

Police Service of Northern Ireland

# Agricultural and Rural Crime in Northern Ireland: Quarterly Update to 31 March 2017

Prepared 16 May 2017



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This bulletin presents (i) agricultural and (ii) rural crime for the latest financial year 2016/17 and the previous financial year 2015/16.

Figures for financial years dating back to 2010/11 and for calendar years dating back to 2011 are available in a separate spreadsheet.

**Agriculture Crime:** the agricultural crime figures in this bulletin represent offences of burglary, robbery and theft where the victim is involved in an agricultural-based activity. Agricultural crime covers burglary, robbery and theft offences where the property or vehicles stolen have an agricultural link (e.g. farm equipment, agricultural vehicles, livestock) or where the location was agricultural (e.g. farm, farmhouse). This information is identified from both drop down pick lists and free text searches using key agricultural-related words.

**Urban/Rural crime:** this covers all burglary, robbery and theft offences, split into these two geographical areas based on an aggregation of settlement bands. Please note that not all agricultural crime will occur in a rural settlement.

The urban/rural crime split is based on classification boundaries that are available for Northern Ireland as defined by the Planning Service, these areas being defined from Settlement Development Limits. Further details are available from the NISRA website (<http://www.nisra.gov.uk/support/geography/urban-rural-classification>). Crimes are allocated to urban or rural by linking the available postcode information for the crime location to the Central Postcode Directory.

**Please note:** all figures contained in these tables are subject to revision. Further information is provided in the NOTES section on the last page of this bulletin.

### Key Points

#### Agricultural crime figures - burglary, robbery and theft offences relating to agricultural-based activity

- The number of burglary, robbery and theft offences relating to agricultural-based activity has shown an overall downwards trend since 2010/11, when 937 such offences were recorded. The lowest level recorded was in 2015/16 (514 offences). This has since increased by 68 offences (13.2%) to 582 recorded in 2016/17 and is the second lowest level recorded since 2010/11. [Table 1 in accompanying spreadsheet].
- During 2016/17:
  - burglary and robbery represented 31 per cent of agricultural crime, while theft represented 69 per cent; these are the same as the proportions found during 2015/16 [Table 4 in bulletin].
  - 98 per cent of agriculture crime was identified as occurring in rural settlement areas, compared with 95 per cent during 2015/16<sup>1</sup> [Table 3 in bulletin].
  - agriculture crime represented 1.8 per cent of all burglary, robbery and theft offences, compared with 1.5 per cent during 2015/16 [Tables 1 and 5 in bulletin]. The proportion seen in 2016/17 is similar to 2014/15 (1.9 per cent), while between 2010/11 and 2013/14 the proportion was 2.3 to 2.4 per cent.
  - the highest levels of agriculture crime were seen in Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon policing district, with 104 offences recorded. This level was followed by Newry, Mourne & Down (90), Fermanagh & Omagh (67), Mid Ulster (66) and Causeway Coast & Glens (63) [Table 1 in bulletin].
- Eight of the policing districts showed increases and two showed decreases in agriculture crime when comparing 2016/17 with 2015/16; Belfast City showed no change with 2 recorded in each time period. The increases were seen in Mid & East Antrim (21), Antrim & Newtownabbey (14), Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon (13), Derry City & Strabane (10), Newry, Mourne & Down (9), Mid Ulster (6), Causeway Coast & Glens (5) and Ards & North Down (2). The decreases were seen in Lisburn & Castlereagh City (-11) and Fermanagh & Omagh (-1) [Table 1 in bulletin].

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<sup>1</sup> Urban/rural settlement figures are identified through matching the postcode of the occurrence with the Central Postcode Directory.

**Burglary, robbery and theft offences relating to geographical location (urban/rural settlement bands<sup>2</sup>)**

- The number of burglary, robbery and theft offences in rural settlements has fallen each year since 2010/11. There were 356 fewer offences when comparing 2016/17 with 2015/16; the level of 5,876 recorded in 2016/17 is more than a third lower than the 9,211 offences recorded in 2010/11 [Table 5 in accompanying spreadsheet].
- Levels of burglary, robbery and theft offences in urban settlements have fluctuated since 2010/11, falling between 2010/11 and 2012/13, increasing to 2013/14 and falling again in each year since. When comparing 2016/17 with 2015/16, urban settlements showed a decrease of 2,855 (10.0 per cent) in the number of burglary, robbery and theft offences recorded [Table 5 in accompanying spreadsheet].
- In Northern Ireland as a whole, burglary, robbery and theft offences fell by 3,211 (9.2 per cent) when comparing 2016/17 with 2015/16 [Table 5 in bulletin and accompanying spreadsheet].
- During 2016/17 less than 1 per cent of burglary, robbery and theft offences in Belfast City district occurred in rural settlement areas [Table 5 in bulletin and accompanying spreadsheet].
- In the remaining districts, the percentage of burglary, robbery and theft offences occurring in rural settlement areas was 58 per cent in Mid Ulster, 46 per cent in Fermanagh & Omagh, 40 per cent in Newry, Mourne & Down, 36 per cent in Causeway Coast & Glens, 29 per cent in Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon, 27 per cent in Mid & East Antrim, 24 per cent in Lisburn & Castlereagh City, 22 per cent in Antrim & Newtownabbey, 19 per cent in Ards & North Down and 19 per cent in Derry City & Strabane [Table 5 in bulletin and accompanying spreadsheet].

**Section 1: Agricultural crime figures - burglary, robbery and theft offences relating to agricultural-based activity****Table 1 Agriculture Crime (burglary, robbery and theft offences for agricultural-based activity) by Policing District**

	Numbers		
	2015/16	2016/17	change
Belfast City	2	2	0
Lisburn & Castlereagh City	32	21	-11
Ards & North Down	19	21	2
Newry, Mourne & Down	81	90	9
Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon	91	104	13
Mid Ulster	60	66	6
Fermanagh & Omagh	68	67	-1
Derry City & Strabane	35	45	10
Causeway Coast & Glens	58	63	5
Mid & East Antrim	32	53	21
Antrim & Newtownabbey	36	50	14
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<b>514</b>	<b>582</b>	<b>68</b>

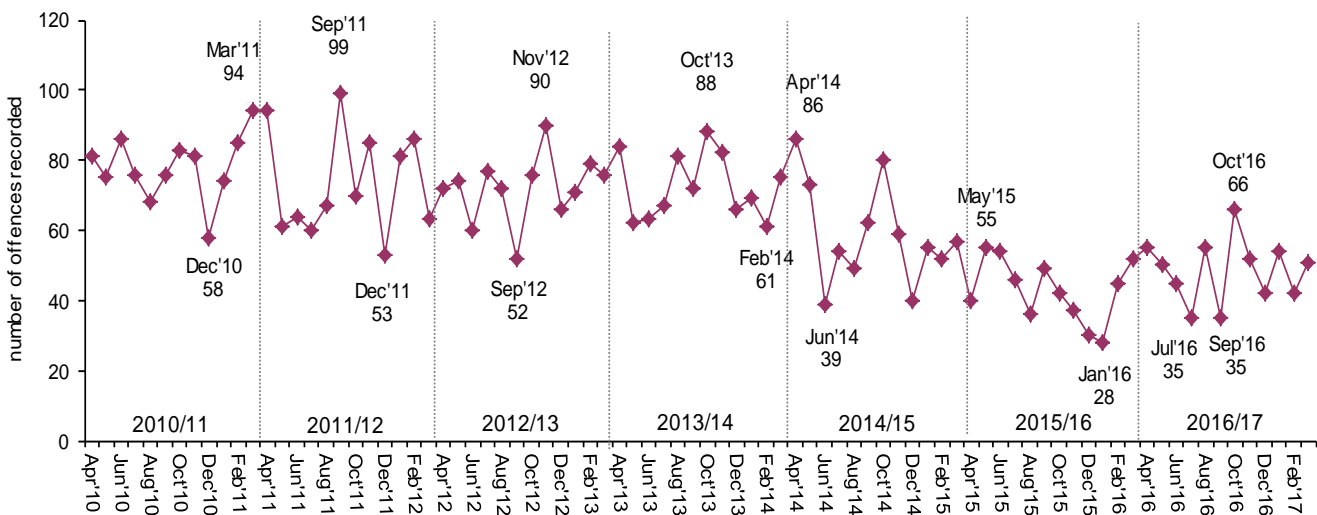
<sup>2</sup> Urban/rural settlement figures are identified through matching the postcode of the occurrence with the Central Postcode Directory.

**Table 2 Agriculture Crime (burglary, robbery and theft offences for agricultural-based activity) by month, 1 April 2010 to 31 March 2017**

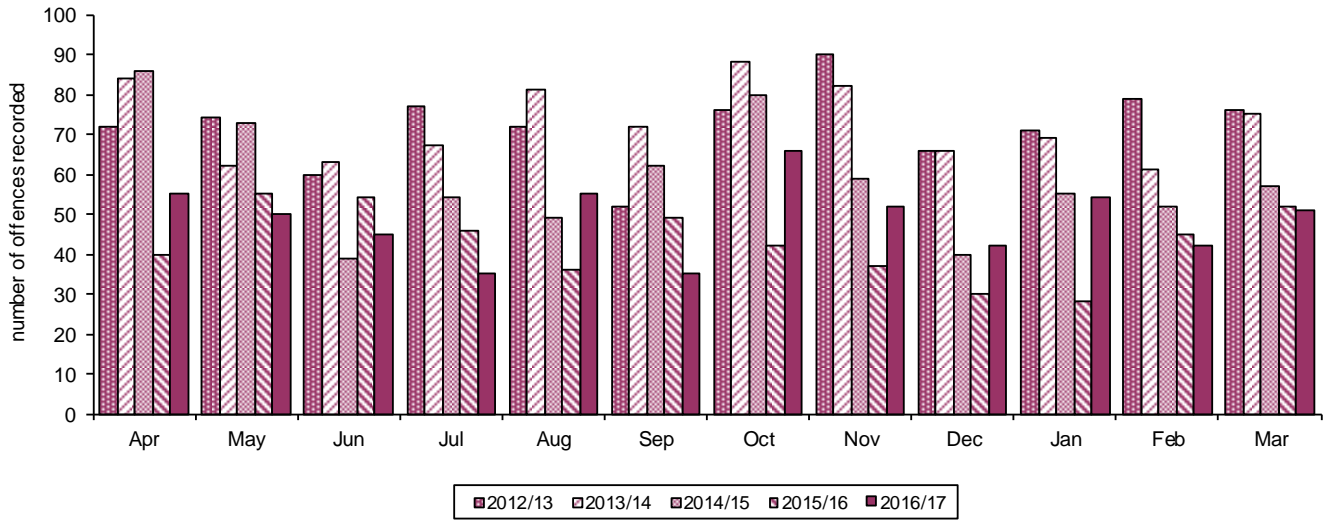
	Numbers											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2010	-	-	-	81	75	86	76	68	76	83	81	58
2011	74	85	94	94	61	64	60	67	99	70	85	53
2012	81	86	63	72	74	60	77	72	52	76	90	66
2013	71	79	76	84	62	63	67	81	72	88	82	66
2014	69	61	75	86	73	39	54	49	62	80	59	40
2015	55	52	57	40	55	54	46	36	49	42	37	30
2016	28	45	52	55	50	45	35	55	35	66	52	42
2017	54	42	51	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Figure 1 below shows the number of agriculture crimes each month since April 2010. The highest and lowest monthly figures within each financial year are highlighted in the chart.

**Figure 1 Agriculture Crime (burglary, robbery and theft offences for agricultural-based activity) by month, 1 April 2010 to 31 March 2017**



**Figure 2 Agriculture Crime (burglary, robbery and theft offences for agricultural-based activity) by month, 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2017**



**Table 3 Agriculture Crime (burglary, robbery and theft offences for agricultural-based activity) split by Urban/Rural settlements**

	Numbers		
	2015/16	2016/17	change
Urban	25	13	-12
Rural	489	569	80
Not known	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>514</b>	<b>582</b>	<b>68</b>

**Table 4 Agriculture Crime (burglary, robbery and theft offences for agricultural-based activity) split by type of offence**

	Numbers		
	2015/16	2016/17	change
Burglary / Robbery	159	183	24
Theft	355	399	44
<b>Total</b>	<b>514</b>	<b>582</b>	<b>68</b>

**Section 2: Burglary, robbery and theft offences relating to geographical location (based on settlement bands defined as urban and rural)****Table 5 Urban/Rural Crime (burglary, robbery and theft offences based on geographical location) by Policing District**

	Numbers					
	Urban		Rural		Total	
	2015/16	2016/17	2015/16	2016/17	2015/16	2016/17
Belfast City	13,941	12,528	68	37	14,009	12,565
Lisburn & Castlereagh City	1,469	1,458	594	456	2,063	1,914
Ards & North Down	1,524	1,453	295	331	1,819	1,784
Newry, Mourne & Down	1,637	1,507	1,083	998	2,720	2,505
Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon	2,113	2,004	912	825	3,025	2,829
Mid Ulster	619	535	632	735	1,251	1,270
Fermanagh & Omagh	810	761	711	637	1,521	1,398
Derry City & Strabane	2,325	1,747	379	411	2,704	2,158
Causeway Coast & Glens	1,131	929	576	520	1,707	1,449
Mid & East Antrim	1,302	1,284	465	484	1,767	1,768
Antrim & Newtownabbey	1,786	1,596	517	442	2,303	2,038
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<b>28,657</b>	<b>25,802</b>	<b>6,232</b>	<b>5,876</b>	<b>34,889</b>	<b>31,678</b>

Urban/rural settlement figures are identified through matching the postcode of the occurrence with the Central Postcode Directory.

## NOTES

Like any administrative data, police recorded crime statistics are affected by the rules governing the recording of data, systems in place and operational decisions in respect of the allocation of resources. More proactive policing in a given area could lead to an increase in crimes recorded without any real change in underlying crime trends. These issues need to be taken into account when using these data.

### Definitions

**Agricultural crime** covers burglary, robbery and theft offences where the property or vehicles stolen have an agricultural link (e.g. farm equipment, agricultural vehicles, livestock) or where the location was agricultural (e.g. farm, farmhouse). This information is identified from both drop down pick lists and free text searches using key agricultural-related words.

**Urban/Rural** crime covers all burglary, robbery and theft offences, split into these two geographical areas based on an aggregation of settlement bands.

Please note that not all agricultural crime will occur in a rural settlement.

As part of the **Review of Public Administration** which came into effect on 1 April 2015, PSNI moved from eight to eleven policing districts, with the new policing model becoming fully operational at the end of September 2015.

### Data Accuracy and Revisions

Agricultural crime figures are based on a range of information extracted from a live crime recording system and, as such, will always be subject to revision.

Within the current financial year revisions may occur because:

- There will be incidents identified as crimes but not processed on the crime recording system by the time the figures are extracted for presentation in these tables.
- Figures may change from month to month due to crimes being reclassified from one crime type to another during the financial year. This may be because quality checks have identified the crime as incorrectly classified, or further information may indicate that the circumstances surrounding the crime were not as initially recorded.
- The Home Office Counting Rules allow crimes initially recorded to be 'no crime'd' or removed from the crime figures.

Revisions to any records within the dataset may also occur as information in relation to property stolen, vehicles stolen and location may be updated on the live system. This may be through adding additional information or updating existing information based on more up-to-date details.

The urban/rural figures are identified through matching the available postcode to the Central Postcode Directory. Postcode accuracy and availability within the current financial year will not be of the same quality or completeness as a full financial year. This is because additional quality checks are completed at the end of each financial year to improve postcode quality and completeness. Further details are available in the [User Guide to Police Recorded Crime Statistics in Northern Ireland](#).

### Further information

[Trends in Police Recorded Crime in Northern Ireland 1998/99 to 2015/16](#) was published on 1 December 2016 and provides detailed trend information covering this time period.

Further details on Police Recorded Crime statistics are available in the [User Guide to Police Recorded Crime Statistics in Northern Ireland](#), and in the [Police Recorded Crime Statistics Quality Report](#). These are reference guides with explanatory notes regarding the issues and classifications which are key to the production and presentation of police recorded crime statistics.

Copies of other PSNI publications are available from the PSNI Internet site:

<https://www.psni.police.uk/inside-psni/Statistics/>

For further information about the police recorded crime statistics for Northern Ireland, or to contact the PSNI Crime Statistician please:

Email: [statistics@psni.police.uk](mailto:statistics@psni.police.uk);

Write to: Statistics Branch, Lisnasharragh, 42 Montgomery Road, Belfast, BT6 9LD; or

Telephone: 028 9065 0222 ext 24135