Not been in care	68	50	43	19	34	1,292

Notes:

1. Source: Prisoner Criminality Survey (2000). Based on all respondents.
2. Injecting behaviour - injecting amphetamines, cocaine, crack, heroin or methadone.

Table A4.8: Prevalence of drug use in last 12 months and problematic use, by education and employment status (Prisoner Criminality Survey, males)

Percentages	Drug user	Any Class A	Heroin, Crack or Cocaine	Injecting behaviour	Problem staying off drugs	Base n
Age finished school or college						
14 or under	86	70	61	31	53	398
15 or 16	74	55	47	24	39	1,244
17 to 19	58	41	32	9	25	167
Older	30	25	20	14	21	57
Qualifications obtained						
None	80	62	52	27	44	903
Any qualification	66	50	43	20	34	981
Employment status prior to custody						
Employed or self-employed	54	35	27	6	18	539
Unemployed	86	71	62	32	52	1,070
Sick/disabled & unable to work	73	58	51	38	45	187
Other, including in education	68	31	23	12	19	86
Length of time unemployed						
Less than a year	85	68	59	31	49	389
1 year but less than 2 years	80	62	52	29	43	162
2 years but less than 5 years	89	76	65	27	53	222
5 years or more	87	74	68	40	63	270

Notes:

1. Source: Prisoner Criminality Survey (2000). Based on all respondents.
2. Injecting behaviour - injecting amphetamines, cocaine, crack, heroin or methadone.

Table A4.9: Prevalence of drug use in last 12 months and problematic use, by socio-demographic characteristics (Community Penalties Criminality Survey, males)

Percentages	Drug user	Any Class A	Heroin, Crack or Cocaine	Injecting behaviour	Problem staying off drugs	Base n
Age group						
15-20	69	40	27	9	23	232
21-25	73	51	41	21	34	293
26-29	68	45	40	24	33	184
30-35	61	42	37	23	28	239
36 or older	46	23	22	13	19	313
Ethnicity						
White	65	43	35	19	29	1,140
Black	53	25	22	5	16	75
Asian	40	17	16	-	11	68
Marital status						
Married	31	9	5	2	9	132
Cohabiting	63	36	30	15	21	311
Separated/divorced/widowed	47	25	23	11	19	149
Single	72	49	41	23	35	727
Accommodation before custody						
Owned	41	21	16	4	5	133
Rented (self-contained)	61	36	30	16	25	500
Bedsit/room with shared facilities	69	47	42	29	36	36
Hostel, bed and breakfast or on streets	87	72	69	50	53	53
Rented by others	67	44	35	18	31	572
Care background						
Been in care as a child	73	47	40	27	43	213
Not been in care	61	38	31	16	24	1,105

Notes:

1. Source: Community Penalties Criminality Survey (2002). Based on all male respondents.
2. Injecting behaviour - injecting amphetamines, cocaine, crack, heroin or methadone.

Table A4.10: Prevalence of drug use in last 12 months and problematic use, by education and employment status (Community Penalties Criminality Survey, males)

Percentages	Drug user	Any Class A	Heroin, Crack or Cocaine	Injecting behaviour	Problem staying off drugs	Base n
Age finished school or college						
14 or under	80	56	41	22	43	89
15 or 16	64	41	34	19	28	930
17 to 19	55	32	26	12	18	183
Older	41	17	15	6	6	62
Qualifications obtained						
None	66	40	33	18	31	422
Any qualification	61	39	33	17	25	825
Employment status prior to custody						
Employed or self-employed	54	27	19	4	11	555
Unemployed	72	53	45	30	41	449
Sick/disabled & unable to work	67	46	41	26	39	198
Other, including in education	51	22	18	2	16	79
Length of time unemployed						
Less than a year	65	46	39	20	32	200
1 year but less than 2 years	80	62	49	36	44	102
2 years but less than 5 years	74	56	53	35	46	123
5 years or more	74	54	46	40	49	89

Notes:

1. Source: Community Penalties Criminality Survey (2002). Based on all male respondents.
2. Injecting behaviour - injecting amphetamines, cocaine, crack, heroin or methadone.

Table A4.11: Prevalence of drug use in last 12 months and problematic use, by sentence (males)

Percentages	Drug user	Any Class A	Heroin, Crack or Cocaine	Injecting behaviour	Problem staying off drugs	Base n
Sentence length – male prisoners						
6 months or less	78	59	50	26	43	624
More than 6 months; up to 2 years	69	52	43	22	34	792
Over 2 years	74	58	52	21	42	436
Sentence type – males serving community penalties						
CPO	54	25	17	3	11	453
CRO	63	44	36	20	30	614
CPRO	59	29	22	9	15	165
DTTO	100	99	99	80	98	49

Notes:

1. Source: Prisoner Criminality Survey (2000); Community Penalties Criminality Survey (2002). Based on all male respondents.
2. Injecting behaviour - injecting amphetamines, cocaine, crack, heroin or methadone.

Table A5.1: Prevalence and rate of offending by age and ethnicity (males)

	% committing					Base n
	Theft and handling	Violent offence	Criminal damage	Drug dealing	Any offence	
Prisoner Criminality Survey (males)						
Age at interview						
15-20	77	62	24	37	91	429
21-25	68	38	13	27	81	490
26-29	66	28	7	30	74	307
30-35	50	27	6	26	69	299
Over 35	26	15	4	10	40	247
Ethnic group						
White	62	35	12	26	75	1,533
Black	42	28	5	26	61	144
Asian	28	21	2	26	44	60
All males	59	34	11	26	72	1,772
Community Penalties Criminality Survey (males)						
Age at interview						
15-20	43	31	14	13	58	225
21-25	46	25	9	17	64	287
26-29	41	12	3	6	49	177
30-35	31	15	2	6	42	223
Over 35	23	13	1	3	33	333
Ethnic group						
White	39	20	7	11	52	1,031
Black	21	7	1	1	25	87
Asian	22	22	3	-	34	80
All males	36	20	6	9	49	1,245

Notes:

1. Source: Prisoner Criminality Survey (2000) and Community Penalties Criminality Survey (2002).

Table A5.2: Prevalence and rate of offending by educational profile (males)

	Theft & handling	% committing			Any offence	Base n
		Criminal damage	Drug dealing			
Prisoner Criminality Survey (males)						
Age completed education						
14 and under	79	43	17	35	86	360
15 to 16	59	34	11	25	74	1,177
17 and older	33	19	5	18	50	218
Qualifications obtained						
None	67	34	12	27	78	894
GCSE/O Level/CSE	47	33	10	25	63	255
Any vocational qualification	58	37	11	28	75	571
A Level/Highers/or above	20	11	7	6	32	73
All males	59	34	11	26	72	1,772
Community Penalties Criminality Survey (males)						
Age completed education						
14 and under	51	34	4	11	68	85
15 to 16	37	18	7	10	50	899
17 and older	26	20	4	5	39	245
Qualifications obtained						
None	39	18	5	8	49	402
GCSE/O Level/CSE	35	22	8	10	52	266
Any vocational qualification	36	20	5	11	49	475
A Level/Highers/or above	17	18	7	7	28	68
All males	36	20	6	9	49	1,245

Notes: 1. Source: Prisoner Criminality Survey (2000) and Community Penalties Criminality Survey (2002).

Table A5.3: Prevalence and rate of offending by employment status (males)

	Theft & handling	Violent offence	% committing		Any offence	Base n
			Criminal damage	Drug dealing		
Prisoner Criminality Survey (males)						
Employment status						
Employed or self-employed	35	33	9	17	55	535
Unemployed	75	34	13	33	84	1,059
Sick/disabled unable to work	60	37	9	28	77	185
All males	59	34	11	26	72	1,772
Community Penalties Criminality Survey (males)						
Employment status						
Employed or self-employed	19	18	5	4	34	545
Unemployed	53	20	8	15	63	431
Sick/disabled unable to work	37	22	4	8	51	190
All males	36	20	6	9	49	1,245

Notes:

1. Source: Prisoner Criminality Survey (2000) and Community Penalties Criminality Survey (2002).

Table A5.4: Prevalence and rate of offending by family circumstances and responsibilities (males)

	Theft & handling	% committing Criminal damage	Drug dealing	Any offence	Base n
Prisoner Criminality Survey (males)					
Marital status					
Married	25	21	2	14	43
Cohabiting	61	34	9	29	74
Separated/divorced/widowed	36	23	7	13	52
Single	69	38	16	29	81
Financial dependants					
Any dependants	50	30	8	25	66
Adult dependants	48	31	8	25	64
Child dependants	50	30	8	25	67
No financial dependants	67	37	15	27	78
Been in care as a child					
Yes	77	43	17	32	88
No	52	30	9	24	67
All males	59	34	11	26	72
Community Penalties Criminality Survey (males)					
Marital status					
Married	13	17	-	1	25
Cohabiting	34	19	3	7	43
Separated/divorced/widowed	24	14	3	5	36
Single	44	22	9	13	59
Financial dependants					
Any dependants	29	18	4	7	41
Adult dependants	27	18	3	8	39
Child dependants	28	19	4	7	41
No financial dependants	42	21	8	11	55
Been in care as a child					
Yes	45	18	3	13	56
No	35	20	7	8	48
All males	36	20	6	9	49

Notes: 1. Source: Prisoner Criminality Survey (2000) and Community Penalties Criminality Survey (2002).

Table A5.5: Prevalence and rate of offending by type of accommodation (males)

	Theft & handling	Violent offence	% committing Criminal damage	Drug dealing	Any offence	Base n
Prisoner Criminality Survey (males)						
Owned	23	15	3	16	40	135
Rented (self-contained)	58	33	9	26	71	817
Bedsit/room – shared facilities	78	37	13	38	83	111
Hostel, bed & breakfast or on streets	79	34	21	28	90	106
Other	63	39	15	26	78	598
All males	59	34	11	26	72	1,772
Community Penalties Criminality Survey (males)						
Owned	19	15	2	2	34	139
Rented (self-contained)	32	19	4	6	43	487
Bedsit/room – shared facilities	40	3	6	3	47	33
Hostel, bed & breakfast or on streets	69	13	6	22	70	48
Other	41	23	8	13	56	537
All males	36	20	6	9	49	1,245

Notes:

1. Source: Prisoner Criminality Survey (2000) and Community Penalties Criminality Survey (2002).

Table A5.6: Prevalence and rate of offending by alcohol use in 12 months before sentence (males)

	Theft & handling	Violent offence	% committing Criminal damage	Drug dealing	Any offence	Base n
Prisoner Criminality Survey (males)						
Alcohol consumption						
Every day or almost	68	47	20	29	81	357
At least once a week	50	33	10	21	65	659
At least once a month	55	31	4	25	67	178
Less often	61	35	14	27	78	160
Not at all in last 12 months	67	24	8	32	76	412
All males	59	34	11	26	72	1,772
Community Penalties Criminality Survey (males)						
Alcohol consumption						
Every day or almost	36	31	6	10	51	200
At least once a week	34	22	7	10	49	628
At least once a month	33	11	6	8	42	125
Less often	46	14	5	6	53	133
Not at all in last 12 months	44	7	1	9	51	157
Feeling drunk (drinkers)						
Never	30	15	2	3	41	268
Once	38	12	4	5	44	111
Two or three times	29	22	3	7	42	225
Four to ten times	40	21	8	12	52	144
More often	41	29	13	16	59	338
All males	36	20	6	9	49	1,245

Notes:

1. Source: Prisoner Criminality Survey (2000) and Community Penalties Criminality Survey (2002).

Table A5.7: Prevalence and rate of offending by drug use (males)

	Theft & handling	% committing			Any offence	Base n
		Violent offence	Criminal damage	Drug dealing		
Prisoner Criminality Survey(males)						
Drug use typology						
No drugs	19	21	4	3	37	402
Cannabis only	44	32	10	15	67	216
Non-Class A (excluding cannabis only)	60	36	11	22	78	78
Class A (not HCC)	69	43	17	33	81	154
Heroin, crack or cocaine (HCC)	83	39	15	42	92	922
Injected in last 12 months (users)	89	36	12	43	95	451
Problematic drug use (users)	89	39	15	44	94	760
All males	59	34	11	26	72	1,772
Community Penalties Criminality Survey(males)						
Drug use typology						
No drugs	11	16	3	<0.5	24	543
Cannabis only	25	19	4	2	37	245
Non-Class A (excluding cannabis only)	29	10	6	4	42	42
Class A (not HCC)	57	42	23	18	76	85
Heroin, crack or cocaine (HCC)	69	21	7	23	80	330
Injected in last 12 months (users)	82	13	2	23	88	149
Problematic drug use (users)	73	21	8	23	82	256
All males	36	20	6	9	49	1,245

Notes:

1. Source: Prisoner Criminality Survey (2000) and Community Penalties Criminality Survey (2002).

Table A5.8: Percentage saying drug taking and offending linked (males)

Percentages	PCS – males		CPCS – males		CPCS – females		CPCS – all	
	%s	n	%s	n	%s	n	%s	n
Drug use profile								
Used any drug	55	1469	38	825	38	124	38	949
Used cannabis only	10	229	4	252	0	26	3	277
Used non-Class A (not cannabis only)	26	80	13	52	*	15	10	67
Used Class A (not HCC)	27	166	25	90	*	14	24	104
Used heroin, crack or cocaine	74	994	63	432	64	69	63	501
Used heroin at least nearly daily	94	545	90	219	91	39	90	259

Notes:

1. Source: Prisoner Criminality Survey (2000) and Community Penalties Criminality Survey (2002).

Table A5.9: Prevalence and rate of offending by age of onset (males)

	Theft & handling	Violent offence	% committing Criminal damage	Drug dealing	Any offence	Base n
Prisoner Criminality Survey (males)						
Age of onset						
Below 13	78	44	14	37	84	315
13 to 15	78	40	18	30	86	581
16 to 17	63	39	11	27	80	284
18 to 19	55	41	12	30	76	146
20 or older	39	18	4	20	59	313
All males	59	34	11	26	72	1,772
Community Penalties Criminality Survey (males)						
Age of onset						
Below 13	54	29	8	18	67	142
13 to 15	45	21	9	13	58	272
16 to 17	45	21	6	11	57	221
18 to 19	27	26	6	2	49	159
20 or older	23	11	3	5	33	383
All males	36	20	6	9	49	1,245

Notes:

1. Source: Prisoner Criminality Survey (2000) and Community Penalties Criminality Survey (2002).

Appendix B: Survey design

The Prisoner Criminality Survey (PCS) was conducted by BMRB Social Research; the Community Penalties Criminality Survey (CPCS) by the Office for National Statistics. Both surveys were designed in collaboration with the Home Office Research, Development and Statistics Directorate (RDS).

Interview questionnaire

The interview consisted of two sections, a main questionnaire and a Life Events Calendar (LEC). Both sections were administered as face-to-face personal interviews, with the main questionnaire being conducted as a Computer Assisted Personal Interview (CAPI). Interviews lasted on average around 30 minutes.

The first part of the CAPI interview collected socio-demographic and lifestyle information. Then the first part of the LEC was completed to collect information on contact with the criminal justice system and to define a reference period for the remainder of the interview. Respondents were then asked more questions via CAPI about their offending during the reference period. Respondents who admitted committing the offences of key interest then completed the second section of the LEC (personal events) before being asked how often they committed the key offences during each month of the reference period. Respondents who had not committed any of the key offences did not complete the second section of the LEC.

The following topics were covered in both surveys.

- Domestic situation prior to sentence (CAPI).
- Education and employment prior to sentence (CAPI).
- Income from legal and illegal sources (CAPI).
- Alcohol and drugs consumption in 12 months before interview (CAPI).
- Whether previously convicted or cautioned (CAPI).
- Defining the reference period (LEC Part 1).
- Offending behaviour during the reference period – 14 offences (CAPI).
- Recalling personal events (LEC Part 2).
- Offending behaviour (month by month) – key offences only (CAPI).
- Age first started committing offences (CAPI).
- Reasons started committing offences (CAPI).

The questions were on the whole the same in the two surveys, though the CPCS included extended modules on alcohol use and co-offending and also covered the following topics:

- perceptions of the likelihood and consequences of being caught for various offences;
- experiences of supervision;
- choice of plea and reasons that impacted upon this.

Furthermore, while the PCS collected information only on three key offences (theft of a vehicle, theft from a vehicle and domestic burglary) through the Life Events Calendar methodology, the

CPCS collected information on five offences (non-domestic burglary and assault being the additional offences).

Life Events Calendar and counting offences

The LEC was developed as a cognitive prompt for the respondents, to encourage accurate recall of their behaviour during the survey reference period. The PCS calendar covered the 18-month period July 1998 to March 2000, the CPCS calendar the 24-month period April 2000 to March 2002. A number of 'important' events were marked on the calendars to help respondents accurately recall their experiences. The calendars were completed as a paper document as this proved to be the most efficient way to collect the information and also allowed respondents to see what they had written when recalling events. The process was split into two parts.

LEC Part 1 – Defining the reference period

The first part, completed by all respondents, was used to record information about current and previous sentences. In particular any periods of imprisonment were recorded so that a reference period could be established.²⁶ The reference period was defined as complete months at liberty during the 18 months (PCS)/24 months (CPCS) covered by the LEC. The maximum reference period was set at 12 months. Those offenders who were at liberty for more than this were given a 12-month reference period working backwards from March 2000 (PCS)/March 2002 (CPCS). Some respondents were at liberty for less than 12 months and so had a shorter reference period (20% of PCS respondents; 1% of CPCS respondents). Once the first section of the calendar had been completed, interviewers entered onto the CAPI the complete months when the respondent was at liberty.

Offence screener questions

Respondents were then asked a series of questions about their offending behaviour during the reference period. Fourteen offences were covered (Box B.1). For each, respondents were asked whether or not they committed the offence in the reference period. If so they were asked how many times they had done so (choosing an answer from a banded frequency scale). Those who said they had committed the offence less than once a month were asked exactly how many times they had done so, while those who said they committed more than once a day were asked how many times per day.

Box B.1: Offence categories

Theft and handling Domestic burglary Commercial burglary Thefts of vehicle (including attempts) Thefts from vehicle (including attempts) Theft of a bicycle (including attempts) Shoplifting Stealth theft from person (i.e., pickpocketing) Handling stolen goods	Criminal damage Criminal damage or arson
	Violent offence Personal robbery Commercial robbery Assault
	Drugs offence Dealing in cannabis Dealing in other drugs

LEC Part 2 – Personal events

The second part of the LEC was only used for respondents who admitted committing any of the three (PCS)/five (CPCS) key offences at the screener questions. In these cases the LEC was used to record details about the personal situation of the respondent during the reference period.

²⁶ If a respondent had spent a week or longer in prison during a particular month, they were counted as being in prison for the whole month. While this is not strictly accurate, it was decided that this was the most efficient way of completing the calendar within the time available.

For example, where they were living, whether they were in employment or education, and any significant personal events. This information was collected to assist respondents in recalling their offending behaviour during each individual month in their reference period. Then for each of the key offences respondents were asked for each month whether or not they had committed the offence and if so how often.

This second approach was used because of concerns that respondents would find it difficult to accurately report on their offending behaviour over an extended period such as 12 months, particularly if they had variable offending patterns over time. It has been suggested that in such cases offenders may over-report offending because they focus on their high rate periods. The idea was to compare results from the two approaches to see if it made a significant difference to estimates. However, due to the complexity of the exercise PCS interviewers made errors in identifying the individual months to ask about and thus the LEC based analysis was not possible. Fewer errors were apparent on the CPCS. Preliminary analysis indicated that the approach did not have a significant impact on estimates, but one cannot assume the same would be the case for prisoners who have far higher rates of offending.

Questionnaire development and piloting

Prisoner Criminality Survey

Extensive piloting of the PCS questionnaire was undertaken to test whether respondents understood the questions, how they felt about the more sensitive questions on offending and to assess mode of administration. At the pilot stage respondents were given the option of using self-completion for the most sensitive questions (i.e. drug taking and offending). However, without exception, all respondents declined the offer, preferring to have the questions asked by the interviewer. The main reason respondents gave for this was that they believed the interview to be confidential and did not feel that their responses would be any more secure if they typed them in personally. It may also be that some respondents did not feel confident in completing the interview on their own due to low levels of literacy. Respondents said that they would be equally honest regardless of the mode of administration. It was therefore decided that self-completion should not be used in the main stage survey.

Community Penalties Criminality Survey

A small study was undertaken by ONS in 2001 to explore the feasibility of conducting a survey of offenders serving community sentences. The study examined issues relating to sampling offenders and fieldwork procedures. A further pilot study was then undertaken to assess whether the instruments used in the PCS were appropriate for offenders serving community sentences. Some minor changes were made to take into account the different lifestyles of offenders serving sentences in the community.

Sample and fieldwork details

For both surveys a two-stage random probability sample design was adopted, with over-sampling of specific groups of interest.

Prisoner Criminality Survey

A sample was selected from all male prisoners sentenced to custody in Prison Service establishments in February and March 2000, with the exception of sex offenders. The design comprised a main sample of prisoners who were selected randomly and an additional sample to boost the number of respondents serving sentences for domestic burglary, theft of a motor vehicle and theft from a motor vehicle.

Main sample

A random sample of 34 prisons was selected (from the largest 77 institutions) with probability proportional to size²⁷, followed by a random selection of 49 prisoners from each prison who were sentenced in February or March 2000. Smaller institutions were excluded from the sampling frame because they had too few prisoners to provide sufficient opportunities for interviews (these account for 5% of all prisoners). Young Offender Institutes were included in the sampling frame but because these tend to be smaller establishments younger offenders were less likely to be included in the final sample.²⁸

A substitute sample was also drawn because the fluid nature of the prison population meant the drawn sample could quickly become out of date. Substitutions were made where:

- the prison recommended not to interview (for the safety of the interviewer);
- the prisoner had been released;
- the prisoner had been transferred to another prison;
- the prisoner was on authorised absence for the entire fieldwork period;
- the prisoner had absconded.

Boost sample

The boost sample was selected from the 34 prisons that were selected for the main sample. Within these prisons all offenders who had committed a domestic burglary, theft of a vehicle or theft from a vehicle and who were not in the main sample were selected to be in the boost. No substitutions were possible because all eligible respondents were selected for the boost.

Fieldwork procedures

At the beginning of March 2000 the selected prisons were sent a letter from the Home Office asking for their co-operation. Thirty-two prisons agreed to take part. Replacement prisons were selected for the two who did not agree, but just before fieldwork commenced one establishment refused to take part leaving a total of 33 prisons in the sample. Lists of selected prisoners were sent to the participating prisons and prison staff were asked to arrange appointments for the interviewer to meet the prisoner. Prison staff provided potential respondents with a letter explaining the nature of the survey but did not ask if they wished to take part – this was done by the interviewer at the beginning of the appointment.

Fieldwork took place during April and May 2000. Interviewers were instructed to try and make contact with prisoners in release date order where possible to try and ensure that the contact rate was as high as possible. All initial refusals and non-contacts (after 5 attempts) were re-issued to interviewers to try and secure further interviews.

Response rate

Response rates are calculated as the percentage of full interviews achieved from the total in scope. Table B.1 below presents the results. The overall response rate was 90 per cent. There were few refusals (5%), while four per cent of respondents were classed as “other unsuccessful”

²⁷ Probability proportional to size (PPS) means prisons with more eligible offenders have a higher chance of selection. For example, a prison with 200 eligible offenders in it had twice the chance than a prison with 100 eligible offenders. A PPS design meant that a fixed number of prisoners could be selected in each prison and that because every eligible offender had the same chance of inclusion the sample is 'self-weighting'. However, because the selection of prisons had to be based on earlier information on prison receptions a slight adjustment was required at the weighting stage. The Prison Services' Inmate Information System was used to construct the sampling frame.

²⁸ Young offenders held in establishments outside the remit of the Prison Service (Secure Training Centres and Local Authority Secure Children's Home) were not included.

outcomes. These outcomes consisted of prisoners who were unavailable throughout the fieldwork period, for example at home or in the hospital wing. A total of 1,894 interviews were achieved. However ten interviews were removed from the analysis due to incomplete information.

Table B.1: Sample information and response rates (PCS)

	Numbers	%
Issued sample	3018	100
Ineligible (released/transferred)	906	30
Total in scope	2112	100
Full interviews	1894	90
Non-contacts	7	<1
Refusals	102	5
Other unsuccessful	87	4

Community Penalties Criminology Survey

A sample was drawn from offenders commencing one of the following community sentences in February and March 2002: Community Rehabilitation Order; Community Punishment Order, Community Punishment and Rehabilitation Order; Drug Treatment and Testing Order. These orders all apply to offenders aged 16 or over. The two-stage sample design incorporated over-sampling of female offenders, ethnic minorities, those serving DTTOs and those sentenced for theft of or from a motor vehicle, domestic and non-domestic burglary, and assault.

The first stage of sampling involved the selection of primary sampling units (probation offices or pairs of probation offices²⁹) with probability proportional to the number of commencements on the four orders in an earlier two-month period. The sampling frame was stratified by region, an ethnic minority indicator (based on the 1991 Census) and size. Offices in areas with a high ethnic minority population were given an increased chance of selection. One hundred and twenty primary sampling units (PSUs) were selected, equating to 150 probation offices. Substitution was allowed for any selected office that refused to take part. Participating offices then provided lists of offenders commencing a community sentence during February and March 2002.³⁰ From these standardised lists a sample of offenders was selected using a programme which gave specified groups (female offenders, those serving DTTOs and those sentenced for one of the five key offences) an increased chance of selection. At most offices 52 offenders were selected, but at those with fewer than 40 commencements 26 offenders were selected.

Fieldwork procedures

Selected offices were contacted to obtain their agreement for inclusion in the study and to obtain the name of a specific person to act as the main point of contact throughout the study. Briefing materials were then sent to offices to circulate to relevant members of staff. Interviewers first contacted the specified contact person in order to agree arrangements for the survey and check the eligibility of the selected sample.³¹ Interviewers generally contacted potential respondents when they came to the office for a routine appointment with their supervising officer and undertook interviews often immediately after the appointment. For offenders serving CPOs, who do not normally visit the probation office, interviewers arranged to visit respondents at the site of

²⁹ Offices with a low number of commencements were paired with another office in a geographically adjacent area. Small highly specialised units were excluded from the sampling frame.

³⁰ The following were specifically excluded: sex offenders, those resentenced for being in breach, pre- and post-release prisoners and those on stand alone curfew orders.

³¹ Interviewers were instructed to check eligibility as potential respondents may have become ineligible in the period between the selection of the sample and the interviewers' visit.

their placement. Fieldwork was mainly completed during June and July 2002, though in some offices interviewing continued through August because of difficulties in contacting and interviewing respondents.

Response rate

A total of 1,581 interviews were achieved (3 were not used in analysis because of incomplete data). This was lower than the anticipated 2,000 interviews. The shortfall was mainly due to the higher than expected number of ineligible respondents and higher level of non-contact. Overall 53 per cent of the selected sample was eligible, of which 53 per cent were interviewed. The time lag between the selection of the sample and commencement of fieldwork resulted in a higher number of ineligibles due to breach, imprisonment or completion of the order. The time lag also impacted on the level of non-contacts as offenders have less frequent appointments as their order progresses. Table B.2 sets out the response rate in detail.

Table B.2: Sample information and response rates (CPCS)

	Numbers	%
Issued sample	5,621	100
Ineligible	2,641	53
In breach	1,299	23
In prison	299	5
Order completed	636	11
Moved/transferred	295	5
Other ineligible	118	2
Total in scope	2,974	100
Interviews	1,581	53
Non-contacts	965	32
Refusals	223	7
Other unsuccessful	205	7

The far lower response rate achieved for the CPCS compared with the PCS is not surprising. Those in custody are a 'captive audience' and it was easy for interviewers to make contact. Moreover, many of those in prison were very willing to participate in the survey both because it was 'something to do' and because they felt they 'had nothing to lose' by participating. In contrast, those serving community sentences were usually accessed through their appointments at the probation office, which were often infrequent or not attended. Offenders in the community may also have more reasons not to participate both with more demands on their time and perhaps a fear that their responses would be reported to their supervising officer.

Weighting

Weights are applied to survey data to ensure that the results are representative of the population of interest and are not biased. There are two forms of weighting:

- sample weights to adjust for known differences in the probabilities of selection that are explicit in the survey design;
- non-response weights that compensate for differential non-response among sample members.

Sample weights

For both surveys sample weighting was applied to the data to adjust for known differences in the probabilities of selection. The weighting procedures corrected for (a) the over-sampling of specific groups and (b) the fact that the information used to construct the sampling frames was an approximation based on data from a period prior to the actual selection of individuals.

Non-response weights

Non-response weighting was applied to the CPCS only. The low eligibility and response rates were a cause for concern and as such ONS constructed a non-response model and applied appropriate weights. Further details available on request.

Representative sample

Appendix C details the profiles of the samples. The achieved samples were generally representative of the populations from which they were drawn in terms of offence type. The PCS had fewer short-term prisoners than received into custody during the period because short-term prisoners were often released before interviewers could make contact. Both samples slightly underrepresented the youngest offenders. For the PCS this will reflect the fact that younger prisoners are more likely to receive short sentences.

Appendix C: Sample profile

This Appendix outlines the characteristics of those interviewed in the two surveys in terms of their socio-demographic profile. It covers demographic details, family responsibilities, educational and employment profile, and experiences of being taken into care as a child. First, though, information on the offence type for which respondents were sentenced and the type of sentence received are briefly presented.

Sentencing information

Information was collected on the primary offence for which the respondent was sentenced and the type of sentence received. This information was collected from administrative records rather than through self-report. The results are given in Table C.1.

Primary offence

For the PCS sample the most common offences were burglary (18%); theft and handling stolen goods (18%) and violence against the person (15%). Only five per cent were sentenced for robbery; nine per cent for drug offences. For the CPCS sample, the most common offences were motoring (24%); theft and handling stolen goods (22%) and violence against the person (20%). Females were particularly likely to have been sentenced for a theft or handling offences, while for males it was most likely to be a motoring offence. The offence profile of the samples are generally in line with those of all those sentenced to custody or community sentences during the period of sample selection.

Type of sentence

Four in ten (41%) prisoners in the PCS had received a sentence of six months or less, with a further 13 per cent being sentenced to more than six months but less than one year. A third had received a sentence of between one and three years and a tenth a longer sentence. The survey underrepresents short-term prisoners (60% of all males sentenced to custody in March 2000 received a sentence of six months or less) because short-term prisoners were often discharged before interviewers could make contact. Although there was a substitution sample to replace such cases even in this group it might have been that the prisoner had been released by the time contact had been made.

In the CPCS the most common order was a Community Rehabilitation Order (45%), followed by a Community Punishment Order (36%). Only 12 per cent had been given a Community Punishment and Rehabilitation Order; seven per cent a Drug Treatment and Testing Order. These figures are in line with those for all commencements in the first quarter of 2002 (44% CRO; 41% CPO; 12% CPRO and 4% DTTO).

Table C.1: Sentence profile

<i>Percentages</i>	PCS – males	CPCS – males	CPCS – females	CPCS – all
Primary offence for which	%	%	%	%
Theft and handling stolen goods	18	20	32	22
Burglary	18	5	1	5
Robbery	5	<1	-	<1
Violence against the person	15	19	20	20
Criminal damage	2	2	1	2
Fraud and forgery	3	5	13	6
Drugs offences	9	5	5	5
Motoring offences	13	26	15	24
All other offences	11	16	14	15
Unknown	6	-	-	-

Notes: 1. Source: Prisoner Criminality Survey (2000) and Community Penalties Criminality Survey (2002).

Demographic profile

The age profile of offenders is much younger than the general adult population. Nineteen per cent of PCS respondents were under the age of 21; 20 per cent of those in the CPCS. The mean ages were 28 and 29 respectively (Table C.2). Both surveys slightly underrepresent younger offenders. Twenty-four per cent of all males sentenced to custody in February and March 2000 were under the age of 21, while 24 per cent of all males and females sentenced to the four orders in the first quarter of 2002 were under the age of 21 (from Probation and Prison Statistics).

The majority of respondents in both surveys described themselves as White (PCS – 86%; CPCS – 87%). The proportion of Black and minority ethnic groups in the sample is slightly higher than in the general population, after taking into account the age and sex profile of the sample. For example, based on the Crime and Justice Survey, 11 per cent of young males aged from 16 to 24 in the general population are from Black or minority ethnic groups. The respective figures in the PCS and CPCS samples are 13 per cent and 17 per cent.

Given the relatively small number of Black and minority ethnic respondents in the surveys the following groups have been used for the purposes of analysis.

- White
- Black (Black Caribbean, Black African, other Black)
- Asian (Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi).

Table C.2: Socio-demographic profile

<i>Percentages</i>	PCS – males	CPCS – males	CPCS – females	CPCS – all
Age	%	%	%	%
15 to 17	5	2	3	2
18 to 20	14	18	17	17
21 to 24	22	20	19	20
25 to 29	22	18	18	18
30 to 39	26	26	30	27
40 to 49	8	11	11	11
50 and older	3	4	3	4
Mean age	28	29	29	29
Median age	26	27	28	28
Modal age	21	20	21	20
Ethnic group	%			
White	86	86	88	87
Black Caribbean	5	4	4	4
Black African	2	2	3	2
Other Black	2	1	1	1
Indian	1	2	1	2
Pakistani	2	2	1	2
Bangladeshi	<1	1	<1	1
Chinese	<1	<1	1	<1
None of these/Other	2	2	2	2

Notes:

1. Source: Prisoner Criminally Survey (2000) and Community Penalties Criminally Survey (2002).
2. The list in the table is the list of groups presented to respondents in the PCS. In the CPCS the revised 2001 Census list was used, including 'mixed' groups. For the purposes of analysis the 'mixed' groups are placed in the 'other' group.

Educational profile

The majority of respondents completed their education at the end of, or even before the end of, compulsory schooling (Table C.3). Eighty-six per cent of PCS respondents and 81 per cent of CPCS respondents said they left school/college at age 16 or before. Just under a half (47%) of PCS respondents and around a third of CPCS respondents did not have any academic or vocational qualifications at the time of interview. Vocational or technical qualifications were more common than academic qualifications.

Compared with the general population, known offenders have far lower levels of educational attainment. The Labour Force Survey estimates that a half of the general population had left full-time education at or before the age of 16, only 16 per cent with no qualifications. This pattern holds when age and sex is controlled for.

Table C.3: Educational profile

<i>Percentages</i>	PCS – males	CPCS – males	CPCS – females	CPCS – all
Age when finished school/college²	%	%	%	%
10 or under	<1	<1	<1	<1
11 to 14	18	7	7	7
15 to 16	66	76	70	75
17 to 19	11	13	20	14
20 to 25	3	4	3	4
Older	<1	<1	<1	<1
Unknown	1	<1	1	<1
Qualifications obtained³				
No qualifications	47	34	39	35
Technical/business/vocational	35	38	35	38
GCSE	21	15	13	15
O Levels	9	3	5	4
CSE	8	3	3	3
A Level/Highers	3	3	2	3
Degree level or higher	2	2	2	2
Other	7	2	1	2

Notes:

1. Source: Prisoner Criminality Survey (2000) and Community Penalties Criminality Survey (2002).
2. Respondents were asked how old they were when they finished going to school or college.
3. Figures sum to more than 100 as more than one answer could be given.

Employment history and social class

Just over a half (51%) of PCS respondents said they were unemployed during the four weeks prior to custody (Table C.4). A third (33%) were employed or self-employed.³² Among those who were employed just over a half were in semi-skilled, unskilled or casual jobs; 29 per cent were skilled manual or supervisory workers. Levels of employment were slightly higher among the CPCS male sample (39%), though still far lower than that for the general male population (79% as at June/August 2002 according to the Labour Force Survey - see Labour Market Statistics October 2004 - First Release).

Those who were unemployed were asked how long they had been unemployed at the time of sentence. Around four in ten were unemployed for less than a year. However, a quarter of male prisoners had been unemployed for five or more years. Males sentenced to a community sentence were less likely to have experienced long-term unemployment (17%). For females the levels were far higher at 42 per cent though this is likely to reflect the fact that women are more likely to have time caring for children when they are not actively looking for work (the question did not use the formal definition of unemployment).

³² Respondents were asked what they were doing in the four weeks before coming into prison. The options were in full-time education, working full time, working part time, unemployed, sick or disabled and unable to work, and other. Unemployment is self-defined and not based on the official definition of unemployment (actively looking for work and able to start within two weeks).

Table C.4: Employment status in 4 weeks prior to sentence

<i>Percentages</i>	PCS – males	CPCS – males	CPCS – females	CPCS – all
Employment status	%	%	%	%
Unemployed	51	39	38	39
Employee – full-time	21	27	19	26
Self-employed – full-time	9	7	<1	6
Employee – part-time	3	4	14	6
Self-employed – part-time	1	1	<1	1
Full-time education	3	4	4	4
Sick/disabled – unable to	11	15	17	15
Other	2	2	8	3
Length of time unemployed (base: those unemployed in 4 weeks prior to custody)	%	%	%	%
Less than a year	40	40	19	37
1 year but less than 2 years	15	20	12	19
2 years but less than 3 years	9	9	9	9
3 years but less than 4 years	5	8	9	8
4 years but less than 5 years	6	7	9	7
5 or more years	26	17	42	20

Notes:

1. Source: Prisoner Criminality Survey (2000) and Community Penalties Criminality Survey (2002).

Living arrangements

Respondents were asked about their living arrangements in the four weeks prior to sentence. Again these may have been influenced by the likelihood of a conviction. Nonetheless the circumstances just prior to sentence for prisoners may well reflect the type of accommodation they will return to on their release and how well they are able to integrate back into the community. For those serving sentences in the community their living arrangements might impact on their ability to meet the requirements of their order and desist from future offending.

Around four in ten PCS respondents were living with their spouse or partner prior to sentence, a fifth were living with their parents, and a fifth living alone (Table C.5). CPCS males were somewhat more likely to live with parents and less likely to live with a spouse or partner. A high proportion of CPCS females lived with dependant children only (23%). Overall, six per cent of prisoners and four per cent sentenced to a community penalty were homeless or in temporary accommodation prior to sentence (based on definition of living in hostel or bed and breakfast accommodation, in a hospital or treatment centre or living on the street).

Family circumstances and responsibilities

Just over four in ten (45%) of the male prisoners were in a marital or cohabiting relationship at the time they were sentenced, compared with a third of CPCS respondents (Table C.6).

Overall, 51 per cent of prisoners supported at least one person financially (including partners, children, parents, and other relatives) before custody. Thirty-one per cent were financially supporting an adult, most often their partner; 41 per cent were responsible for financially supporting at least one child under the age of 16. Just over a third of male offenders in the community had financial responsibility for a child before sentence; a fifth were financially responsible for an adult. Females in the CPCS were far more likely to have financial responsibility for a child (49%), less so for an adult (14%).

Table C.5: Living arrangements in the 4 weeks prior to sentence

<i>Percentages</i>	PCS – males	CPCS – males	CPCS – females	CPCS – all
Accommodation in 4 weeks before sentence²				
	%	%	%	%
Accommodation respondent owned	10	10	10	10
Self-contained accommodation respondent rented	47	38	58	41
Bedsit/room with shared facilities	6	3	1	2
Hostel/bed and breakfast	4	2	2	2
Hospital/treatment/rehabilitation centre	<1	<1	<1	<1
Living on streets	2	2	1	2
Living with adult relatives	26	na	Na	Na
Accommodation owned/rented by someone else	Na	43	28	41
Other type	5	2	<1	2
Who living with in 4 weeks prior to custody				
	%	%	%	%
Alone	20	22	16	21
With spouse/partner	44	34	31	34
Parents or parents-in-law	22	30	21	28
Other adult relatives	4	5	2	4
Friends	9	8	7	8
Dependent children only	1	1	23	5
Adult children only	<1	<1	1	<1

Notes:

1. Source: Prisoner Criminality Survey (2000) and Community Penalties Criminality Survey (2002).
2. In the PCS, accommodation type was only asked of those living alone or with partner, friends or children. In the CPCS the question was asked of all respondents.

Table C.6: Family responsibilities prior to sentence

<i>Percentage</i>	PCS – males	CPCS – males	CPCS – females	CPCS – all
Marital status prior to custody				
	%	%	%	%
Married	10	10	10	10
Cohabiting	34	24	21	23
Single	47	55	53	55
Separated from spouse	4	5	7	6
Divorced	4	6	9	6
Widowed	<1	<1	1	<1
Financially supporting any dependent children prior to custody				
At least one child under the age of 5	25	22	21	22
At least one child aged between 5 & 10	22	18	27	19
At least one child aged between 11 & 15	11	11	20	12
At least one child	41	36	49	38
Financially supporting any adult prior to custody				
Supporting a partner	27	17	6	15
Supporting adult child(ren)	2	2	4	2
Supporting parent(s)	3	2	3	2
Supporting other relatives	2	1	1	1
Supporting any adult financially	31	20	14	19

Notes:

1. Source: Prisoner Criminality Survey (2000) and Community Penalties Criminality Survey (2002).

Experiences of care

Respondents were asked if they had ever been taken into Local Authority Care as a child up to the age of 16. Over a quarter (27%) of male prisoners said they had been in care as a child; 16 per cent of males and 15 per cent of females serving community sentences. These figures are far higher than in the general population. The 2003 Crime and Justice Survey estimated that just one per cent of males over the age of 16 had experienced time living with a foster family, in children's homes or a young person's unit between the ages of 10 and 16. However, they are in line with previous studies of sentenced offenders – 26 per cent of prisoners in the 1991 National Prison Survey said they had spent time in local authority care (Walmsley *et al.*, 1992); 19 per cent in the 1994 survey of those serving probation or combination orders (Mair and May, 1997).

Appendix D: Offence questions

Screener questions

- Shoplifting** Did you do any shoplifting during the time period that we have been talking about?
1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know
- Theft of vehicle** Did you take or attempt to take a car, van or motorbike and drive it away without permission, during the time period that we are talking about?
1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know
- Theft from vehicle** Did you steal or attempt to steal something out of or from a car, van or motorbike during this time period we have been talking about?
1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know
- Theft of bicycle** Did you steal or attempt to steal a bicycle, without the owners permission, during the time period that we are talking about?
1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know
- Domestic burglary** During the time period that we are talking about did you enter someone's house or flat without permission to steal or attempt to steal something?
1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know
- Commercial burglary** During the time period that we are talking about did you get into a building other than somebody's house or flat, such as an office building, without permission in order to steal or attempt to steal something?
1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know
- Handling stolen goods** During the period of time that we are talking about did you buy or sell something you knew or believed to be stolen?
1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know
- Criminal damage** During the time that we are talking about did you deliberately damage property or set fire to property including vehicles?
1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know
- Dealing in cannabis** During the time that we are talking about, did you deal in cannabis that is, did you sell, make or smuggle cannabis?
1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know

- Dealing in other drugs** During the time that we are talking about did you deal in any drugs other than cannabis. That is, did you sell or make or smuggle any other drugs?
1. Yes
 2. No
 3. Don't know
- Stealth theft** During the time that we are talking about did you pickpocket or snatch something from somebody, without them knowing?
1. Yes
 2. No
 3. Don't know
- Personal robbery** During the time that we are talking about, did you mug or threaten someone with a weapon, or threaten to beat them up, in order to get money or other valuables from them?
1. Yes
 2. No
 3. Don't know
- Commercial robbery** In the time that we are talking about did you rob a shop, garage, bank or any other business using force or threats?
1. Yes
 2. No
 3. Don't know
- Assault** In the time that we are talking about did you hurt someone, or attempt to do so, with a knife, stick or other weapon, or assault or beat someone up, or get into a fight where someone was hurt?
1. Yes
 2. No
 3. Don't know

For each offence screener answered positively the following questions was asked:

[ASK IF Offence Screener='Yes']

How often in this period did you do this?

Count each person who was hurt as a separate incident.

1. Less than once a month
2. Once a month
3. Every 2 or 3 weeks
4. Once a week
5. 2 or 3 times a week
6. 4 or 5 times a week
7. Every day or almost every day
8. More than once a day
9. Don't know

[ASK IF 'Less than once a month']

How many times during this period did you do this?

1 to 11

Don't know

[ASK IF 'More than once a day']

How many times a day during this period did you do this?

1 to 100

Don't know

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