

## Recorded violent crime

<b>General details</b>	Crime reported to and recorded by the police
<b>Area output</b>	The data are postcoded and georeferenced and can be aggregated to any set of geographical boundaries Other information from the British Crime Survey
<b>Time period</b>	Data supplied quarterly, but reported annually Other information from the British Crime Survey
<b>Source</b>	West Yorkshire Police
<b>Provider</b>	West Yorkshire Police
<b>Comments</b>	

### 1 Introduction

#### 1.1 Recorded violent crime falls into three main groupings

- Violence against the person

Ranges from homicide, through grievous bodily harm to minor offences such as common assault, the definition of which, changed in 2002 to only include offences where no injury was sustained

- Sexual offences

Covers most unlawful sexual activity from rape to indecency some of which (e.g. bigamy and kerb-crawling) are not violent

- Robbery

Robbery is an offence in which force or the threat of force is used in association with a theft or attempted theft. Offences include bank robberies to violent disputes between schoolchildren over small amounts of money or property.

1.2 Young men between 16 and 24 are most at risk of being a victim of violent crime. The British Crime Survey (BCS) 2003/4 estimated that 15.5% of that age group had experienced violent crime in the previous year.

1.3 Other high risk factors for violent crime include being unemployed, single, living in rented accommodation and being a single parent.

1.4 Overall the risk of being a victim of violent crime for the whole adult population was 4.1% in 2003/4. The risk for people over 75 was 0.2% for men and 0.5% for women.

1.5 Other risk factors from the BCS 2003/4 indicate that 67% of domestic violence victims were women and 81% of stranger violence victims were men.

1.6 Most recorded violent crime is not serious; common assault accounted for 24% of recorded violent crime and harassment accounted for 16%, neither involve physical injury to the victim. Thirty nine percent of recorded violent crime is categorised as less serious woundings which resulted in minor injuries such as bruising, grazes and black eyes.

1.7 Firearm offences are subsumed largely under robbery or violence against the person. The 2003/4 national figure of 10,340 firearms offences represents an increase of 1% on the

previous year and continues the upward trend in these offences. Half of these offences involved the use of a hand gun and imitation guns were used in 2,150 offences.

## 2 National and Regional Figures

2.1 BCS estimated that there were 2.7 million violent incidents against adults in 2003/4 of which 52% resulted in no injury. This figure has fallen sharply from a peak in 1995 of almost 4.3 million estimated incidents.

2.2 The police recorded 1.1 million violent crimes (violence against the person, sexual offences and robbery) in 2003/4. This figure has increased every year but one since 1995. The contrasting trends of recorded crime and the BCS can be partly explained by:

(i) Changes in the way crimes are recorded

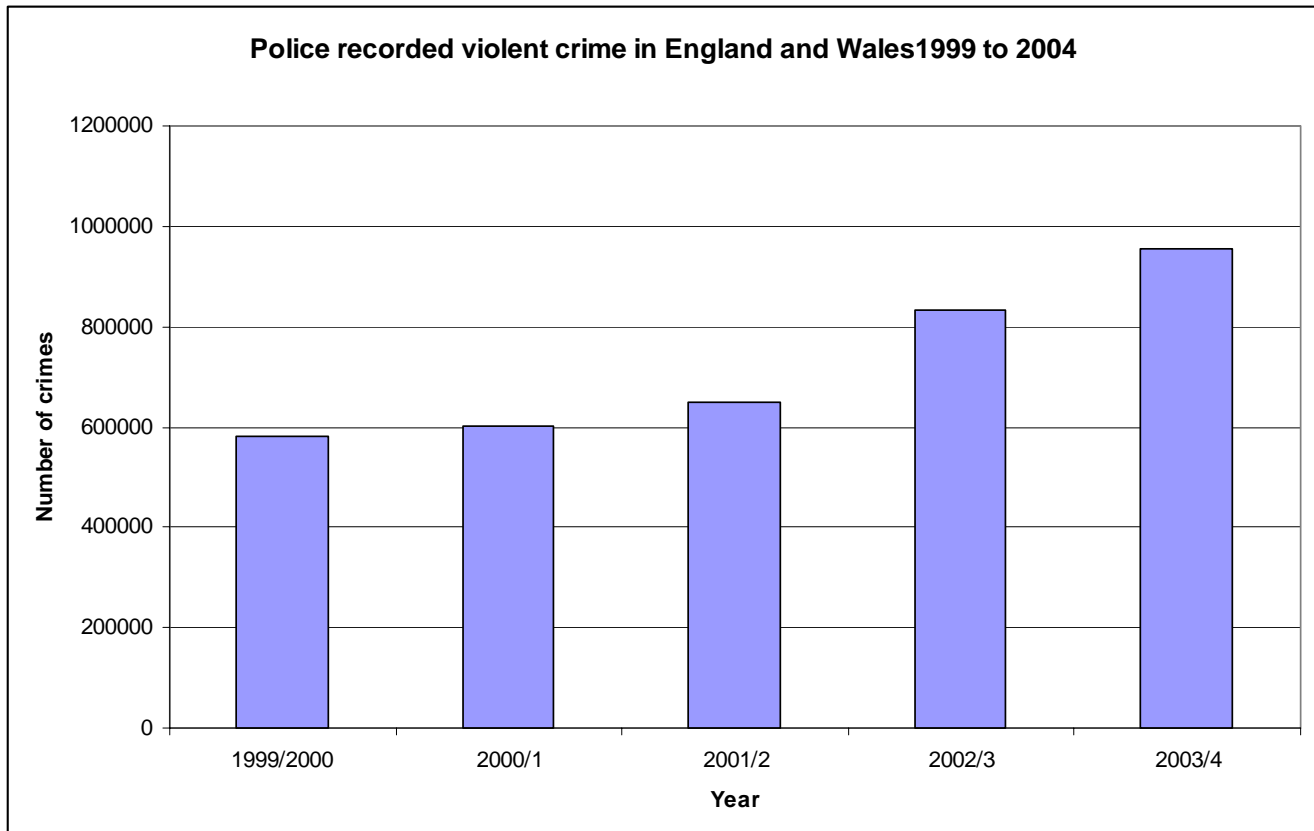
There have been two major changes to the recording of crimes since 1997/8.

- In April 1998, the Counting Rules for Recorded Crime were expanded to include certain additional summary offences. These included the recording of common assault and harassment for the first time
- In April 2002, the National Crime Recording Standard was introduced to ensure greater consistency between forces in recording crime and is thought to be responsible for an increase of a quarter in the figures for violent crime

Crime in England and Wales 2003/4.

(ii) Increased reporting of offences and increased police activity

**Figure 1: Recorded violent crime 1999 to 2004 in England and Wales**



2.3 It is claimed that the effects of the 2002 changes are still being seen in the increasing figures for recorded violent crimes but that the increase is concentrated in the less serious offences.

#### Violence against the person

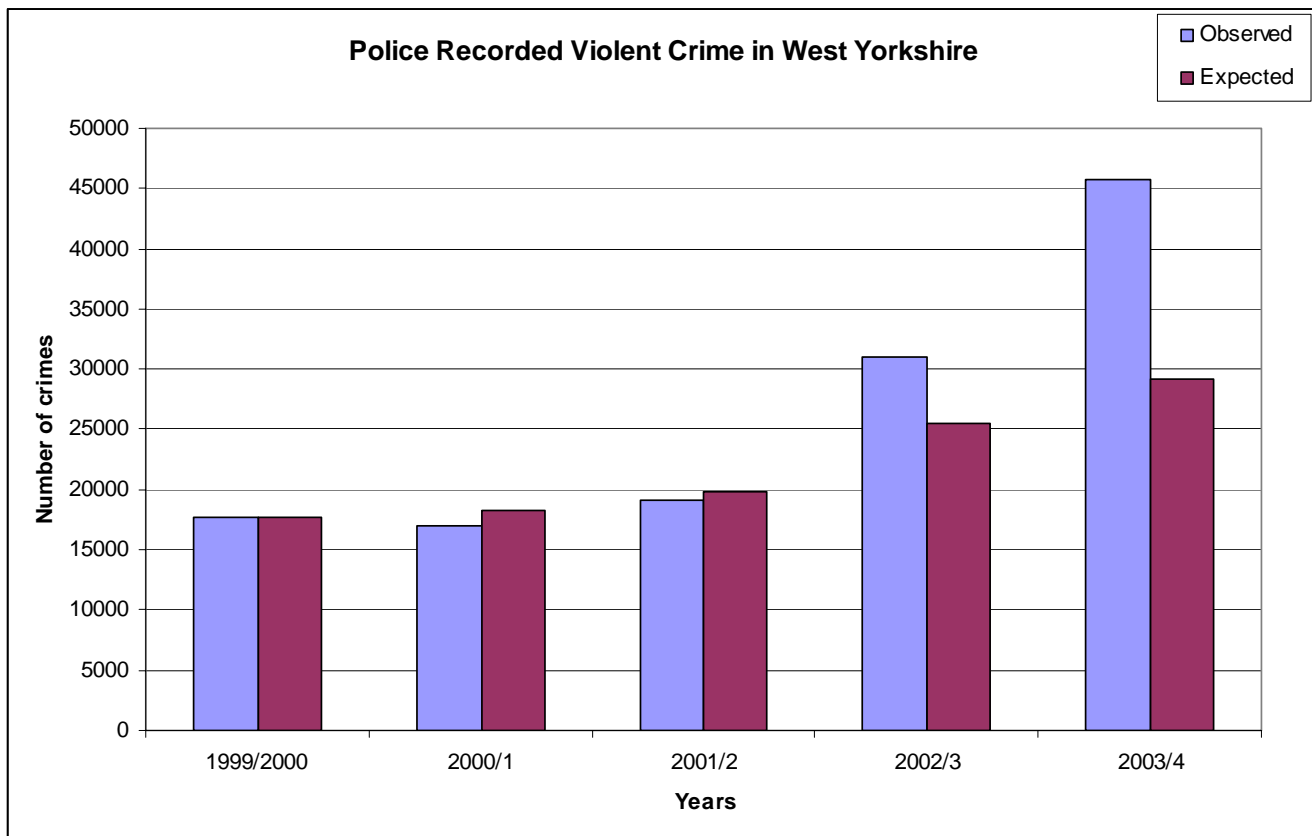
2.4 As discussed above, the changes in the way police recorded crime is collected that occurred in 1998 and 2002 have made it impossible to identify trends over the last few years. “..the continuing effects of the NCRS and the subsequent audits of police recording make recent trends in types of recorded violence difficult to interpret.”  
Crime in England and Wales 2003/4.

2.5 Figure 1 shows that recorded offences have increased from just under 600,000 in 1999/2000 to almost 1 million in 2003/4

2.6 Figure 2 shows the difference between the actual number of violent crimes that were recorded by the police in West Yorkshire and the number that would have occurred from 1999/2000 if West Yorkshire had followed the same trend as the figures for England and Wales.

2.7 West Yorkshire has experienced an increase in recorded violent crime greater than expected compared to the national trend over the last five years. However, this could simply be that the 2002 changes to the NCRS disproportionately affected West Yorkshire’s figures.

**Figure 2: Comparison of expected and observed violent crime in West Yorkshire 1999 to 2004**



“Expected violent crimes” is the number of crimes that would have occurred in West Yorkshire if the national trend in crimes from 1999/2000 was extrapolated from the 1999/2000 figure for West Yorkshire.

2.8 Homicides are relatively rare occurrences and over the last five years have averaged about 850 offences for England and Wales. Homicides are attributed to the year they are discovered so the 2002/3 figure of over 1000 retrospectively includes murders by Harold Shipman.

2.9 The figure of 12 homicides in Kirklees in 2003/4 includes the five victims of the Birkby fire.

**Table 1: Homicides 1999 to 2004**

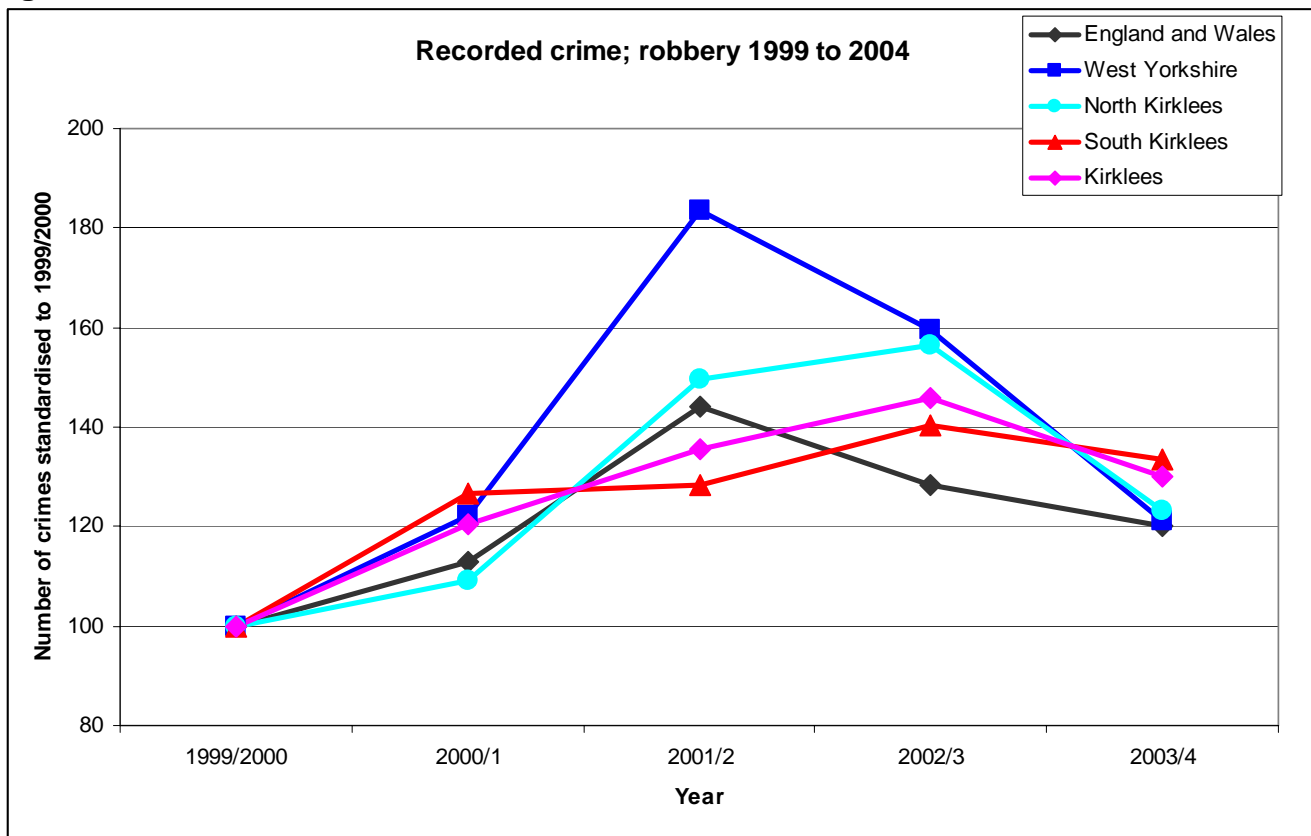
	1999/2000	2000/1	2001/2	2002/3	2003/4
England and Wales	765	850	886	1043	853
West Yorkshire	23	35	42	44	43
Kirklees	4	7	6	12	4

**Robbery**

2.9 Recorded robberies in England and Wales reached a five year peak in 2001/2 since when they have fallen by about 20% (Figure 3).

2.10 Evidence from the BCS, charts a steady reduction in incidents of robbery from an estimated 400,000 in 1999 to about 280,000 in 2003/4.

**Figure 3: Robberies 1999 to 2004 standardised to 1999/2000 figure**



2.11 It is felt therefore that much of the rise in recorded robberies to 2001/2 is due to changes in the way crimes are recorded and some of it to increased rates of reporting. The decline in recorded robberies since 2001/2 may be more representative of the public's experience of robbery. The West Yorkshire figures are broadly similar to the national figures only they rose much higher in 2001/2. In Kirklees the peak occurred a year later with a greater rise and subsequent fall in North Kirklees than South.

2.12 Nationally the police recorded 101,000 robberies in 2003/4, of which half were concentrated in 20 local authorities mostly in city centres of metropolitan areas.

### Sexual offences

2.13 Locally, regionally and nationally, the number of sexual offences recorded by the police rose significantly in 2002/3 and then rose the following year (see Table 2). Much of the earlier increase is due to the changes in the way police record crime whereas the further increase in 2003/4 is less readily explained. The British Crime Survey provides no assistance as the reporting of sexual offences during the face-to-face interviews of the survey is understandably unreliable. The most optimistic interpretation is that the number of offences is not rising, the increase is due to victims being more prepared to report offences to the police and an increased number of reporting centres.

**Table 2 Recorded sexual offences 1999 to 2004**

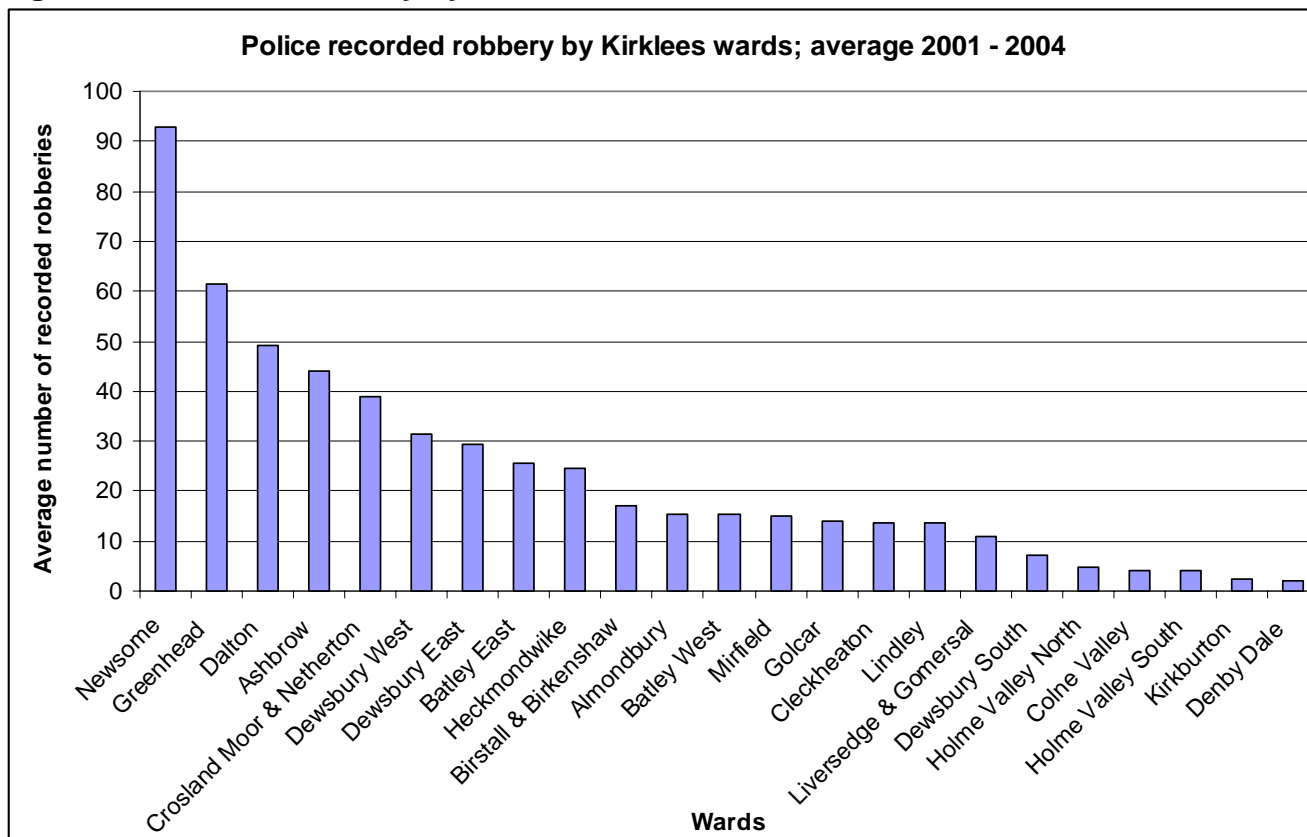
	1999/2000	2000/1	2001/2	2002/3	2003/4
England and Wales	37792	37299	41425	48644	52070
West Yorkshire	1807	1464	1532	2088	2343
Kirklees	269	199	218	324	401
North Kirklees	103	86	107	136	194
South Kirklees	166	113	111	188	207

2.14 Of the 52,000 sexual offences recorded in 2003/4, 26,700 were indecent assaults on a female and 13,250 were rapes of which 93% of victims were female.

### 3 Kirklees Figures

3.1 The number of robberies recorded in Kirklees is small relative to other violent crimes, around 500 in 2003/4. Figure 3 shows the average number of robberies recorded by the police over the last 3 years by wards. Robberies are concentrated in the wards containing Huddersfield town centre (Greenhead and Newsome). Figures are also relatively high in some of the wards around Huddersfield, Ashbrow, Dalton and Crosland Moor and Netherton. Fewer than 5 robberies per year were recorded in the rural wards of Holme Valley North and South, Denby Dale, Colne Valley and Kirkburton.

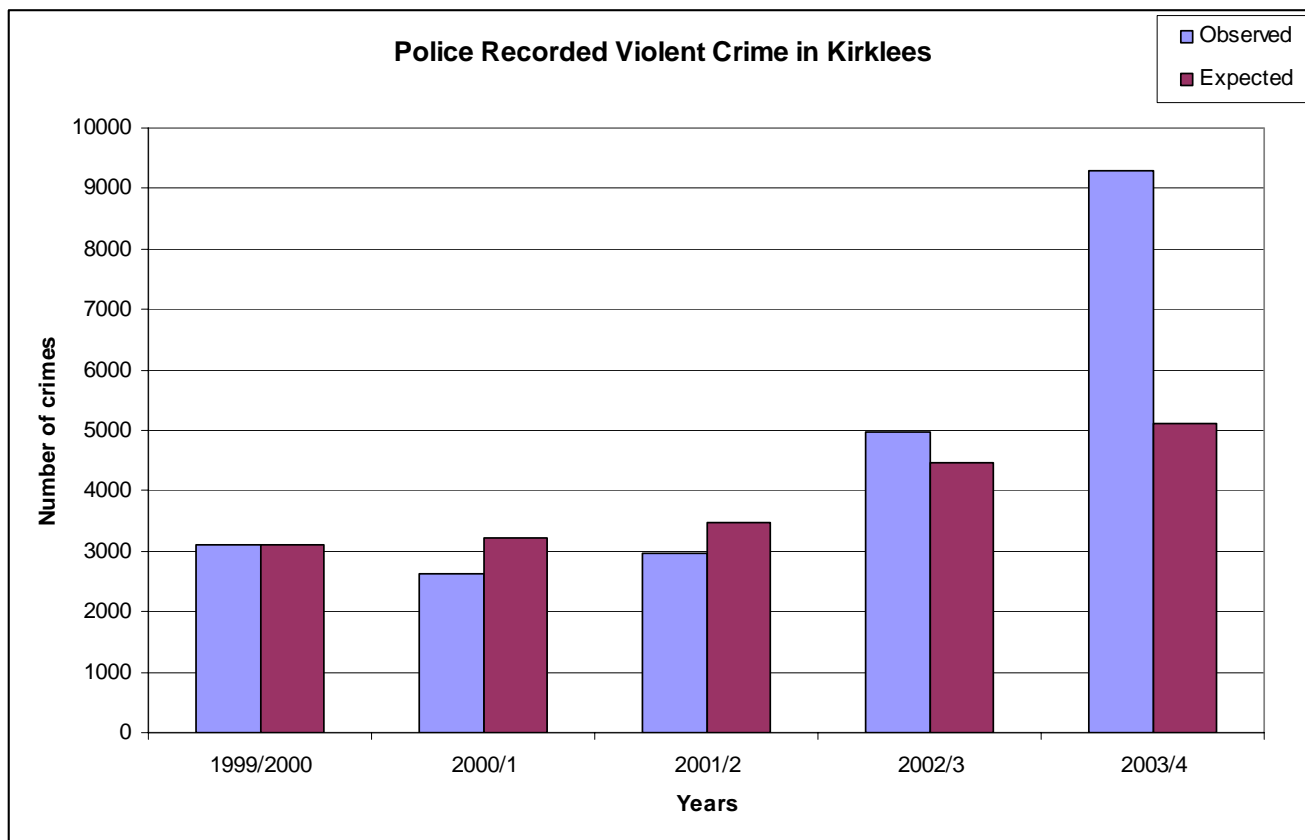
**Figure 3: Recorded robbery by Kirklees wards**



3.2 Figure 4 shows a comparison of the actual trend in Kirklees with the extrapolated trend based on national figures.

3.3 As with the West Yorkshire comparison in Figure 2, Kirklees observed figures are much higher than expected compared with the national trend. This may mean that violent crime has increased in Kirklees at a faster rate than the national figure. It may however indicate that the impact of the National Crime Recording System has been more marked locally than nationally.

**Figure 4: Comparison of expected and observed violent crime in West Yorkshire 1999 to 2004**



Expected violent crimes is the number of crimes that would have occurred in Kirklees if the national trend in crimes from 1999/2000 was imposed on the 1999/2000 figure for Kirklees.

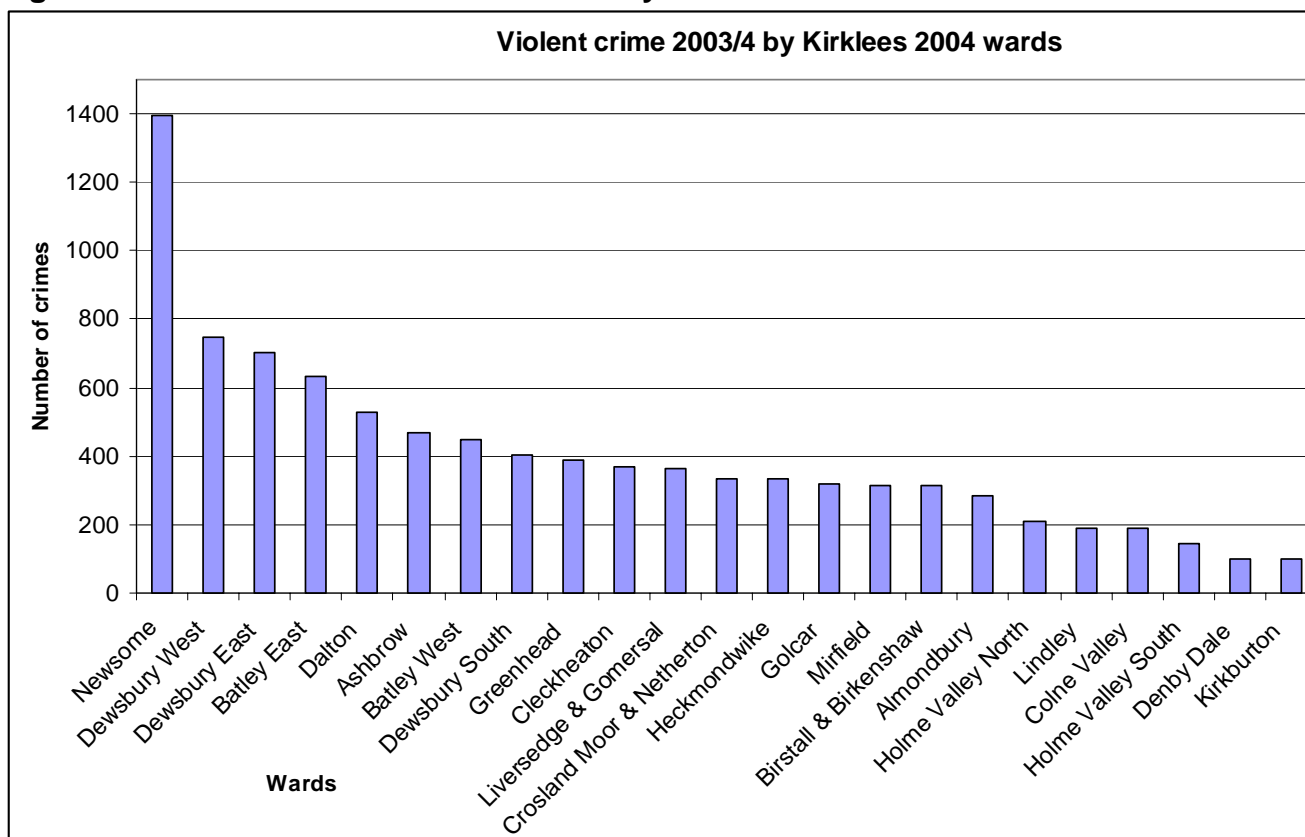
3.4 Violent crime does not occur evenly across Kirklees. Town centres, especially at night, attract a disproportionate number of violent offences. Twice as many violent crimes were recorded in Newsome (which contains Huddersfield town centre) in 2003/4 than in the ward with the next highest number, and 15% of all the violent crime in Kirklees (see Figure 5).

3.5 Whilst the presence of a town centre appears to affect the figures for Dewsbury East and West and Batley East, it does not seem to act as strongly for Cleckheaton and not at all for Holme Valley South which contains Holmfirth.

3.6 Of the suburban areas, the figure for Dalton is high compared with Almondbury, although they are similarly sub-urban areas. The rural wards of Denby Dale and Kirkburton each only recorded about 100 incidents.

3.7 Data reported in the Kirklees Crime Audit show that 34% of violent incidents attended by West Yorkshire Ambulance Service occurred between 9 p.m. and 3 a.m. on Friday and Saturday evenings.

**Figure 5: Recorded Violent Crime 2003/4 by Kirklees wards**



3.8 Ward figures for sexual offences are mostly very low. As with other violent crimes, the highest numbers are concentrated in the wards containing Huddersfield town Centre (Greenhead and Newsome) and Dewsbury town centre (Dewsbury East and West). Again, as with other violent crime, Ashbrow and Dalton wards have much higher numbers of recorded sexual offences compared with other suburban wards, perhaps twice as many as would be expected. Very few sexual offences were recorded for Kirkburton and Denby Dale.

4 Links and further information

Office for National Statistics

<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/default.asp>

Crime in England and Wales 2003/2004

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs04/hosb1004.pdf>

Crime in England and Wales 2003/2004; Quarterly Update to December 2004

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs05/hosb0705.pdf>

Outputs from British Crime Surveys

<http://www.crimestatistics.org.uk/output/Page109.asp>

Kirklees Crime and Disorder Audit 2004

Available from Kirklees Community Safety Unit

## 5 Indicator archive

Date of the original document	July 2005
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