



STAFFORDSHIRE
POLICE

Knife Crime and Stop Search Report

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Definition – National

There are two ways of identifying knife crimes, through a national and a local definition.

The Home Office (ADR) definition of Knife Crime takes into account not just knives but any instrument that is used as a weapon that is sharp and capable of piercing the skin. As a result, there is no definitive, exhaustive list of which weapon types would be included in this context. Staffordshire has identified the following weapon types for Knife Crime:

- Axe
- Bottle (only for certain offence types)
- Glass (only for certain offence types)
- Knife/Dagger
- Machete
- Nail(s) (including studded club)
- Other sharp/pointed instrument
- Scissors
- Screwdriver
- Stanley knife/blade
- Meat cleaver
- Chisel
- Hypodermic needle/syringe
- Disguised knife
- Sword/bayonet
- Razor
- Crossbow/bow and arrow
- Hatchet
- Dart
- Needle(not hypodermic needle)/pin

Furthermore, the Home Office definition of Knife Crime is measured against specific types of crime, which are as follows:

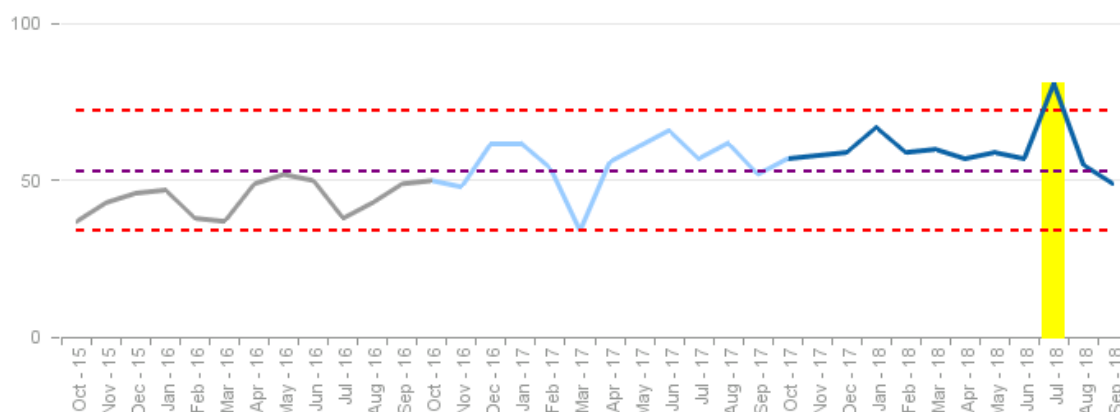
- Attempted murder
- Threats to kill
- Assault with intent to cause serious harm
- Endangering life
- Assault with injury and racially or religiously aggravated assault with injury
- Sexual assault
- Rape
- Robbery
- Murder
- Manslaughter

Of Note: - other offence types (such as aggravated burglary, possession of a blade and other types of violence) are not included in the figures for the ADR.

Current Performance

Between 1st October 2017 and 30th September 2018 there were 718 crimes matching the above definition, and there has been an increase of 8% or 54 additional crimes compared to the previous year based on the Home Office (ADR) definition. The graph below shows the data over the last three years.

Recorded Crime Over Time (Variation)



Where is this happening?

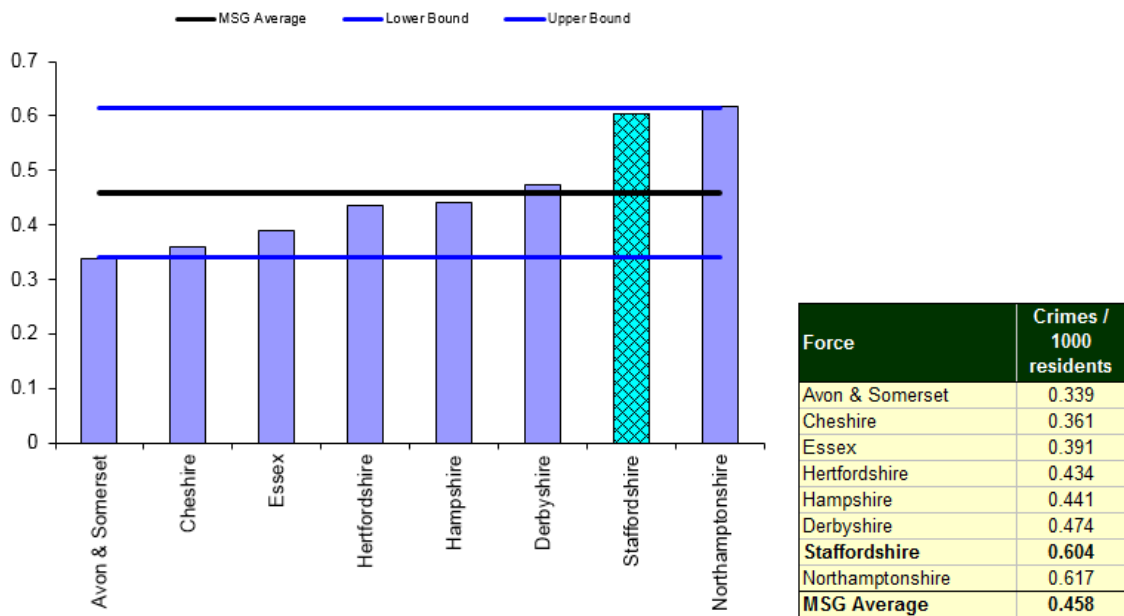
Based on the percentage change, Stoke South has the largest increase at 35% and Tamworth, Lichfield, Moorlands, Cannock, Newcastle and Stoke North are showing increases of between 28% and 3%. East Staffs, South Staffs and Stafford are showing reductions of between 2% and 27%.



How do we compare to other forces?

The only way in which we can compare our performance to other forces is through the national (ADR) definition. The latest national data is to March 2018 and Staffordshire's position is shown below in terms of its most similar forces and also by volume compared to all the other forces.

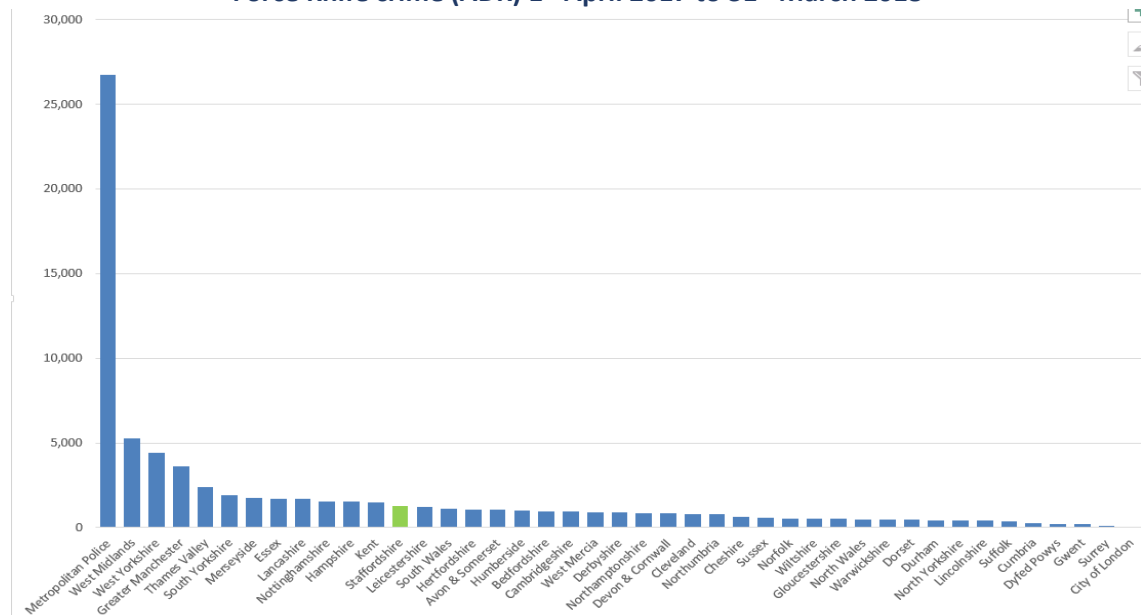
**iQuanta Bar Chart MSG - Knife Crimes per 1000 Residents
Staffordshire
01 Apr 2017 - 31 Mar 2018**



Staffordshire are 2nd highest compared to their other most similar forces with 0.604 per 1000 population between 1st April 2017 and 31st March 2018.

The graph below shows volumes of knife crimes based on the ADR definition across the country and Staffordshire is 13th out of 43 forces for the volume of crimes between 1st April 2017 and 31st March 2018. Staffordshire has also remained in 13th position in the previous 12 months.

Force Knife crime (ADR) 1st April 2017 to 31st March 2018



Definition – Local

The local (Staffordshire) definition of Knife crime is defined as: any crime, no crime or non-crime which has one of the following bladed weapon types and includes all possession of a blade offences:

- Machete
- Axe
- Knife/dagger
- Martial arts weapon
- Saw
- Sword/bayonet
- Disguised knife
- Stanley knife/blade

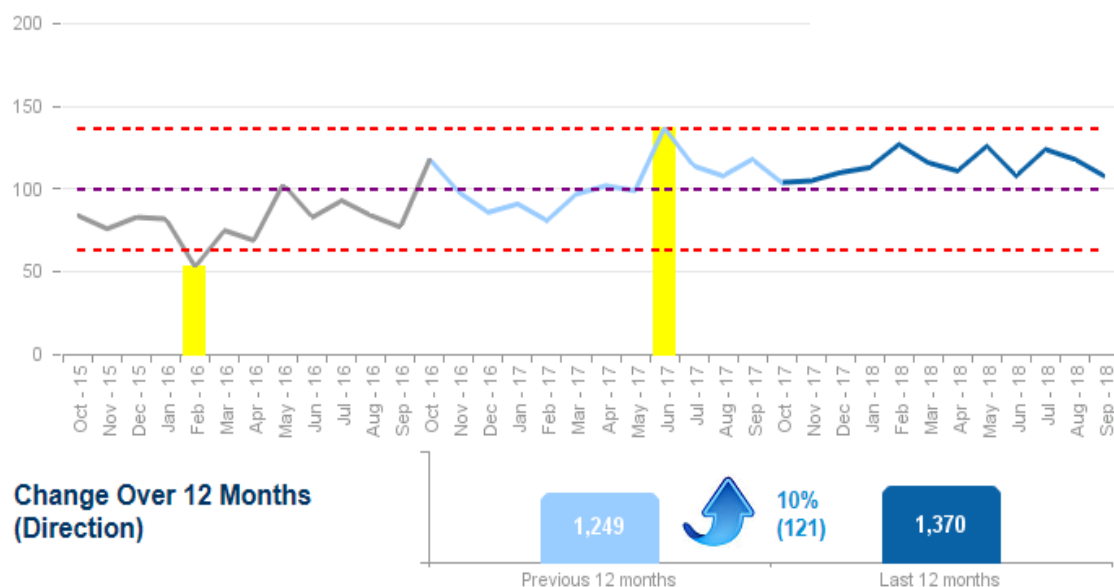
This methodology has been locally defined and continues to be used as this covers all types of crime, as opposed to the specific offence types that are measured nationally via the ADR.

Current Performance

There have been 1370 knife offences committed between 1st October 17 and 30th September 18 (including 36 non/ no crimes), based on Staffordshire Police's local definition of knife crime. This is an increase of 10% or 121 more offences than the previous year.

Levels have been consistently above average for the last 12 months, but no breaches of the upper control limit have occurred.

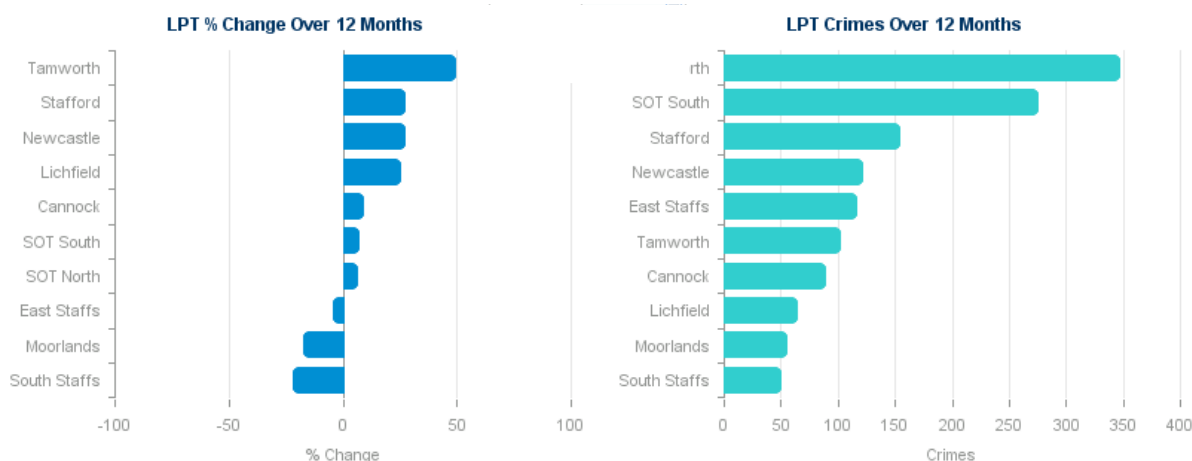
Committed Crime Over Time (Variation)



The majority of offences are possession of weapons (36%) which has increased by 23% on the last 12 months. Other Violence Against the Person also makes up a significant proportion of knife crime (18%) and this has increased by 9% in the last 12 months. Personal robbery has the third highest volume (13%) and has increased by 17% in the last 12 months.

Where is this happening?

The highest volume of offending occurs within the city of Stoke-on-Trent (45%), with Stoke North making up 25% and Stoke South accounting for 20%. The city has not seen as significant an increase as at force level, with the city as a whole showing a 7% increase (39 additional offences) (Stoke North 6% increase with 20 additional offences, and Stoke South 8% increase with 21 additional offences) Other NPT's have experienced a higher percentage increase but have smaller numbers of offences.



What has happened?

As a force we are focused on reducing knife crime, especially looking at a partnership approach to encourage preventative measures with children and young people, this has included joint work with schools, colleges and third sector organisations. We have supported applications for government funding for third sector organisations. We are aware not just from our own data, but also from other voices such as the youth commission and schools, that knife crime is an issue for young people. We are using a partnership approach to deal with the issue of knife crime as it cannot be solved purely through enforcement and policing methodologies, this is a national issue which no single agency can resolve on its own.

What are we doing about it?

We are using the findings from the national week of action (Op Sceptre) regarding best practice to tackle knife crime. There is a 4P plan for knife crime which is managed through a tactical group under the force lead Supt Fields, and there is an associated action plan to monitor and drive performance. Each NPT also has their own individual Knife crime plans.

We are working in conjunction with partners and specifically schools to raise awareness and focus on prevention. Before the summer holidays, letters in relation to a joint response to Gangs and Youth Violence were sent to all parents across Stoke-on-Trent in relation to raising awareness of gangs, violence and knife crime. These letters were part of a partnership approach and were jointly signed by Force lead Supt Fields, Matthew Ellis, Local MP's, City council and Chair of SASCAL (Stoke on Trent schools).

We have supported the national PSHE knife crime presentation which is given to high school students, and have also been involved in targeted work with primary schools and a values vs violence presentation.

Schools across Stoke-on-Trent and have signed up to a joint knife crime and criminal exploitation action plan and some of the schools have received some funding to support its implementation. This action plan is not police owned and the schools own and implement the plan with assistance from the police if required.

A week of action from 17th to 24th September was held across the force and focused on local engagement, prevention and early intervention. This was targeted at schools and colleges in order to raise awareness of this issue. The week of action also included the use of knife wands at licensed premises as a preventative measure.

We are also working with Trading standards in relation to the sale of knives to under 18's, and with the crime prevention team to target identified hotspot areas.

Recently we have supported the Crime stoppers knife crime campaign aimed at prevention through awareness via the media, and this was targeted at hotspot locations across Staffordshire.

Stop Searches for Knives

Current Performance

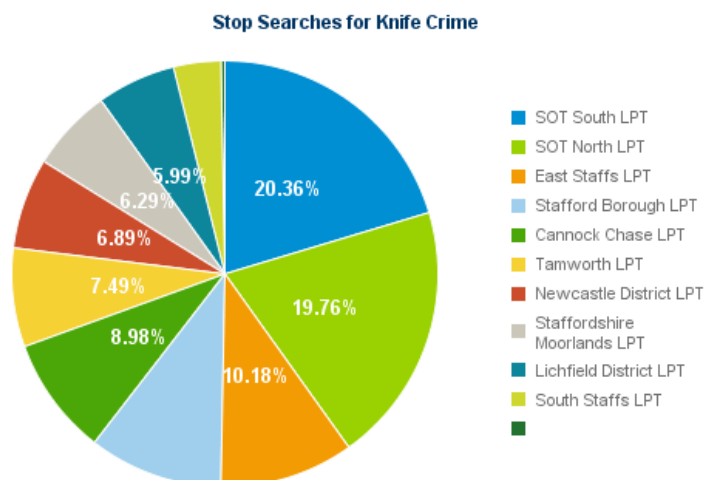
In the last 12 months 01/10/2017 to 30/09/2018 there have been 334 stop searches linked to knife crime, where one of the weapon types from the Staffordshire local knife crime definition is included in the free text reason for the search. This has increased by 12% compared to the previous year when 299 stop searches linked to knife crime were conducted.

The majority of searches were for offensive weapons (86%), however knives or other bladed articles were included in the reason for search in 27 drugs searches (8%), 15 stolen property searches (5%), 3 going equipped searches, 1 criminal damage search and one other search.

In the last 12 months there has been an increase in the proportion of under 18's who have been stopped and searched in relation to knives. 33% of all stop searches for knife crime (111 searches) in the last 12 months were conducted on individuals between 10 and 17, compared to 27% in the previous 12 months (80 searches). There were no stop searches of any under 10's for knives. The proportion of stop searches on under 18's is higher (33%) than the proportion of knife offences which under 18's are linked to as offenders (19%).

Where is this happening?

The distribution of stop searches across the force is shown in the pie chart below, with Stoke-on-Trent accounting for 40% of all stop searches for knife crime. When comparing the proportions of Stop Searches to the proportion of knife crime, there is not any significant variation between the amount of offences and the numbers of stop searches.



Offensive weapons recovered

The majority of knives were found during stop searches in Stoke North in the last 12 months, and in the last year a knife was recovered in 24% of the searches conducted, with this proportion increasing compared to last year (23%).

The most significant reduction in the number of offensive weapons recovered is in Stoke South with 4 or 6% recovered in the last year compared to 15 or 26% in the previous year.

The table below shows the breakdowns by area in relation to searches where an offensive weapon has been recovered.

LPT Name	Last 12 Months	Weapon recovered	Searches where knife recovered	Previous Year	Weapon recovered Previous Year	Searches where knife recovered Previous year
SOT North LPT	66	16	24.24%	57	13	22.81%
East Staffs LPT	34	6	17.65%	34	10	29.41%
Stafford Borough LPT	34	5	14.71%	42	4	9.52%
SOT South LPT	68	4	5.88%	58	15	25.86%
Tamworth LPT	25	3	12.00%	29	4	13.79%
Staffordshire Moorlands LPT	21	3	14.29%	13	2	15.38%
South Staffs LPT	12	3	25.00%	10	2	20.00%
Cannock Chase LPT	30	1	3.33%	20	2	10.00%
Newcastle District LPT	23	1	4.35%	20	2	10.00%
Lichfield District LPT	20	0		16	7	43.75%
	1	0			0	
	334	42	12.57%	299	61	20.40%

What has happened?

Offensive weapons recovered

In 13% of stop searches which mentioned a knife or bladed weapon in the reason for search an offensive weapon was found (42), this has decreased compared to last year where 20% of searches recovered an offensive weapon (61).

12 offensive weapons were found in the last 12 months when under 18's were stop searched (11% of all searches) and of these 11 also resulted in an arrest. This has reduced compared to the previous year when 14 offensive weapons were recovered when under 18's were stop searched (18% of all searches) and of these 9 also resulted in an arrest.

Arrests

16% of searches resulted in an arrest (55), and of these 53% (29) also included the recovery of an offensive weapon. This equates to 9% of all stop searches for knife crime, have led to both an arrest and the recovery of an offensive weapon.

This has decreased compared to last year where 23% resulted in an arrest (70), and 54% also included the recovery of an offensive weapon. This equates to 13% of all stop searches for knife crime, in the previous year led to both an arrest and the recovery of an offensive weapon.

16 under 18's have been arrested following a stop search in the last 12 months (14%), compared to 15 in the previous 12 months (19%). Of those arrested in the last 12 months, 69% have been found in possession of an offensive weapon, compared to 60% in the previous year.

In the last 12 months there have been more stop searches where the reason for search included a bladed weapon, however less weapons have been recovered and less arrests have been made than in the previous year.

What are we doing about it?

We are encouraging the use of stop searches where intelligence identifies that an individual has possession or immediate access to a knife or bladed article, especially in relation to habitual knife carriers. This has been publicly supported by the Chief Constable.

We are working with academia in order to develop a greater understanding of the link between knife crime and stop searches, and there is currently a project underway which is looking further at this area.

We are giving officers additional stop search training on OPST (Operational Personal Safety Training). Officers receive training on realistic techniques that can be used in attempts to counteract a frenzied knife attack at close range. The chance of escaping such an attack without injury is very low, the objective is to simply survive through the use of behavioural based responses and the correct combative mindset.