

Speeding offence detection and disposal in England and Wales 2020 - 2021

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This report provides an annual update on statistics on speeding offences detected by police forces in England and Wales. It is based on analysis of Home Office data.¹

This report uses figures from April 2020 – March 2021 thus reflecting the impact of Covid-19. The number of speeding offences detected decreased in many police force areas, possibly because of the travel restrictions imposed during the pandemic.

In 2020-21, 2,426,950 speeding offences were detected in England and Wales, a 6% decrease on the 2,584,571 figure for the previous 12 months. However, traffic volume fell by 26% across Great Britain.

Over the last five years, acts of illegal speeding detected have decreased by 13%. Over the past eight years they have decreased by 32%.

Speeding offences made up 86% of total motoring-related offences in 2020-21. The other 14% comprised such things as: licence, insurance and record keeping offences; careless driving; seat belt offences; use of a hand-held mobile phone whilst driving; neglect of traffic signs, directions and of pedestrian rights; and vehicle test condition offences. More details are shown in Table 2.

The force which detected most speeding offences in 2020-21 was the Metropolitan Police (including City of London). It was followed by: West Yorkshire, Greater Manchester, Lincolnshire, and Thames Valley. Lincolnshire unusually makes the top five list, having increased 90% from the previous year. In part this is likely to be due to a 'speed camera blunder' which resulted in many drivers being wrongly fined².

The largest year-on-year percentage decreases in speeding offences in 2020-21 were seen in Cheshire (down 57%) and Cleveland (down 55%).

As suggested in the previous report "the constabulary-level variations in detection rates are significant but difficult to understand from the bald numbers. However, reasons for the differences are likely to include road network length, road type, traffic volume and makeup, local priorities dictated by police and crime commissioners, financial and human resources, and the availability of detection technology."

Table 3 shows how speed limit offences were disposed of. In 2020-21, most speeding offences resulted in a speed awareness courses (40%) or a fine (31%), similar proportions to those in 2019-20. However, 404,335 offences detected (17% of the total) were disposed of by being cancelled.

¹https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1040226/fix-ed-penalty-notice-and-other-motoring-offences-statistics-police-powers-and-procedures-year-ending-31-march-2021.xlsx

²<https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/thousands-motorists-win-back-2m-25009514>

Table 1: Total number of speeding offences detected by police forces in England and Wales in 2020 - 2021 and how they were detected.

Police force	Total number of speeding offences detected 2019 - 2020	Total number of speeding offences detected 2020 - 2021	% year-on-year change 2020 - 2021	Proportion of speeding offences detected by camera 2020 - 2021	Total number of all motoring offences in 2020 - 2021	Proportion of speeding offences relative to all motoring offences 2020 - 2021
Avon and Somerset	108,433	100,396	-7%	99%	109,445	92%
Bedfordshire	72,784	51,862	-29%	99%	55,151	94%
Cambridgeshire	45,919	35,930	-22%	98%	40,418	89%
Cheshire	64,269	27,810	-57%	92%	37,540	74%
City of London / Metropolitan Police	214,409	262,280	22%	88%	363,246	72%
Cleveland	14,682	6,628	-55%	93%	7,962	83%
Cumbria	35,039	26,070	-26%	99%	28,803	91%
Derbyshire	13,124	19,789	51%	95%	22,385	88%
Devon and Cornwall	63,306	77,086	22%	98%	85,038	91%
Dorset	23,825	16,640	-30%	87%	19,995	83%
Durham	14,632	8,357	-43%	88%	10,298	81%
Essex	83,998	54,472	-35%	81%	75,215	72%
Gloucestershire	31,582	25,268	-20%	97%	29,322	86%
Greater Manchester	158,155	178,123	13%	98%	195,727	91%
Hampshire	89,315	65,356	-27%	98%	71,639	91%
Hertfordshire	67,398	50,047	-26%	99%	55,847	90%
Humberside	45,786	48,174	5%	95%	59,110	81%
Kent	22,082	31,684	43%	90%	42,044	75%
Lancashire	71,303	55,154	-23%	98%	64,615	85%
Leicestershire	49,604	31,084	-37%	99%	38,087	82%
Lincolnshire	65,033	123,533	90%	99%	126,319	98%
Merseyside	70,057	66,498	-5%	95%	82,746	80%
Norfolk and Suffolk	93,322	95,181	2%	94%	108,843	87%
North Wales	19,037	15,535	-18%	86%	20,085	77%
North Yorkshire	85,016	73,658	-13%	99%	79,439	93%
Northamptonshire	64,716	62,414	-4%	99%	69,272	90%
Northumbria	66,585	57,753	-13%	99%	62,857	92%
Nottinghamshire	21,791	21,207	-3%	98%	27,636	77%
South Yorkshire	59,867	48,771	-19%	99%	57,335	85%
Staffordshire	58,708	55,902	-5%	98%	63,572	88%
Surrey	84,465	78,647	-7%	97%	88,871	88%
Sussex	65,954	54,028	-18%	94%	58,814	92%
Thames Valley	124,512	100,622	-19%	97%	114,767	88%
Wales (except North Wales)	41,036	35,389	-14%	97%	43,301	82%
Warwickshire	45,560	34,132	-25%	98%	39,492	86%
West Mercia	85,319	75,719	-11%	98%	82,547	92%
West Midlands	66,353	74,407	12%	96%	88,505	84%
West Yorkshire	177,013	180,432	2%	96%	208,743	86%
Wiltshire	582	912	57%	0%	3,106	29%
Total England and Wales	2,584,571	2,426,950	-6%	96%	2,838,137	86%

Table 2: Total number and proportions of all motoring offences for all of England and Wales

Offence Group	Total number (Proportion in brackets) 2012 - 2013	Total number (Proportion in brackets) 2013 - 2014	Total number (Proportion in brackets) 2014 - 2015	Total number (Proportion in brackets) 2015 - 2016	Total number (Proportion in brackets) 2016 - 2017	Total number (Proportion in brackets) 2017 - 2018	Total number (Proportion in brackets) 2018 - 2019	Total number (Proportion in brackets) 2019 - 2020	Total number (Proportion in brackets) 2020 - 2021
Careless driving (excluding use of hand-held mobile phone when driving)	7,007 (0%)	9,933 (0%)	17,728 (1%)	20,262 (1%)	19,705 (1%)	17,991 (1%)	21,699 (1%)	29,208 (1%)	36,786 (1%)
Licence, insurance and record-keeping offences	104,200 (4%)	101,357 (4%)	86,279 (3%)	81,442 (3%)	98,648 (4%)	101,438 (4%)	105,171 (4%)	112,115 (4%)	127,435 (4%)
Lighting and noise offences	16,187 (1%)	18,268 (1%)	11,969 (0%)	9,130 (0%)	9,649 (0%)	7,881 (0%)	7,919 (0%)	7,749 (0%)	8,867 (0%)
Miscellaneous motoring offences (excluding seat belt offences)	1,110 (0%)	704 (0%)	2,936 (0%)	7,130 (0%)	3,560 (0%)	445 (0%)	449 (0%)	497 (0%)	470 (0%)
Neglect of traffic signs and directions and of pedestrian rights	142,036 (5%)	130,470 (5%)	107,852 (4%)	138,939 (5%)	112,835 (4%)	108,665 (4%)	116,485 (4%)	104,931 (3%)	80,396 (3%)
Obstruction, waiting and parking offences	103,986 (4%)	62,790 (2%)	53,519 (2%)	49,597 (2%)	42,388 (2%)	36,235 (1%)	34,780 (1%)	36,207 (1%)	22,200 (1%)
Operator's licence offences	68 (0%)	67 (0%)	42 (0%)	47 (0%)	46 (0%)	43 (0%)	23 (0%)	20 (0%)	31 (0%)
Other Offences	12,090 (0%)	11,620 (0%)	9,713 (0%)	7,467 (0%)	7,725 (0%)	7,685 (0%)	7,605 (0%)	7,817 (0%)	10,547 (0%)
Seat belt offences	151,253 (6%)	127,282 (5%)	95,188 (4%)	73,128 (3%)	58,830 (2%)	54,292 (2%)	55,023 (2%)	54,054 (2%)	55,341 (2%)
Speed limit offences	1,837,000 (70%)	1,888,058 (73%)	2,066,447 (78%)	2,151,352 (80%)	2,213,257 (81%)	2,292,534 (83%)	2,386,720 (84%)	2,584,571 (85%)	2,426,950 (86%)
Use of hand-held mobile phone while driving	148,396 (6%)	130,653 (5%)	104,883 (4%)	92,783 (3%)	86,853 (3%)	56,549 (2%)	40,946 (1%)	30,902 (1%)	19,919 (1%)
Vehicle test and condition offences	86,365 (3%)	92,639 (4%)	73,602 (3%)	65,942 (2%)	64,635 (2%)	58,005 (2%)	55,009 (2%)	56,339 (2%)	45,902 (2%)
Work record or employment offences	7,752 (0%)	6,679 (0%)	4,958 (0%)	5,764 (0%)	5,332 (0%)	5,655 (0%)	5,839 (0%)	5,107 (0%)	3,293 (0%)
Total	2,617,450	2,580,520	2,635,116	2,702,983	2,723,463	2,747,418	2,837,668	3,029,517	2,838,137

Table 3: How speeding offences were disposed of by police force area in 2019 - 2020 and 2020 - 2021³

Police Force	Year	Total Number of speeding offences detected	Total number of speeding offences dealt with by FPN	Proportion of speeding offences dealt with by FPN	Total number of speeding offences dealt with by speed awareness course	Proportion of speeding offences dealt with by speed awareness courses	Total number of speeding offences cancelled	Proportion of speeding offences cancelled	Total number of speeding offences ending in court action	Proportion of speeding offences taken to court	Total number of speeding offences ending in potential prosecution	Proportion of speeding offences ending in potential prosecution
Avon and Somerset	2019 - 2020	108,433	38,926	36%	44,374	41%	7,085	7%	18,048	17%		
	2020 - 2021	100,396	35,294	35%	38,074	38%	12,020	12%	14,969	15%		
Bedfordshire	2019 - 2020	72,784	17,740	24%	33,163	46%	15,561	21%	6,313	9%		
	2020 - 2021	51,862	10,999	21%	19,843	38%	11,969	23%	5,377	10%		
Cambridgeshire	2019 - 2020	45,919	12,718	28%	21,293	46%	6,812	15%	4,768	10%		
	2020 - 2021	35,930	9,200	26%	14,673	41%	6,737	19%	3,447	10%		
Cheshire	2019 - 2020	64,269	17,185	27%	37,001	58%	3,219	5%	6,864	11%		
	2020 - 2021	27,810	8,115	29%	12,276	44%	2,332	8%	5,087	18%		
City of London / Metropolitan Police	2019 - 2020	214,409	42,029	20%	77,112	36%	69,950	33%	24,959	12%		
	2020 - 2021	262,280	51,503	20%	95,116	36%	77,399	30%	16,200	6%	22,017	8%
Cleveland	2019 - 2020	14,682	4,032	27%	8,576	58%	730	5%	1,344	9%		
	2020 - 2021	6,628	2,021	30%	3,178	48%	782	12%	642	10%		
Cumbria	2019 - 2020	35,039	10,892	31%	18,047	52%	3,168	9%	2,932	8%		
	2020 - 2021	26,070	8,510	33%	12,789	49%	2,073	8%	2,696	10%		
Derbyshire	2019 - 2020	13,124	11,218	85%	411	3%	1,415	11%	80	1%		
	2020 - 2021	19,789	15,263	77%	493	2%	3,777	19%	248	1%		
Devon and Cornwall	2019 - 2020	63,306	24,283	38%	34,692	55%	571	1%	3,760	6%		
	2020 - 2021	77,086	28,101	36%	42,620	55%	3,693	5%	2,670	3%		
Dorset	2019 - 2020	23,825	19,602	82%	497	2%	2,617	11%	1,107	5%		
	2020 - 2021	16,640	13,143	79%	301	2%	2,250	14%	746	4%		
Durham	2019 - 2020	14,632	5,052	35%	7,121	49%	934	6%	1,525	10%		
	2020 - 2021	8,357	2,903	35%	4,766	57%	290	3%	398	5%		
Essex	2019 - 2020	83,998	28,105	33%	47,194	56%	2,331	3%	6,368	8%		
	2020 - 2021	54,472	18,992	35%	29,100	53%	3,347	6%	3,033	6%		

³ Figures may differ from those in the RAC Foundation's previous report because of corrections/amendments to the official data since first publication.

Police Force	Year	Total Number of speeding offences detected	Total number of speeding offences dealt with by FPN	Proportion of speeding offences dealt with by FPN	Total number of speeding offences dealt with by speed awareness course	Proportion of speeding offences dealt with by speed awareness courses	Total number of speeding offences cancelled	Proportion of speeding offences cancelled	Total number of speeding offences ending in court action	Proportion of speeding offences taken to court	Total number of speeding offences ending in potential prosecution	Proportion of speeding offences ending in potential prosecution
Gloucestershire	2019 - 2020	31,582	10,345	33%	17,057	54%	1,719	5%	2,460	8%		
	2020 - 2021	25,268	9,107	36%	12,728	50%	1,727	7%	1,574	6%		
Greater Manchester	2019 - 2020	158,155	37,065	23%	66,399	42%	45,424	29%	9,267	6%		
	2020 - 2021	178,123	37,976	21%	57,806	32%	68,672	39%	12,412	7%		
Hampshire	2019 - 2020	89,315	26,277	29%	47,317	53%	9,025	10%	6,694	7%		
	2020 - 2021	65,356	18,749	29%	32,333	49%	6,944	11%	7,305	11%		
Hertfordshire	2019 - 2020	67,398	15,834	23%	31,665	47%	14,785	22%	4,886	7%		
	2020 - 2021	50,047	11,556	23%	20,493	41%	10,029	20%	4,579	9%		
Humberside	2019 - 2020	45,786	15,412	34%	23,567	51%	1,988	4%	4,819	11%		
	2020 - 2021	48,174	16,364	34%	22,387	46%	4,543	9%	4,879	10%		
Kent	2019 - 2020	22,082	16,437	74%	368	2%	2,150	10%	2,682	12%		
	2020 - 2021	31,684	22,284	70%	693	2%	3,978	13%	4,245	13%		
Lancashire	2019 - 2020	71,303	19,405	27%	33,702	47%	6,115	9%	12,043	17%		
	2020 - 2021	55,154	14,439	26%	22,865	41%	6,704	12%	10,752	19%		
Leicestershire	2019 - 2020	49,604	13,177	27%	24,609	50%	8,193	17%	3,625	7%		
	2020 - 2021	31,084	8,150	26%	13,480	43%	5,878	19%	3,449	11%		
Lincolnshire	2019 - 2020	65,033	19,648	30%	29,255	45%	7,142	11%	8,987	14%		
	2020 - 2021	123,533	38,190	31%	50,689	41%	20,695	17%	13,885	11%		
Merseyside	2019 - 2020	70,057	19,642	28%	32,480	46%	8,542	12%	9,393	13%		
	2020 - 2021	66,498	19,350	29%	32,139	48%	4,012	6%	10,983	17%		
Norfolk and Suffolk	2019 - 2020	93,322	28,879	31%	47,363	51%	9,233	10%	7,847	8%		
	2020 - 2021	95,181	27,326	29%	42,288	44%	14,455	15%	11,050	12%		
North Wales	2019 - 2020	19,037	15,572	82%	395	2%	254	1%	2,814	15%		
	2020 - 2021	15,535	12,458	80%	196	1%	290	2%	2,591	17%		
North Yorkshire	2019 - 2020	85,016	31,927	38%	47,543	56%	1,887	2%	3,658	4%		
	2020 - 2021	73,658	28,084	38%	40,258	55%	2,324	3%	2,990	4%		
Northamptonshire	2019 - 2020	64,716	21,281	33%	33,844	52%	6,037	9%	3,539	5%		
	2020 - 2021	62,414	20,312	33%	30,047	48%	8,954	14%	3,039	5%		
Northumbria	2019 - 2020	66,585	21,906	33%	34,795	52%	5,519	8%	4,225	6%		
	2020 - 2021	57,753	19,130	33%	25,902	45%	6,876	12%	5,182	9%		

Police Force	Year	Total Number of speeding offences detected	Total number of speeding offences dealt with by FPN	Proportion of speeding offences dealt with by FPN	Total number of speeding offences dealt with by speed awareness course	Proportion of speeding offences dealt with by speed awareness courses	Total number of speeding offences cancelled	Proportion of speeding offences cancelled	Total number of speeding offences ending in court action	Proportion of speeding offences taken to court	Total number of speeding offences ending in potential prosecution	Proportion of speeding offences ending in potential prosecution
Nottinghamshire	2019 - 2020	21,791	19,222	88%	91	0%	307	1%	2,171	10%		
	2020 - 2021	21,207	17,954	85%	181	1%	637	3%	2,435	11%		
South Yorkshire	2019 - 2020	59,867	18,977	32%	36,597	61%	868	1%	3,425	6%		
	2020 - 2021	48,771	15,921	33%	26,805	55%	3,571	7%	2,473	5%		
Staffordshire	2019 - 2020	58,708	18,253	31%	27,573	47%	5,626	10%	7,240	12%		
	2020 - 2021	55,902	18,378	33%	22,611	40%	6,970	12%	7,906	14%		
Surrey	2019 - 2020	84,465	26,450	31%	34,841	41%	2,711	3%	20,463	24%		
	2020 - 2021	78,647	24,001	31%	28,215	36%	2,269	3%	14,380	18%		
Sussex	2019 - 2020	65,954	18,184	28%	31,676	48%	9,086	14%	7,008	11%		
	2020 - 2021	54,028	16,323	30%	24,517	45%	6,820	13%	6,366	12%		
Thames Valley	2019 - 2020	124,512	43,759	35%	70,499	57%	6,138	5%	3,598	3%		
	2020 - 2021	100,622	36,364	36%	52,102	52%	5,954	6%	3,715	4%		
Wales (except North Wales)	2019 - 2020	41,036	28,806	70%	81	0%	1,384	3%	10,765	26%		
	2020 - 2021	35,389	24,004	68%	120	0%	1,972	6%	9,293	26%		
Warwickshire	2019 - 2020	45,560	12,367	27%	21,258	47%	10,343	23%	1,577	3%		
	2020 - 2021	34,132	8,090	24%	11,319	33%	13,239	39%	1,431	4%		
West Mercia	2019 - 2020	85,319	28,174	33%	43,117	51%	9,123	11%	4,901	6%		
	2020 - 2021	75,719	24,204	32%	37,059	49%	10,069	13%	4,335	6%		
West Midlands	2019 - 2020	66,353	16,018	24%	28,181	42%	12,862	19%	9,292	14%		
	2020 - 2021	74,407	17,229	23%	31,189	42%	18,238	25%	7,734	10%		
West Yorkshire	2019 - 2020	177,013	45,132	25%	74,837	42%	29,755	17%	27,287	15%		
	2020 - 2021	180,432	51,800	29%	65,695	36%	41,829	23%	18,479	10%		
Wiltshire	2019 - 2020	582	377	65%	130	22%	14	2%	59	10%		
	2020 - 2021	912	549	60%	241	26%	17	2%	105	12%		
Total England and Wales	2019 - 2020	2,584,571	820,308	32%	1,168,721	45%	330,623	13%	262,793	10%		
	2020 - 2021	2,426,950	762,336	31%	977,587	40%	404,335	17%	233,080	10%	22,017	1%

Table 4: Speeding offence detections by police force areas 2012 - 2013 to 2020 - 2021

Police Force	2012 - 2013	2013 - 2014	2014 - 2015	2015 - 2016	2016 - 2017	2017 - 2018	2018 - 2019	2019 - 2020	2020 - 2021	% Change 2012 - 2013 - 2020 - 2021
Avon and Somerset	95,105	88,428	111,502	120,037	184,654	199,336	159,210	108,433	100,396	6%
Bedfordshire	15,156	35,019	50,401	47,546	68,262	74,297	76,573	72,784	51,862	242%
Cambridgeshire	36,577	26,014	50,582	44,703	38,486	45,763	34,672	45,919	35,930	-2%
Cheshire	38,418	35,319	49,762	49,843	54,787	58,408	52,770	64,269	27,810	-28%
City of London / Metropolitan Police	86,693	91,259	95,996	79,432	88,044	139,318	157,494	214,409	262,280	203%
Cleveland	17,028	11,983	7,889	10,796	13,486	11,308	11,937	14,682	6,628	-61%
Cumbria	38,772	37,556	38,462	38,377	45,734	45,702	40,104	35,039	26,070	-33%
Derbyshire	10,015	9,158	18,034	11,984	10,202	10,480	12,255	13,124	19,789	98%
Devon and Cornwall	15,132	13,199	17,177	25,210	41,994	42,888	47,272	63,306	77,086	409%
Dorset	27,265	27,484	24,630	26,227	24,980	23,027	22,716	23,825	16,640	-39%
Durham	8,143	7,586	7,044	6,846	7,430	8,802	19,395	14,632	8,357	3%
Essex	28,823	45,706	73,170	79,049	98,545	95,967	91,849	83,998	54,472	89%
Gloucestershire	12,495	15,001	20,934	18,090	24,988	21,727	24,121	31,582	25,268	102%
Greater Manchester	118,471	82,740	91,064	127,367	120,094	101,421	106,839	158,155	178,123	50%
Hampshire	88,183	84,857	80,907	88,658	81,213	79,126	73,031	89,315	65,356	-26%
Hertfordshire	49,330	47,715	58,826	78,131	66,912	51,158	52,794	67,398	50,047	1%
Humberside	48,291	56,811	53,058	53,732	54,948	57,930	53,679	45,786	48,174	-0%
Kent	24,758	28,818	26,885	21,660	18,347	18,878	20,366	22,082	31,684	28%
Lancashire	52,860	55,617	65,109	69,547	64,680	61,242	74,286	71,303	55,154	4%
Leicestershire	33,759	34,189	47,043	38,696	40,445	37,340	41,909	49,604	31,084	-8%
Lincolnshire	22,182	48,003	51,310	48,280	54,190	47,020	45,705	65,033	123,533	457%
Merseyside	46,467	50,379	50,503	59,611	66,828	60,681	53,112	70,057	66,498	43%
Norfolk and Suffolk	78,168	87,765	90,157	75,741	88,500	92,750	98,729	93,322	95,181	22%
North Wales	14,234	14,356	18,866	17,416	19,891	20,462	19,493	19,037	15,535	9%
North Yorkshire	20,411	41,896	45,517	30,370	30,459	29,922	41,934	85,016	73,658	261%
Northamptonshire	21,440	22,004	42,023	59,628	51,664	47,860	49,448	64,716	62,414	191%
Northumbria	73,936	94,093	67,476	62,838	57,074	66,327	67,856	66,585	57,753	-22%
Nottinghamshire	24,195	27,082	34,545	35,626	26,101	27,155	24,565	21,791	21,207	-12%
South Yorkshire	45,523	52,243	41,951	46,093	41,090	47,811	55,461	59,867	48,771	7%

Police Force	2012 - 2013	2013 - 2014	2014 - 2015	2015 - 2016	2016 - 2017	2017 - 2018	2018 - 2019	2019 - 2020	2020 - 2021	% Change 2012 - 2013 - 2020 - 2021
Staffordshire	19,923	50,517	51,861	41,373	29,396	41,392	48,584	58,708	55,902	181%
Surrey	51,086	54,310	51,745	72,218	47,732	74,163	89,077	84,465	78,647	54%
Sussex	68,030	56,974	58,975	63,651	68,541	56,828	54,139	65,954	54,028	-21%
Thames Valley	152,328	153,430	139,674	145,639	138,275	131,400	145,443	124,512	100,622	-34%
Wales (except North Wales)	47,621	38,843	49,913	45,268	38,808	43,425	34,979	41,036	35,389	-26%
Warwickshire	35,765	43,488	41,353	48,821	47,185	43,409	52,774	45,560	34,132	-5%
West Mercia	83,577	78,580	98,560	86,992	81,989	66,858	92,335	85,319	75,719	-9%
West Midlands	74,707	56,587	52,580	44,395	53,097	34,966	57,154	66,353	74,407	-0%
West Yorkshire	108,314	78,267	88,855	130,174	123,217	174,796	181,853	177,013	180,432	67%
Wiltshire	3,819	4,782	2,108	1,287	989	1,191	807	582	912	-76%
Total England and Wales	1,837,000	1,888,058	2,066,447	2,151,352	2,213,257	2,292,534	2,386,720	2,584,571	2,426,950	32%

Figure 1: Comparing the number of speed limit offences to motor traffic vehicle miles by region

