

Community Safety and Gender¹

Summary:

- Victimization rates for total crime are higher amongst men than women, both nationally and locally.
- Women are also more likely to experience domestic and sexual violence, both of which are typically under-reported to the police.
- Women are more likely to think that crime has increased in the last year.
- Women feel less safe in their neighbourhoods after dark than men, although this difference is not evident in the city centre.

Police recorded crime data

Total crime

Figure 1

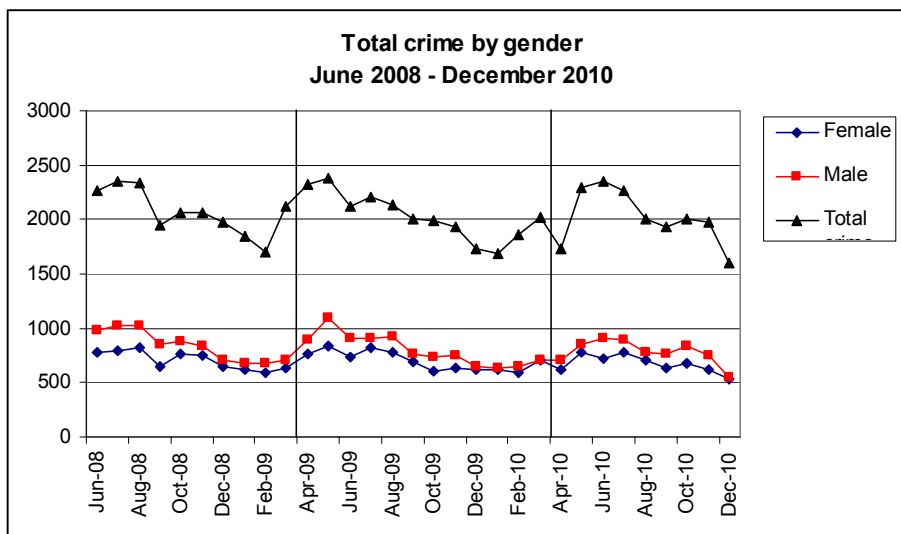


Figure 1 shows both total crime², and crime against men and women separately. Both the number, and rate, of crimes committed against men are higher than those committed against women. The 2009 mid-year population estimates show that 51% of Brighton and Hove

¹ Data used in this report is downloaded from the live system at Sussex Police each month. This data has not been audited or verified by statisticians at Police HQ, therefore it represents a reflection of crime and disorder in the area, rather than the authorised and fully verified 'performance data'.

² Please note that not all crimes have the gender of the victim recorded, or indeed are against an individual victim. Some crimes will be committed against businesses, for example, and when 'total crime' is referred to, this includes all offences.

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residents are female and 49% are male. With a greater number of females compared to males, one might expect to see a slightly higher number of crimes with female victims, yet in 2010, of those crimes where the victim was an individual, 53% were committed against men, compared with 47% against women. Nationally, victimisation for women of any crime is also lower than that for males; the 2009/10 British Crime Survey showed that 23% of men had been victims of any crime in the last year, compared with 20% of women. However, crimes relating to domestic and sexual violence are disproportionately experienced by women, and also tend to have a high proportion of offences which go unreported to the police, so this may influence the overall gender balance of the statistics presented.

Crime type breakdown by gender

Figure 2

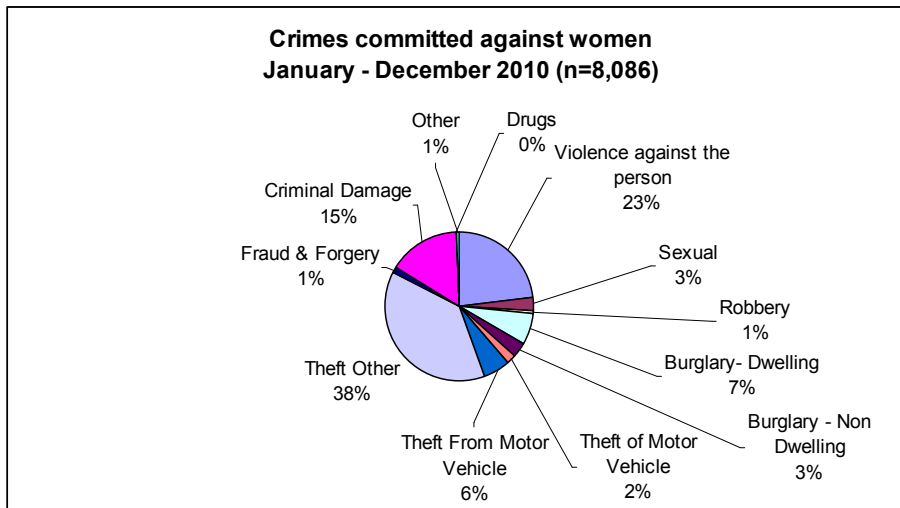
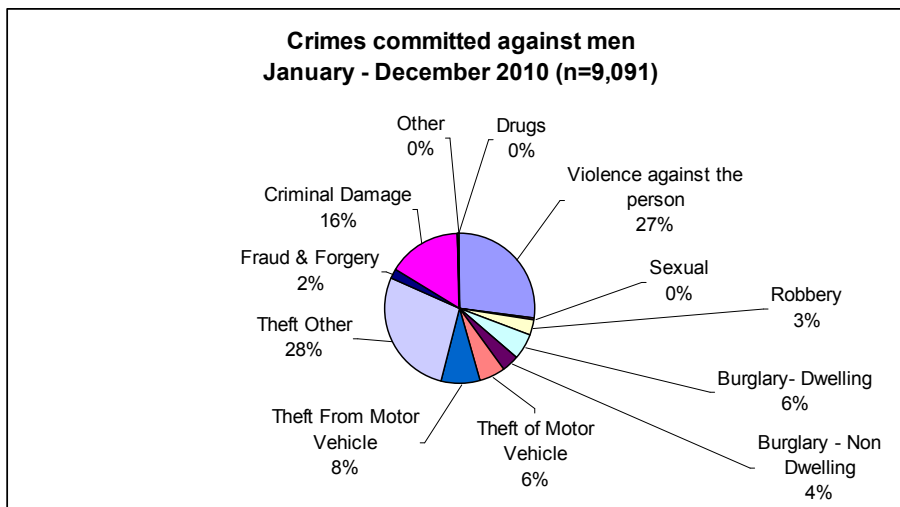


Figure 3



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Figures 2 and 3 show the proportion of all offences committed against men and women, broken down by crime type.

Figure 2 shows that the largest proportion of offences committed against women are theft other offences (38%). These make up a higher proportion of offences than seen in figure 3, in offences committed against men. This is likely to be due to women carrying handbags etc. which can be targeted in theft, and theft from person offences.

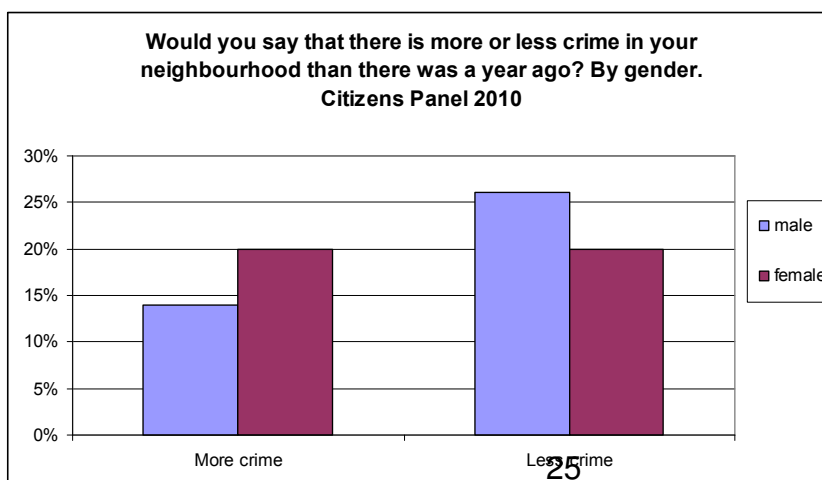
Violence against the person offences account for 23% of offences committed against women in this time period, compared with 27% of offences committed against men.

Although the proportion of violence against the person offences for both men and women are similar, the types of offences which are committed vary with gender. For example, men are more likely than women to become a victim of public place, or stranger violence, whilst women are disproportionately victims of domestic violence³, which has a high rate of repeat victimisation. As this data records the number of crimes with a male or female victim, rather than the number of individual male and female victims, women's increased likelihood of being a repeat victim of violent crime is likely to affect local statistics.

Figures 2 and 3 show that sexual offences account for 3% of police recorded offences committed against women, and 0.3% of offence committed against men. However, many sexual offences go unreported to the police.

There are further complexities in analysing crime types by victim gender. For example, crimes such as burglary may be committed against multiple people in the same household; however, as only one crime is recorded per household, the gender of the victim is presumably determined by who reports the crime to the police. This also affects crimes such as theft of and from motor vehicles. The gender breakdown of victims of these crimes will also be affected by differences in ownership rates by men and women. Figures 2 and 3 show that in offences committed against men, for example, theft of a motor vehicle offences account for 6% of all offences committed against men, compared with 2% of offences committed against women.

Figure 4



Citizens Panel survey

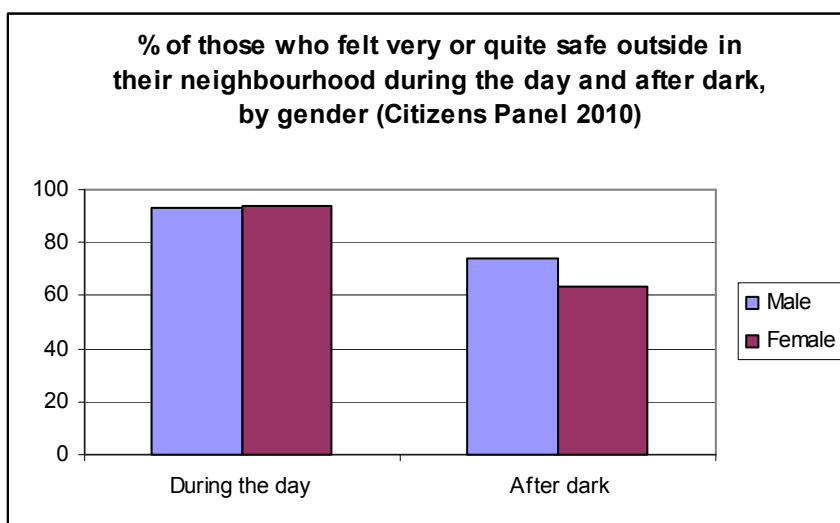
person offences.
offences, criminal

The Citizens Panel 2010 asked respondents if they thought that there was more or less crime in their neighbourhood than there was a year ago. This showed that women were more likely than men to think that crime had increased, and less likely to think that crime had decreased in the last year. 14% of male respondents thought that crime had increased in the past year, compared with 20% of female respondents. 26% of male respondents thought that crime had decreased in the past year, compared to 20% of female respondents.

The Citizens Panel survey also asked respondents how safe they felt both during the day and after dark in both their local neighbourhood and in the city centre. The results, broken down by gender, are available below.

Feelings of safety in local neighbourhoods

Figure 5



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There is very little difference in feelings of safety amongst men and women when asked how safe they feel outside in their local neighbourhood during the day. However, a gender difference can be seen between men and women in their feelings of safety at night, where 74% of men felt very or quite safe outside in their neighbourhood at night, compared with 63% of women.

Feelings of safety in the city centre

Figure 6

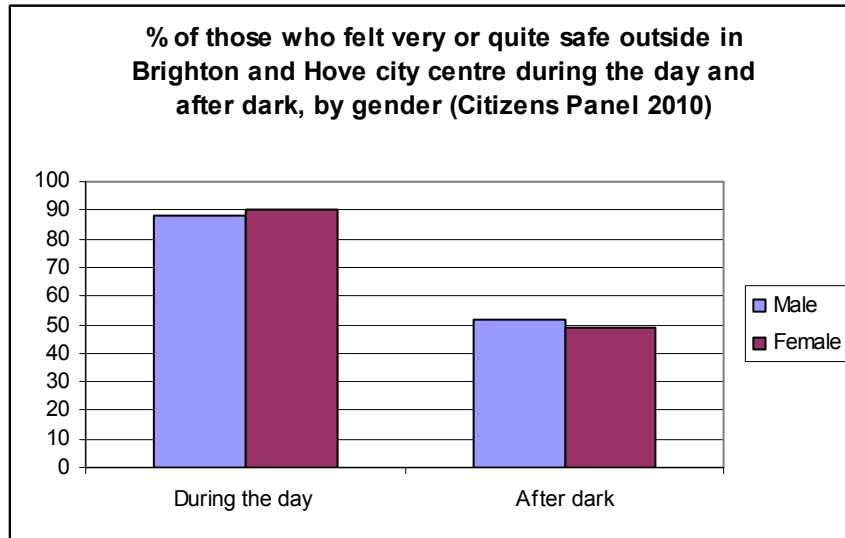


Figure 6 shows that there are only slight differences between men and women's feelings of safety in the city centre, both during the day and at night. During the day, 90% of women feel very or fairly safe in the city centre, compared with 88% of men. After dark, 52% of men feel very or fairly safe in the city centre, compared with 49% of women.

