



FOCUS ON THEFT

Tamar Dinisman, Ania Moroz
April 2016

www.victimsupport.org.uk

Contents

Introduction.....	04
Note on the data source.....	07
Who is more at risk of becoming a victim of theft?.....	08
Personal characteristics.....	08
Household characteristics.....	12
Area characteristics.....	14
Which risk factors are the strongest.....	16
Personal theft.....	17
Household theft.....	17
Change in the trend of risk factors over the years.....	18
Conclusions.....	27

List of figures

Figure 1: Long-term trends in total CSEW crime and property crime from 1981 to 2014/15.....	3
Figure 2: Proportion of victims of theft by age group.....	7
Figure 3: Proportion of victims of theft by ethnicity background.....	8
Figure 4: Proportion of victims of theft by marital status.....	8
Figure 5: Proportion of victims of theft by employment status.....	9
Figure 6: Proportion of victims of theft by visits to a pub/bar in the last month.....	10
Figure 7: Proportion of victims of theft by household income.....	11
Figure 8: Proportion of victims of theft by household structure.....	11
Figure 9: Proportion of victims of theft by household tenure.....	12
Figure 10: Proportion of victims of theft by living in London or elsewhere.....	13
Figure 11: Proportion of victims of theft by 2011 OAC.....	14
Figure 12: Proportion of victims of personal theft by gender from 2006/07 to 2014/15.....	16
Figure 13: Proportion of victims of personal theft by age group from 2006/07 to 2014/15.....	17
Figure 14: Proportion of victims of household theft by age group from 2006/07 to 2014/15.....	17
Figure 15: Proportion of victims of personal theft by marital status from 2006/07 to 2014/15.....	18
Figure 16: Proportion of victims of household theft by marital status from 2006/07 to 2014/15.....	18
Figure 17: Proportion of victims of personal theft by ethnicity background from 2006/07 to 2014/15.....	19
Figure 18: Proportion of victims of household theft by ethnicity background from 2006/07 to 2014/15.....	19
Figure 19: Proportion of victims of personal theft by frequency of bar/pub visits in the last month from 2006/07 to 2014/15.....	20
Figure 20: Proportion of victims of personal theft by frequency of nightclub visits in the last month from 2006/07 to 2014/15.....	20
Figure 21: Proportion of victims of personal theft by household structure from 2006/07 to 2014/15.....	21
Figure 22: Proportion of victims of household theft by household structure from 2006/07 to 2014/15.....	22
Figure 23: Proportion of victims of personal theft by household income from 2006/07 to 2014/15.....	22
Figure 24: Proportion of victims of household theft by household income from 2006/07 to 2014/15.....	23
Figure 25: Proportion of victims of household theft by household tenure from 2006/07 to 2014/15.....	23
Figure 26: Proportion of victims of personal theft by living in London or elsewhere from 2006/07 to 2014/15.....	24
Figure 27: Proportion of victims of household theft by living in London or elsewhere from 2006/07 to 2014/15.....	24

Introduction

Theft is usually defined as “felonious taking and removing of personal property with intent to deprive the rightful owner of it or an unlawful taking of property”.¹ The owner of the property can be an individual, a household or a corporate body.

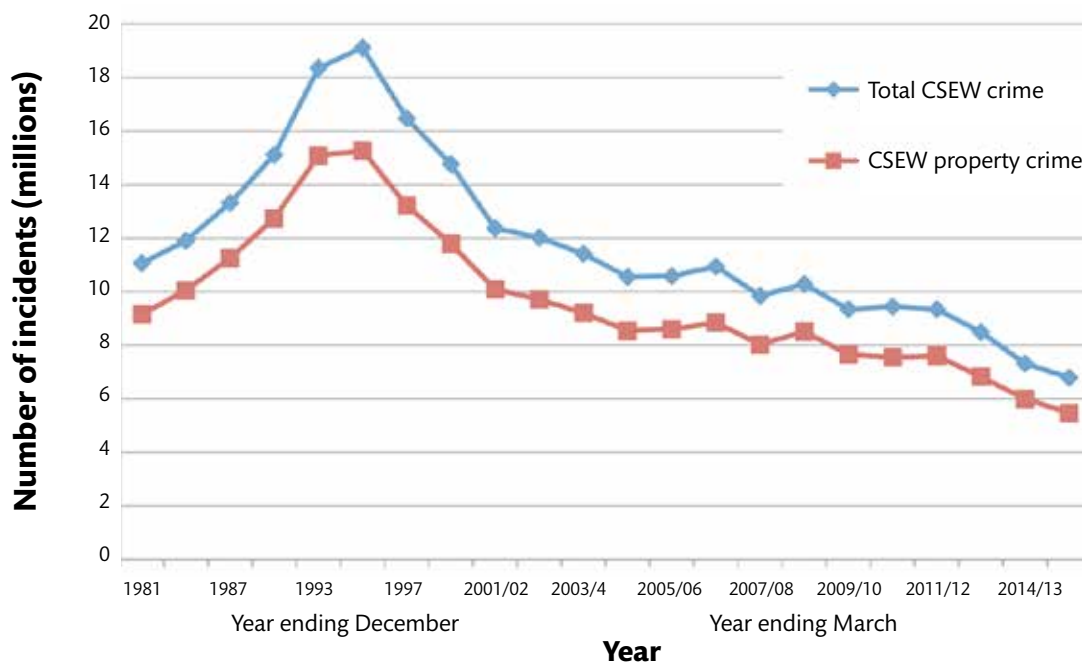
Household theft may include burglary and other household theft, robbery, vehicle offences (which include theft of vehicles or property from vehicles), and bicycle theft. Theft from the person involves snatch thefts (where an element of force may be used to snatch the property away), stealth thefts (where the victim is unaware of the offence being committed – for example, pickpocketing), and robbery (in which violence or the threat of violence is used during a theft).²

The impact of household and personal theft is widespread. Personal and household theft accounted for 59% of all incidents estimated by the Crime Survey for England

and Wales (CSEW) (an estimated 3.9 million incidents) and 40% of all police recorded crime (1.8 million offences) in the year ending September 2015.³ Furthermore, property crime (comprising personal theft, household theft and criminal damage) as a proportion of all crime has remained relatively stable over time, accounting for at least 80% of offences since 1981.⁴

The number of theft incidents detected by the CSEW increased steadily from 1981, reaching a peak in 1995. However, since then, a decline has been reported and, by 2014/15, the number of thefts had fallen by 64% (Figure 1). Most of the decline can be explained by the drop in vehicle-related theft.

Figure 1. Long-term trends in total CSEW crime and property crime from 1981 to 2014/15⁶



Theft from the person remained stable until the 1990s, when it declined; 1.6% of adults were victims of personal theft in 1995 compared with 0.9% in 2014/15. In addition, there has been a shift in the type of goods stolen, with mobile phones now accounting for about half of theft from the person.⁵

One of the explanations for the fall in household and vehicle-related crime is the *security hypothesis*, which suggests that the availability and quality of security devices is a key driver in falling crime.⁷ Indeed, the availability of both household and vehicle security devices increased significantly over the period during which theft fell.⁸ Other explanations include reduced consumption of drugs and alcohol,⁹ improvement in forensic and other crime scene investigation,¹⁰ and longer prison sentences.¹¹

Several theoretical perspectives attempt to explain determinants of the risk of becoming a victim of household and personal theft. According to the *theories of opportunity*, such as the *routine activities theory*¹² and *lifestyle theory*,¹³ people's daily routines, lifestyle, individual characteristics and behaviour play a crucial role by presenting an opportunity for victimisation. A target will be selected when an opportunity presents itself. On the one hand, a suitable target will be one that poses a minimal risk to the offender, or where the capable guardian is absent. Indeed, previous research found that people with physical disability,¹⁴ mental health problems¹⁵ or intellectual disability living in community housing or alone¹⁶ are at increased risk of being a victim of personal or household theft. Moreover, people living alone, younger rather than older people, and males, due to their lifestyle, are more likely to be victims of theft.¹⁷ Other research has found that victims of personal theft and robbery are more likely to be young (16–24), single, professional males with high income, those who own the newest

technology and often engage in night-time activities away from the home.¹⁸ In contrast, other studies did not find that gender, ethnicity or the time of day that the incident occurred had a statistically significant effect on either household and personal theft¹⁹ or daily activities and burglary rate.²⁰

Other theories concentrate more on environmental factors; the *geometric theory of crime* stresses the importance of the routes used by potential offenders and how this enhances their knowledge about the environment, behaviour, and daily routines of potential victims.²¹ Indeed, it has been found that most property crimes take place during an offender's routine activity and within a familiar area;²² thus, people living in deprived neighbourhoods may be at greater risk.²³ Another important risk factor for household theft is the type of house. However, the evidence is inconsistent, with some research suggesting a higher risk for residents of detached and semi-detached houses compared with flats and terraced houses,²⁴ while other studies reported that detached houses had the lowest burglary rate and terraced houses had the highest rate.²⁵

Lastly, the relationship between socioeconomic characteristics and the risk of being a victim of theft is not clear, and it seems that wealth has a twofold impact on victimisation risk. On the one hand, wealthier individuals may possess property and belongings that are more attractive for potential offenders. On the other hand, they have more money to spend on personal and dwelling security. In contrast, although the possessions of people with low incomes are less attractive to offenders, they have less money to protect their houses, hence often become victims of burglary.²⁶

Being a victim of personal and household theft has a significant and undesirable

impact on the individual, the community and the society in general. The effects on the victim include a negative impact on their psychological health, wellbeing²⁷ and perceived safety.²⁸ Research has found that being a target of personal or household theft is associated with emotional suffering and trauma, consequently reducing victims' quality of life.²⁹ Victims may suffer anxiety and stress long after the incident occurs.³⁰ Many victims of robbery reported constraining their activities and behaviour by avoiding risky places and people, changing their social behaviour, and changing the way they look in order to appear as less attractive targets.³¹ Victims may also suffer financial losses as a result of the incident.³²

The community may also be negatively influenced; it has been found that non-victimised people living in an area with a high prevalence of theft experience fear, anxiety, and psychological distress if they perceive an increase in personal risk of victimisation.³³ To reduce the risk, they may avoid certain areas in the neighbourhood, purchase safety devices, stay at home after dark, or even withdraw from community life³⁴ or move house.³⁵ Additional costs to society arise from the involvement of the police and courts, and for the management and rehabilitation of offenders.³⁶

Note on the data source

The data used in this briefing is from the CSEW, mainly from the year ending March 2014 to the year ending March 2015.

The survey is a nationally representative sample of the population resident in households in England and Wales. Participants were asked about their experiences of a range of crimes in the 12 months prior to the interview. Since not all crime is reported to the police, the CSEW provides a more reliable picture of the extent of crime experienced by the population in England and Wales. The CSEW is also a better

indicator of long-term trends than police-recorded crime because it is unaffected by changes in levels of reporting to the police or police-recording practices. Nevertheless, the CSEW does not record all offences; because it is based on the experience of victimisation, it does not cover offences that are often termed 'victimless', such as drug offences or crimes against public- and private-sector organisations – for example, shoplifting.ⁱ

ⁱ For further information on the CSEW and its methods, see: Office for National Statistics. (2016). *Crime Survey for England and Wales: Technical report 2014/2015 volume 1*. London: Office for National Statistics.

Who is more at risk of becoming a victim of theft?

As was pointed out in the introduction, theft consists of two main offences: personal theftⁱⁱ and household theft.ⁱⁱⁱ Therefore, these are also the main components of the current paper, which have been explored separately.^{iv,v}

First, various personal, household and regional elements were analysed to find out what characteristics are associated with being a victim of theft.^{vi}

Personal characteristics

As shown in Figure 2, in general, the likelihood of being a victim of theft decreased with age.

- The two younger age groups – 16–19 and 20–24 – were twice as likely as adults aged 45–54 to be a victim of personal theft. Adults aged 25–34 were also more likely to be a victim, but less likely than the younger groups.
- Adults aged 20–24 and 25–34 had the highest risk of being a victim of household theft – more than the youngest age group (this may be due to the large number of 16–19-year-olds still living in their parents' household).

- However, adults in older age groups were at higher risk of repeat household theft victimisation; adults aged 35–44 were at the highest risk for repeat victimisation (22.3% of victims aged 35–44), followed by those aged 20–24 (21.9% of victims aged 20–24) and 45–54 (20.5% of victims aged 45–54) (not shown in the figure).

Differences were also found for ethnicity background, as can be seen in Figure 3.

- People of mixed ethnicity had the highest risk of being victims of personal theft. People of Chinese or other ethnicity background were also more likely to be victims than the other ethnicity groups.
- In addition, the proportion of repeat victimisation of personal theft is higher for mixed and Chinese or other ethnicity groups, with 29.0% of victims with mixed background and 29.4% of victims with Chinese or other background being victims more than once, compared to 18.1% of victims with black ethnicity background, 9.2% of victims with white ethnicity background and 2.4% of victims with Asian ethnicity background (not shown in the figure).

ⁱⁱ In the current paper, personal theft consists of snatch theft from the person, other theft from the person, other personal theft, and attempts of theft from the person. Since robbery is an offence in which violence or the threat of violence is used, it was included in our briefing paper on violence and will be included here.

ⁱⁱⁱ In the current paper, household theft includes burglary and attempted burglary, theft in a dwelling, theft from outside a dwelling, theft from a meter, theft of/from a car/motorbike, theft of bicycles, and attempted theft.

^{iv} Calculations for 'personal theft' are based on a sample of 33,550 participants. Data was weighted to reflect (as much as possible) the general population of adults in England and Wales.

^v Calculations for 'household theft' are based on a sample of 33,299 households. Data was weighted to reflect (as much as possible) the general population of adults in England and Wales.

^{vi} Differences between categories within each set of characteristics were analysed using chi-square tests. Only statistically significant results are presented (unless indicated otherwise); this refers to a p-value of less than 0.05.

- People of mixed ethnicity were also more likely to be victims of household theft. However, people with Chinese or other ethnicity background were the least likely.
- In addition, people of mixed ethnicity were at higher risk of repeat victimisation of household theft: 36.7% of victims with mixed background were repeat victims compared to only 11.9% of victims with black ethnicity background (not presented in the figure).

Figure 2. Proportion of victims of theft by age group

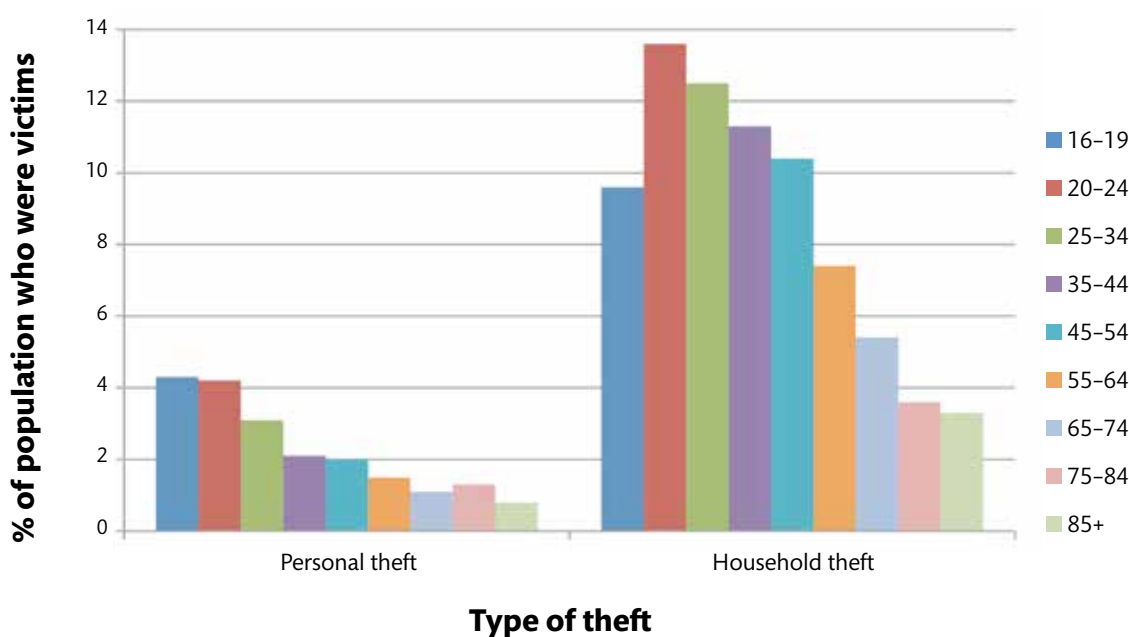
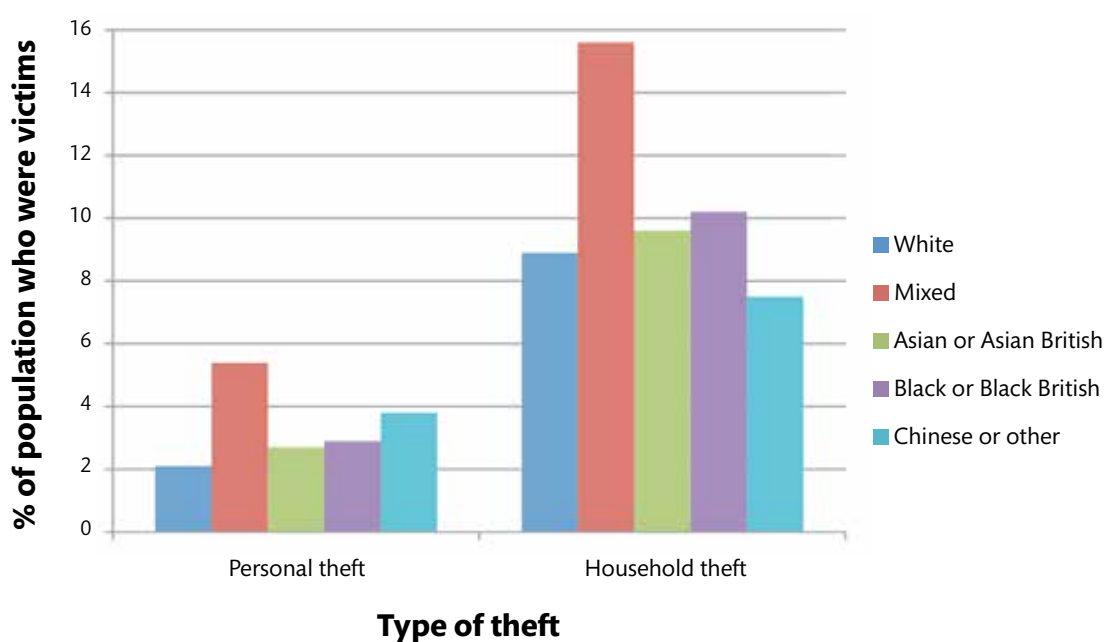


Figure 3. Proportion of victims of theft by ethnicity background



FOCUS ON THEFT

Figure 4 shows the proportion of victims of violent crime by marital status.

- People who identify as single or separated were more likely to be victims of personal theft than those of other marital status. For example, they were twice as likely to be victims as those married or widowed.

- Adults who were single or separated were also more likely to be victims of household theft. However, those who were cohabiting had the highest risk.

People who were unemployed were more likely to be a victim of theft (see Figure 5).

Figure 4. Proportion of victims of theft by marital status

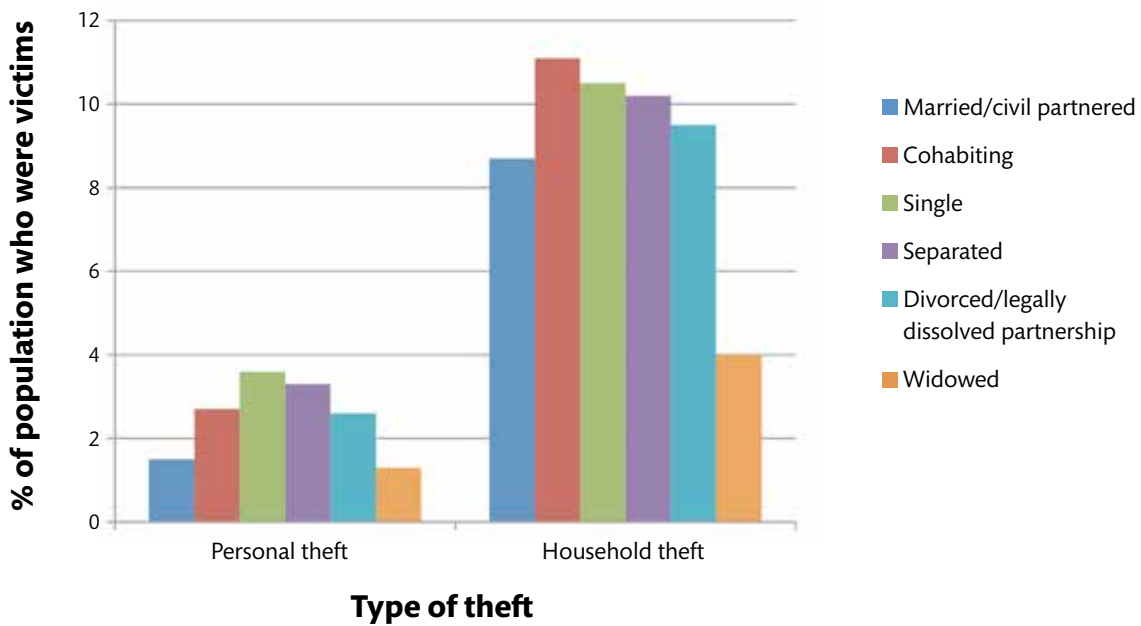
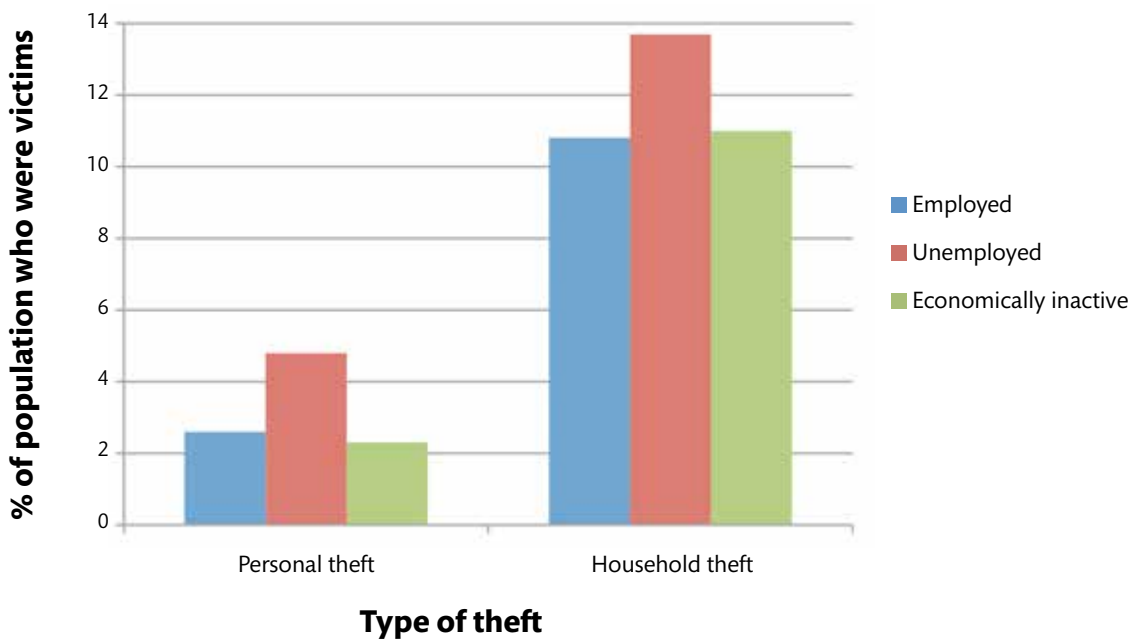


Figure 5. Proportion of victims of theft by employment status



- People who were unemployed were more likely than people who were employed or economically inactive (e.g. students, those looking after a family member, those who are retired) to be victims of personal theft.
- People who were unemployed were also more likely to be victims of household theft. However, compared to personal theft, the differences in the percentages are smaller.

As presented in Figure 6, adults who visited a bar or pub had a higher risk of theft.

- People who visited a bar or pub once a week or more in the previous month were two times more likely to be victims of personal theft than those who did not visit a bar or pub.
- People who visited a pub less than once a week were also at higher risk of personal theft, but not as much as those who visited more frequently.
- The differences were significant, but smaller for household theft.

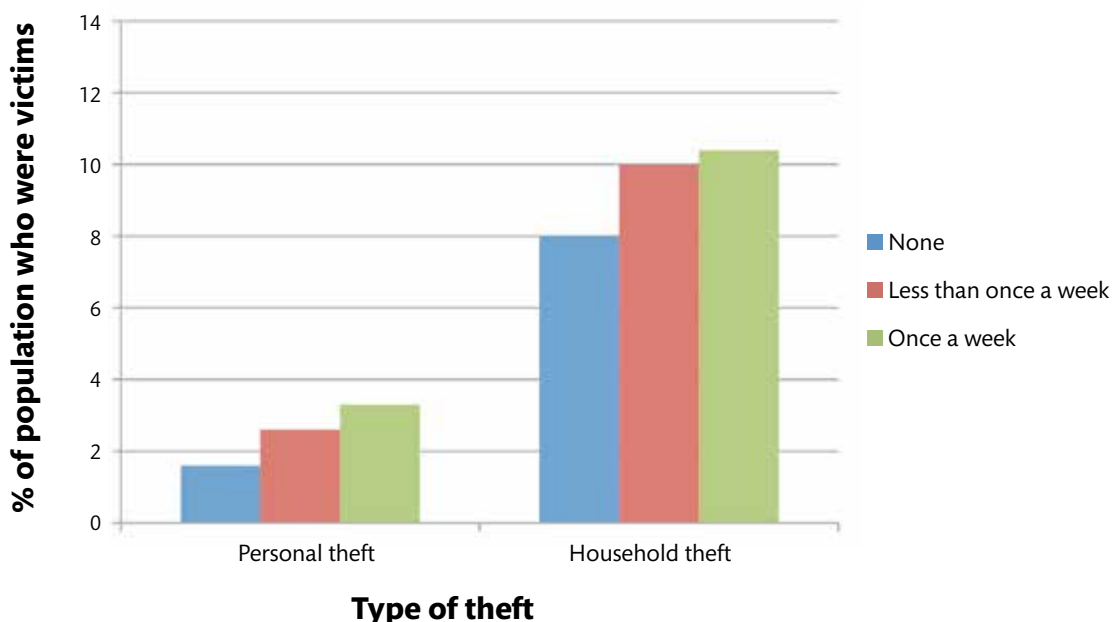
Similarly, people who visited a nightclub were at a much higher risk of being victims of personal theft. Those who visited a nightclub once a week or more in the previous month were more than three times

as likely to be victims as those who did not visit a nightclub (7.0% and 1.9% of these populations respectively). Here, too, the differences regarding household theft were significant but smaller (14.5% and 8.7% of these populations respectively).

Two additional personal characteristics were found to be associated with being a victim of theft:

- People who were full-time students were more likely (3.6% of full-time students) to be victims of personal theft than non-full-time students (2.2% of non-full-time students). They also had a higher risk of being victims of household theft, although the difference is smaller (10.5% of the full-time student population and 9.0% of the non-full-time student population).
- In addition, adults educated to A level or above had a higher risk (2.9%) of being victims of personal theft than those educated to below A level (1.7%) or with no qualifications (1.2%). Similarly, people educated to A level or above were also more likely to be victims of household theft (10.1%). People educated to below A level were also at higher risk than those without qualifications (9.3% and 6.0% respectively).

Figure 6. Proportion of victims of theft by visits to a pub/bar in the last month



Household characteristics

The association between several household-centred characteristics and victimisation of theft was also explored. The first factor involved household income. Some similarities and variations were found between personal and household theft (Figure 7).

- People living in a household with a total income of £50,000 or more had the highest risk for both personal and household theft.
- People living in a household with the lowest income (less than £10,000) were at higher risk than the other groups, but only for personal theft.
- However, when looking at repeat victimisation of household theft, people living in households with a total income of less than £10,000 had the highest risk; 25.6% of victims living in these households were victims more than once compared to 18.3% of victims living in households with a total income of £50,000 or more.

As shown in Figure 8, the differences between various household structures were explored.

- Both lone-parent and two-parent households with children were at higher risk of being a victim of household theft than households without children.
- People living in a lone-parent household were also at higher risk of repeat victimisation of household theft: 27.1% of victims living in a lone-parent household were repeat victims compared to 17.6% of victims living in a household without children (not presented in the figure).
- No differences were found in the risk of victimisation of personal theft.

The third household characteristic is housing tenure.

- As can be seen in Figure 9, adults living in private rented accommodation were twice as likely as people living in accommodation that they owned to be victims of personal theft. They also had the highest risk of being victims of household theft.

Figure 7. Proportion of victims of theft by household income

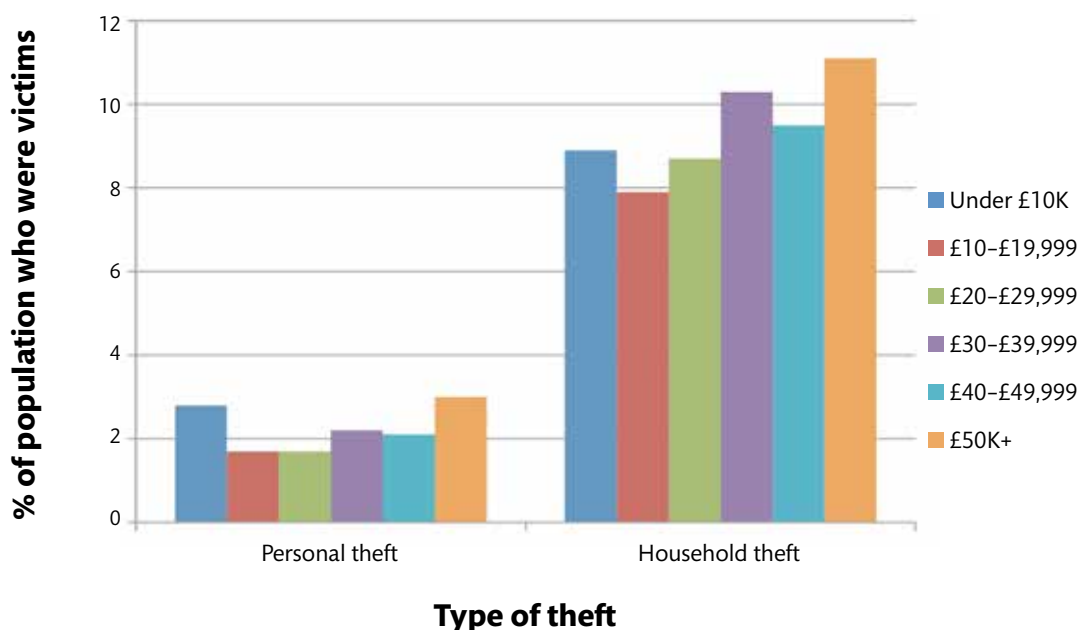
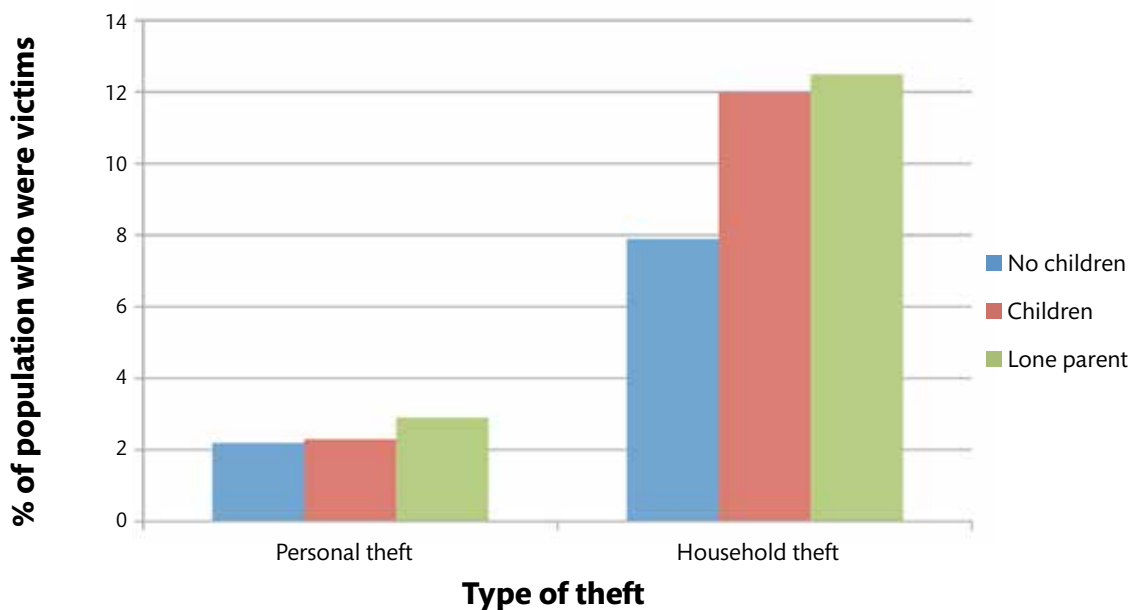


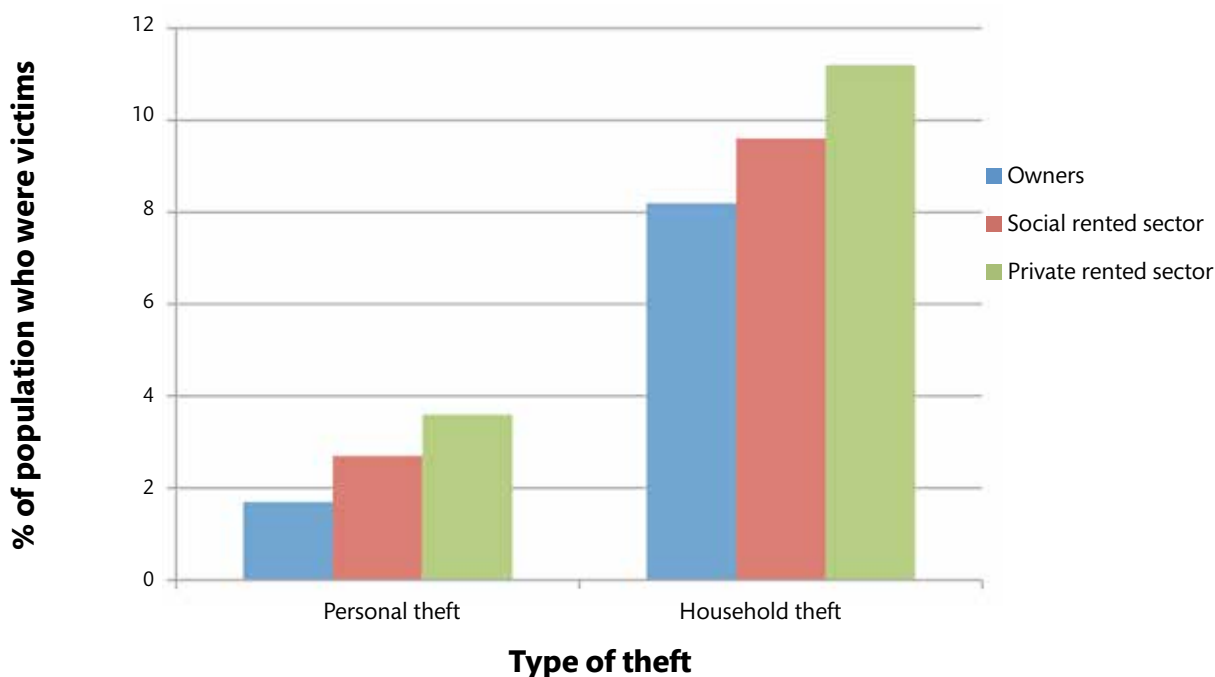
Figure 8. Proportion of victims of theft by household structure



- Those living in social rented accommodation were also more likely to be victims of personal and household theft than people living in accommodation that they owned.
- Furthermore, the proportion of repeat victims of household theft was higher

for people living in social rented accommodation: 24.4% of victims living in social rented accommodation were repeat victims compared to 17.8% of victims living in accommodation that they owned (not presented in the figure).

Figure 9. Proportion of victims of theft by household tenure



Lastly, people living in terraced houses had the highest risk of being victims of household theft, followed by those living in semi-detached houses, compared to those living in flats and detached houses (10.9%, 9.1%, 8.7% and 6.8% of these populations respectively).

Area characteristics

Three variables were explored as characteristics of the area in which the respondents lived to seek the association of these with being a victim of theft.

The differences were explored between those living in London and outside London (Figure 10).

- People living in London were at higher risk of being victims of personal and household theft.
- In addition, those living in London were at higher risk of repeat victimisation of personal theft: 18.5% of victims living in London were repeat victims compared to

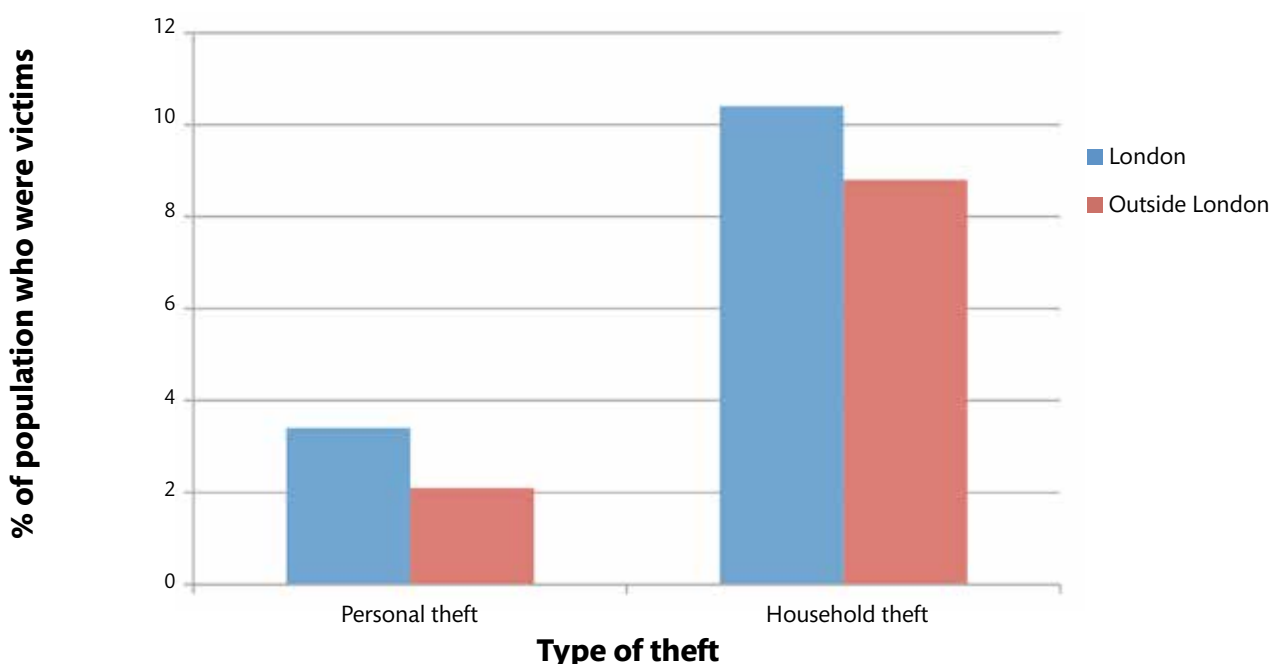
only 7.7% of victims living elsewhere (not presented in the figure).

Similar results were found for the differences between people living in rural and urban areas. Urban residents were at greater risk than those living in rural areas of becoming victims of personal theft (2.4% and 1.6% of these populations respectively) and household theft (9.7% and 6.3% of these populations respectively).

Associations between different area classifications and the likelihood of being a victim of theft were also explored (Figure 11); this was done by using the 2011 Area Classification for Output Areas (2011 OAC).^{vii}

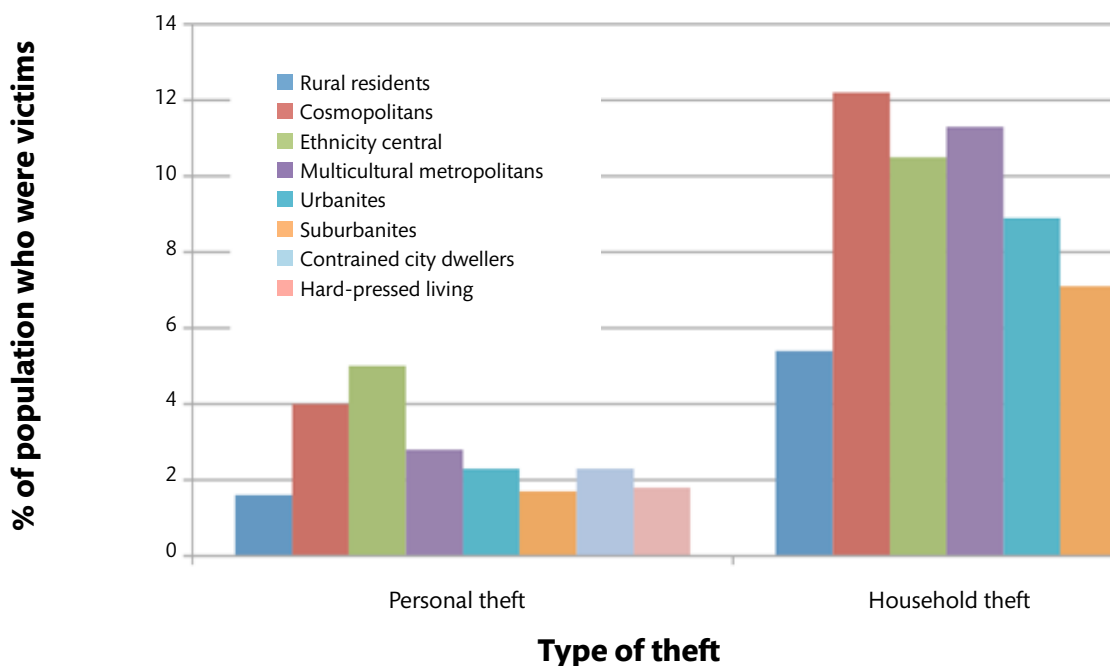
- People living in ethnicity central and cosmopolitans areas had the highest risk of being victims of personal theft; those living in ethnicity central areas were three times more likely to be a victim of personal theft than people living in rural residences.

Figure 10. Proportion of victims of theft living in London or elsewhere



^{vii} The population in the UK was divided into eight supergroups (or clusters) based on the characteristics of areas in terms of their demographic structure, household composition, housing, socioeconomic characteristics and employment patterns. (Office for National Statistics. (2015). *Pen portraits for the 2011 Area Classification for Output Areas*. London: Office for National Statistics).

Figure 11. Proportion of victims of theft by 2011 OAC



- The proportion of repeat victimisation of personal theft was also higher for ethnicity central residents than residents of other areas (21.1% of victims living in ethnicity central areas were victims more than once, compared, for example, to 4.8% of cosmopolitans residents and 9.6% of rural residents). Repeat victimisation was also higher for constrained city dwellers (17.4% of victims living in constrained city dwellers areas were victims more than once) (not shown in the figure).
- People living in cosmopolitan areas were also more likely to be victims of household theft than residents of all other areas.
- However, other area categories – multicultural metropolitans and constrained city dwellers – were at higher risk of repeat victimisation of household theft; 23.2% of victims living in multicultural metropolitans areas and 22.8% of victims living in constrained city dweller areas were repeat victims, compared to only 14.4% of victims living in suburbanite areas (not presented in the figure).

All of the above areas are urban areas. In addition, cosmopolitans, ethnicity-central and multicultural metropolitans also have a higher proportion of ethnicity integration, and cosmopolitans and ethnicity central have an above average population of young residents and flat renters. On the other hand, constrained city dwellers areas are characterised by a higher level of people aged 65 and over and a lower representation of non-white ethnic groups, with a higher proportion of people with limiting disability, and higher level of unemployment.

Which risk factors are the strongest?

The above sections describe differences between the categories within each set of characteristics separately. However, since these characteristics may be related to one another (for example, most students are also young adults), we further explored^{viii} the relative influence of each characteristic and identified which of them contributed more to the likelihood of being a victim of theft.^{ix} This provides a clearer picture of the specific groups of people that were more vulnerable to being a victim of theft.

Furthermore, where characteristics consist of several categories (for example, 'gender' is composed of 'women' and 'men'), one category serves as the reference category; we can then compare the risk of being a victim of theft to each of the subcategories and the reference category (e.g. if the reference category is women, the risk of men being a victim is compared to the risk of women being a victim).

We looked at victims of personal theft and household theft separately.

Personal theft

Two risk factors have a larger contribution to the likelihood of being a victim of personal theft:

- People with **limiting disability/illness** were 1.6 times more likely than people without

a limiting disability/illness to be a victim of personal theft.^x

- People living in **ethnicity central areas** were three times more likely to be a victim of personal theft compared to people living in suburbanites areas.

Three other characteristics were found to be associated with being a victim of personal theft, though with less influence than the first two:

- Adults with **non-limiting disability/illness** were 1.8 times more likely to be victims of personal theft than adults without a limiting disability/illness.
- The likelihood of people who **visited a nightclub once a week or more** in the last month of being victims of personal theft was more than double (2.2 times) the likelihood of people who did not visit a nightclub.
- People who live in **households with a total income of £50,000 or more** were 1.6 times more likely to be victims of personal theft than adults living in households with a total income of £20,000–£29,000.

In summary, having a disability (limiting or not) is one of the key contributors to the likelihood of being a victim of personal theft. The area where people live – particularly ethnicity central areas – also contributes

viii Using a logistic regression analysis.

ix Based on the p-value of the Wald chi-square test (Thompson, D. (2009). *Ranking predictors in logistic regression*. Milwaukee, WI: Assurant Health).

x Health status was not found to be significantly associated with personal or household theft using a bivariate chi-square test (see the previous section). Nevertheless, when multivariable logistic regression was used, having a disability was found to be a strong and significant contributor to both personal and household theft. The two tests differ from one another in several ways (e.g. logistic regression allows the exploration of numerous variables simultaneously, examining the unique contribution of each variable in the context of the other variables – that is, when holding constant the other variables. Hosmer, D. W, Lemeshow, S., & Sturdivant, R. X. (2013). *Applied Logistic Regression* (3rd ed.). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

more than other factors to the likelihood of being a victim of personal theft.

Household theft

Five characteristics were found to have a larger contribution to the likelihood of being a victim of household theft. Only one of them – limiting disability/illness – is similar to personal theft:

- Adults with **limiting disability/illness** were 1.4 times more likely to be victims of household theft compared to adults without a limiting disability/illness.
- People living in **cosmopolitans areas** were 1.7 times more likely than people living in suburbanite areas to be victims of household theft.
- People living in **constrained city dwellers areas** were 1.6 times more likely to be victims of household theft than people living in suburbanite areas.
- People living in **multicultural metropolitans areas** were 1.5 times more likely than people living in suburbanite areas to be victims of household theft.
- People in **hard-pressed living areas** were 1.3 times more likely than people living in suburbanites areas to be victims of household theft.

Two other characteristics were found to be associated with being a victim of household theft, though with less influence than the first five:

- The likelihood of people who live in **two-parent households with children** being victims of household theft was 1.2 times more than the likelihood of people living in a household without children.
- People living in **ethnicity-central areas** were 1.6 times more likely to be victims of household theft than people living in suburbanites areas.

It appears that most of the characteristics that were found to have a higher contribution to the likelihood of being victims of household theft were related to the area in which the victims live, meaning that areas with specific features are at higher risk of household theft. While this may be expected, the finding that having a limiting disability/illness contributes more to the likelihood of being a victim of household theft than any other personal and any other household characteristics is of obvious concern.

Change in the trend of risk factors over the years

We went on to further examine any changes in the main risk factors over a period of nine years, from data of the 2006/07 survey up to 2014/15.

Figure 12 shows the proportion of victims of personal theft by gender from 2006/07 to 2014/15. Historically, women have been at higher risk of personal theft than men. However, due to a 38.9% fall in the proportion of women victims of personal theft from 2006/07 to 2014/15, the gap between women and men has disappeared. Since most of the decrease occurred between 2013/2014 and 2014/2015, it will

be interesting to see if this represents a new trend. The proportion of household theft was similar for men and women over this period (not shown in the figure).

As can be seen in Figure 13, the proportion of victims of personal theft has decreased for all age groups from 2006/07 to 2014/2015, with the exception of those aged 75–84. Young adults aged 16–19 was the age group with the highest proportion until 2012/13. However, the proportion of this age group to become victims has halved since its peak in 2008/09 and was similar to that of people aged 20–24 in 2014/15.

Figure 12. Proportion of personal theft by gender from 2006/07 to 2014/15

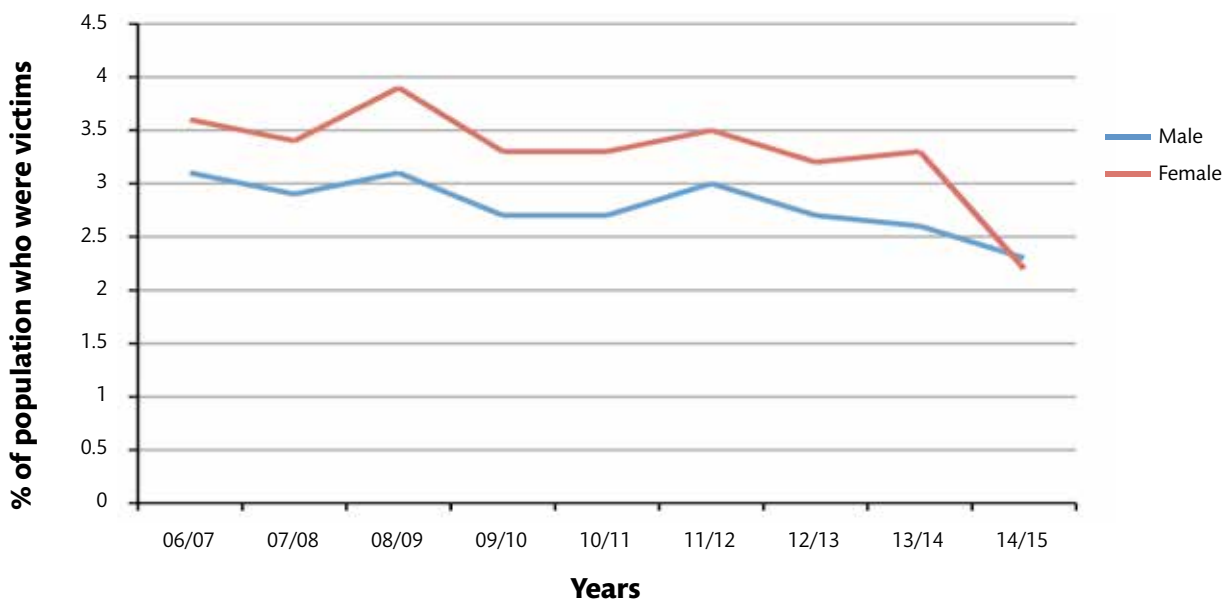


Figure 14 presents the proportion of household theft. The proportion of people aged 20–24 who suffer household theft has remained stable for the last four years (only an 8.7% fall) compared to other age

groups; for example, the proportion of people aged 25–34 who become victims of household theft decreased by 21.4% over the same period.

Figure 13. Proportion of personal theft by age group from 2006/07 to 2014/15

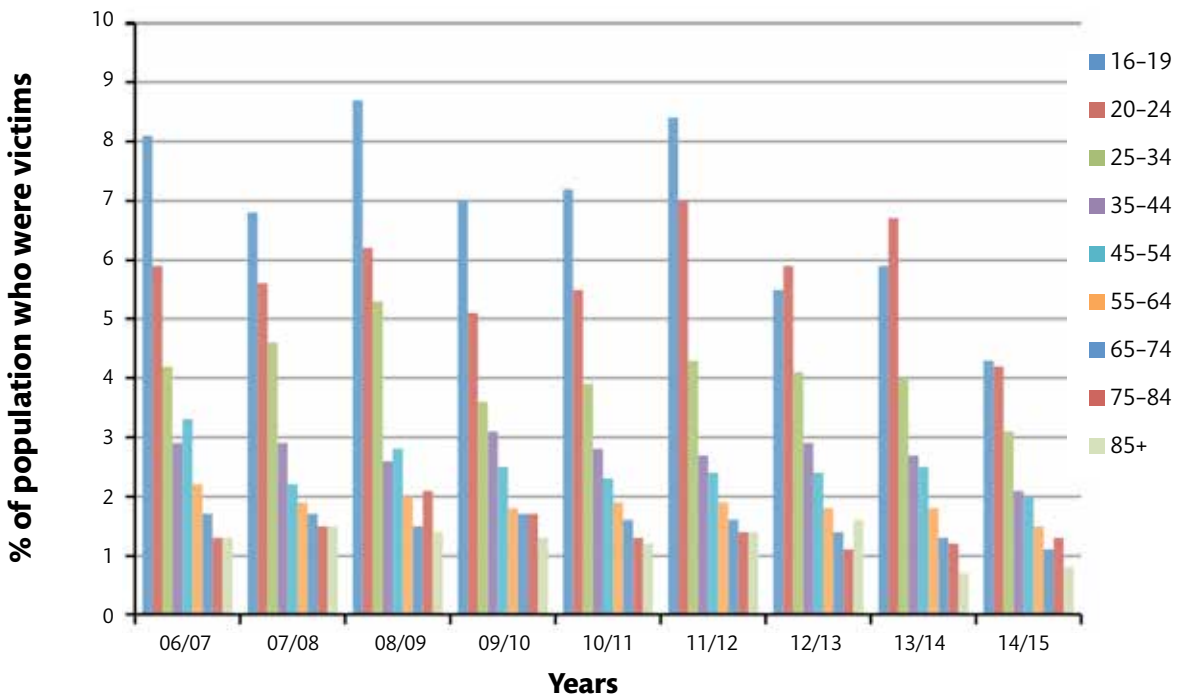
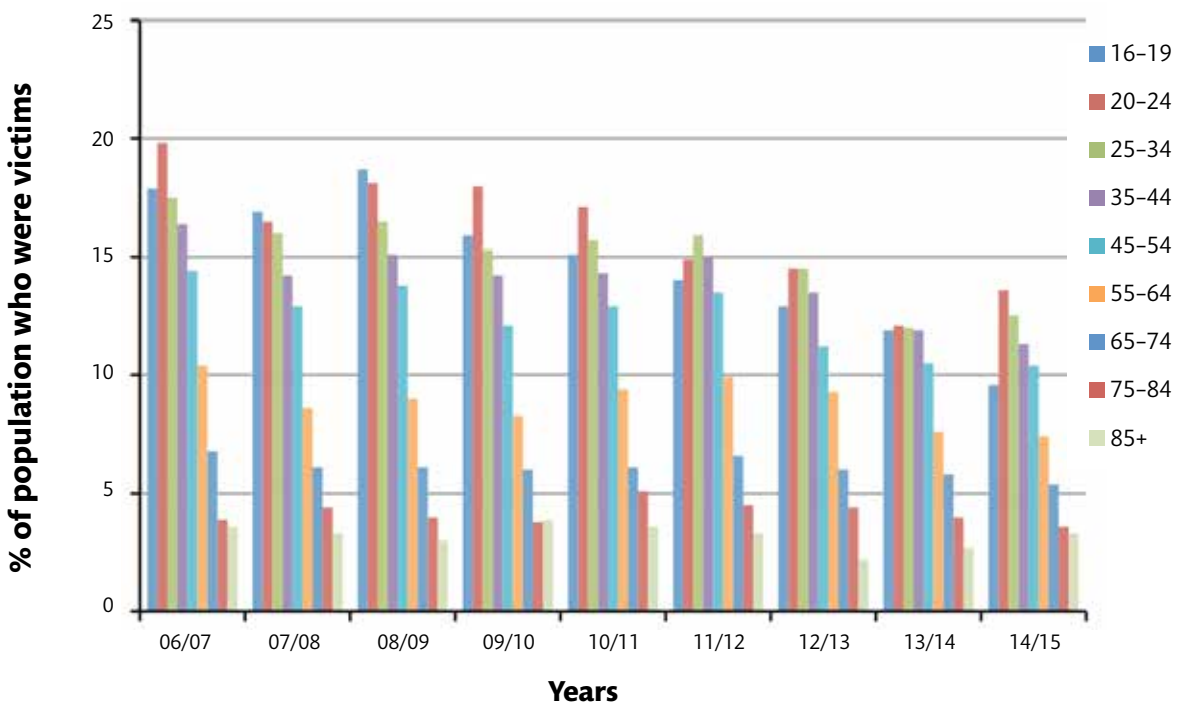


Figure 14. Proportion of victims of household theft by age group from 2006/07 to 2014/15



As shown in Figure 15, there was a substantial fall (43.7%) in the proportion of victims of personal theft who were single since its peak in 2008/09, mainly due to a 28% fall between 2013/14 and 2014/15. However, the corresponding proportion for separated people over the same period actually increased

by 6.4%. The picture is somewhat different for household theft (Figure 16); people who identified themselves as cohabiting have always been at higher risk of household theft. However, due to a 40% decrease from 2006/07, the gap between this group and people who are single or separated has closed.

Figure 15. Proportion of victims of personal theft by marital status from 2006/07 to 2014/15

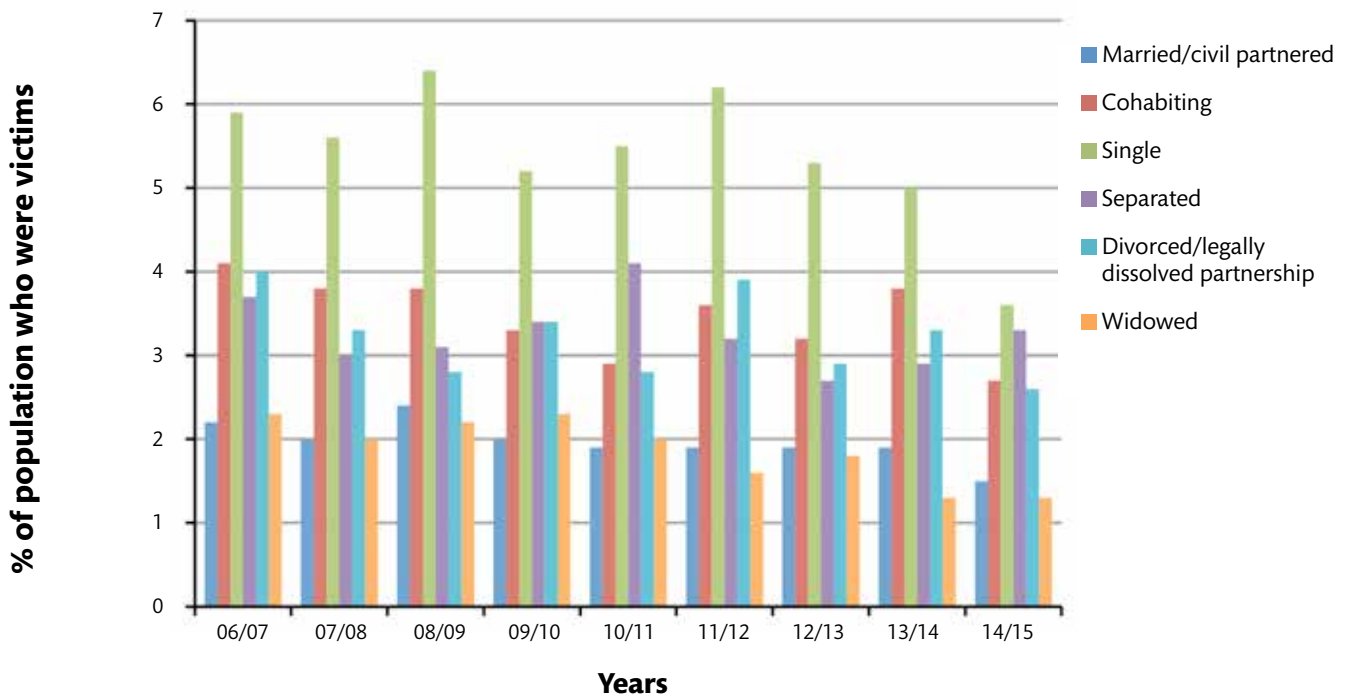


Figure 16. Proportion of victims of household theft by marital status from 2006/07 to 2014/15

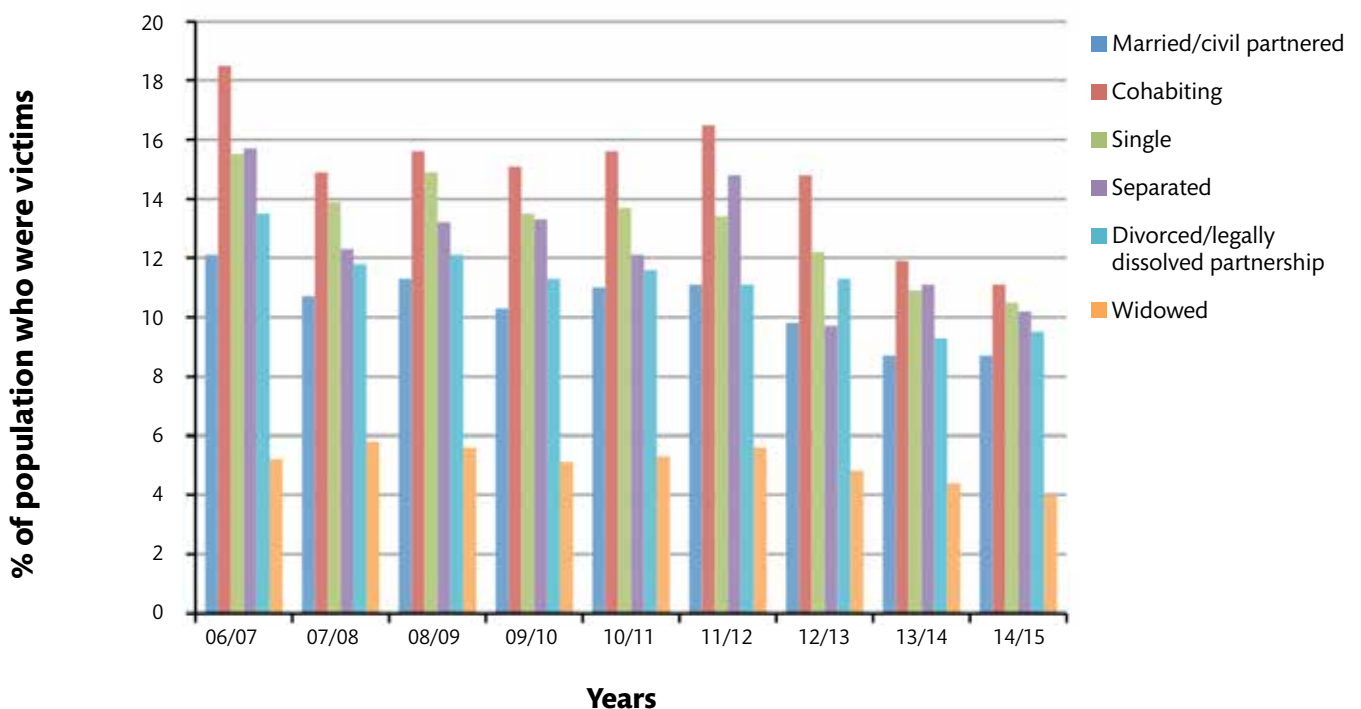


Figure 17 presents the proportion of personal theft by ethnicity background. The trend in the proportion of victims with a mixed ethnicity background is quite inconsistent; while there was sharp growth in 2008/09 and 2011/12 (55.5% and 100.0% respectively), there was a sizeable decrease in 2007/08 and 2014/15 (46.4% and 38.6% respectively).

People with a mixed ethnicity background were also at the highest risk of household theft (Figure 18); while the proportion of victims with a mixed ethnicity background actually rose from 2008/09 to 2014/15 by 1.3%, the corresponding proportion decreased for victims with white ethnicity and black ethnicity backgrounds (24.6% and 16.4% respectively).

Figure 17. Proportion of victims of personal theft by ethnicity background from 2006/07 to 2014/15

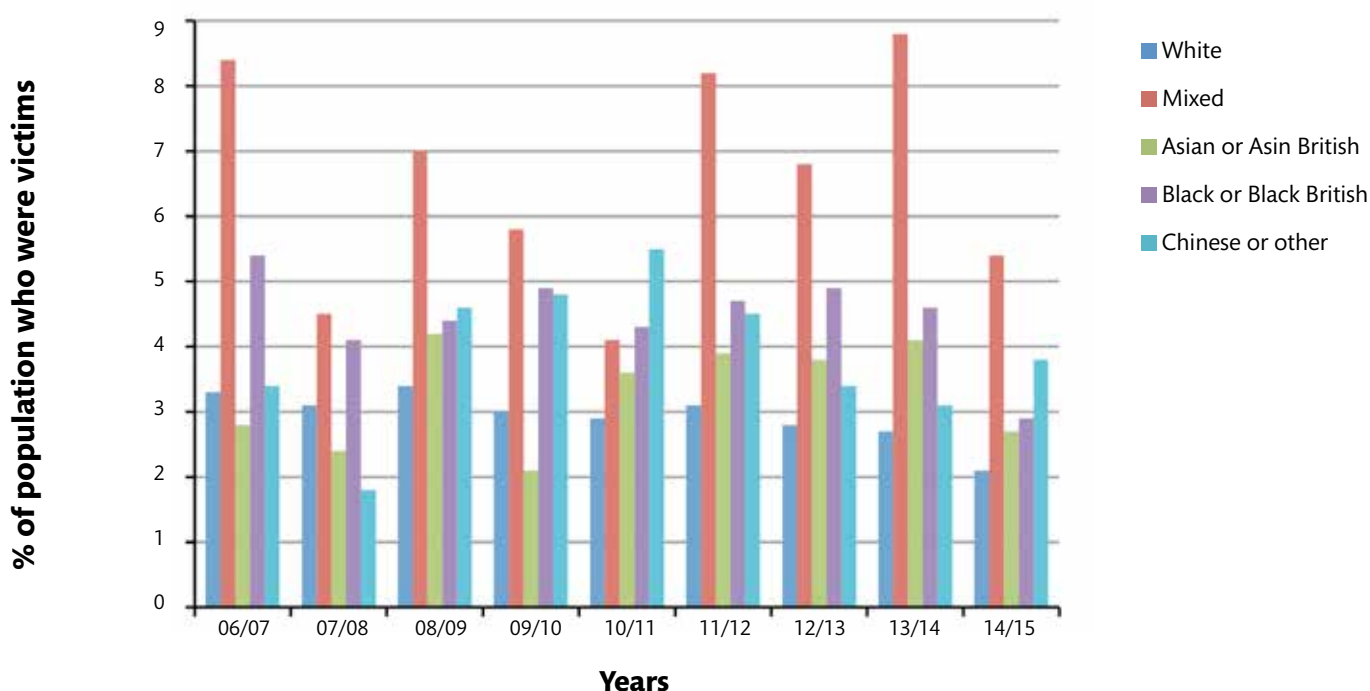


Figure 18. Proportion of victims of household theft by ethnicity background from 2006/07 to 2014/15

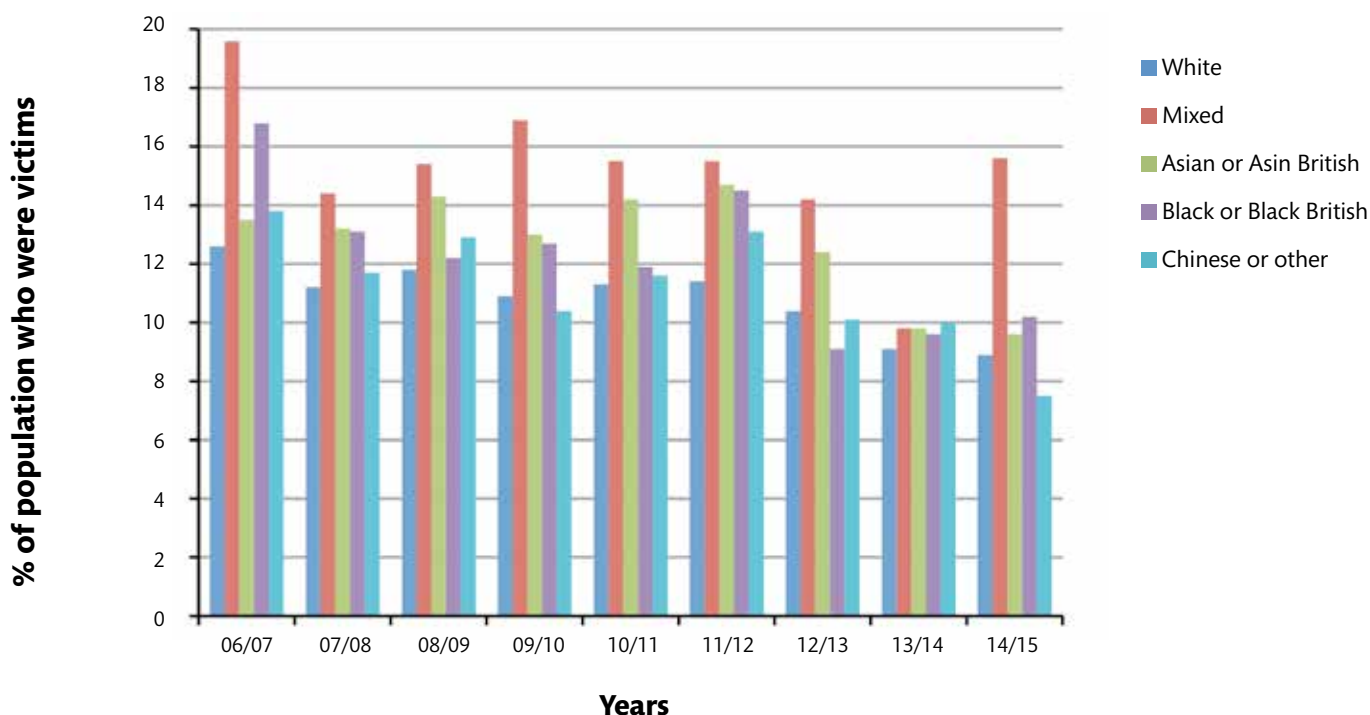
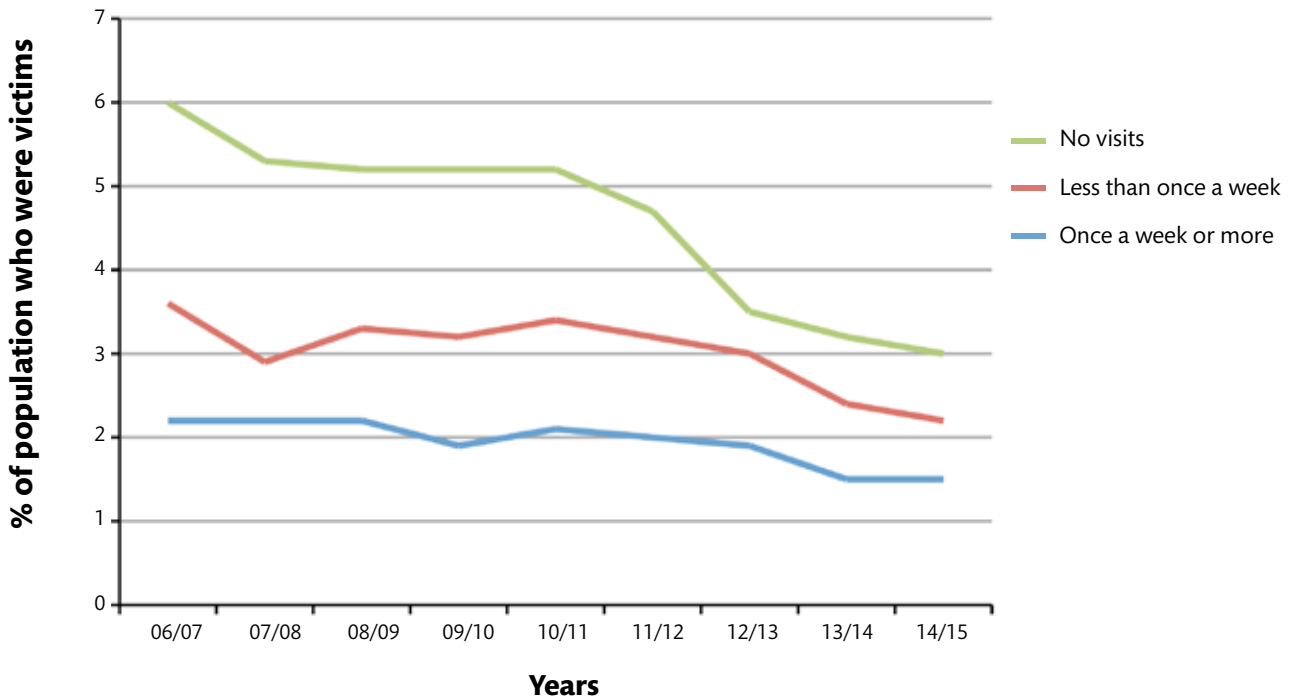


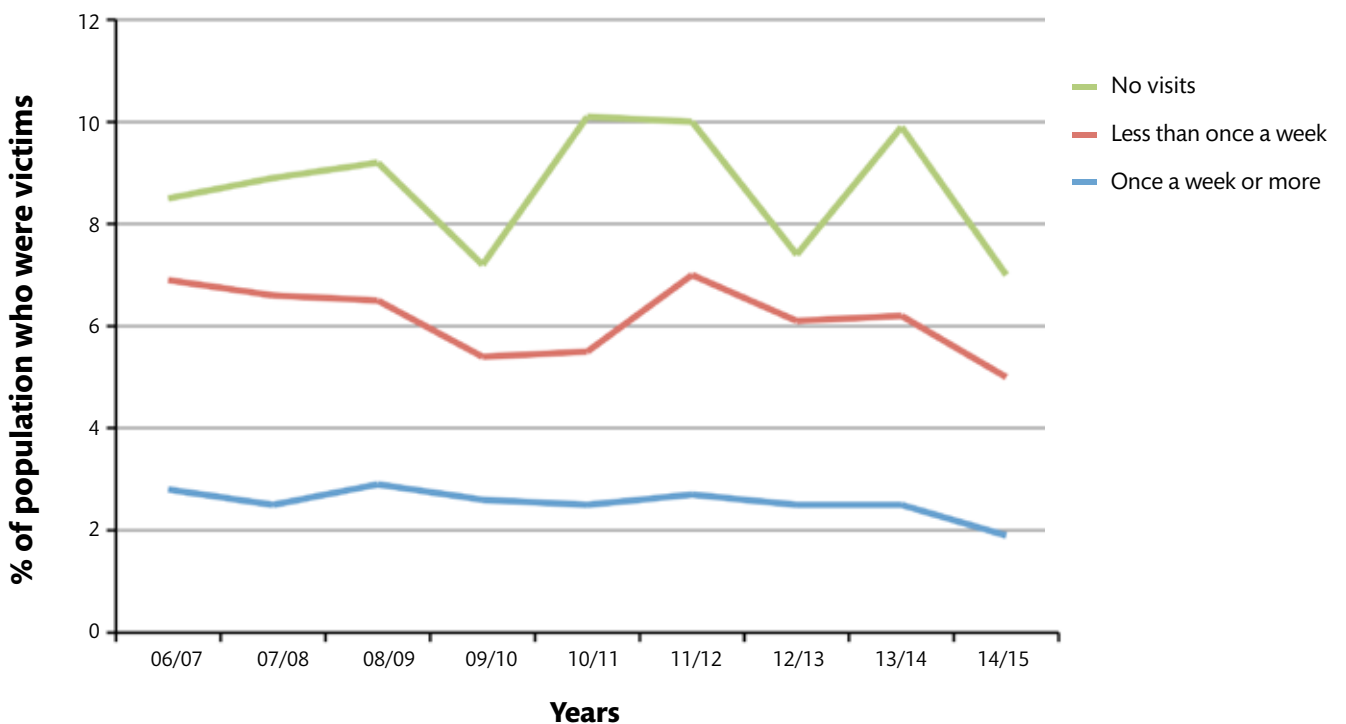
Figure 19. Proportion of victims of personal theft by frequency of bar/pub visits in the last month from 2006/07 to 2014/15



The trend of personal theft regarding frequency of bar/pub visits in the previous month can be seen in Figure 19. People who visited a bar/pub once a week or more were constantly the group at higher risk. Nevertheless, due to a decrease of 36.5%

in the proportion of this group that became victims since 2006/07, compared to a 21.2% decrease in the proportion of victims who visited a bar/pub less than once a week, the gap between these two groups has reduced.

Figure 20. Proportion of victims of personal theft by frequency of nightclub visits in the last month from 2006/07 to 2014/15

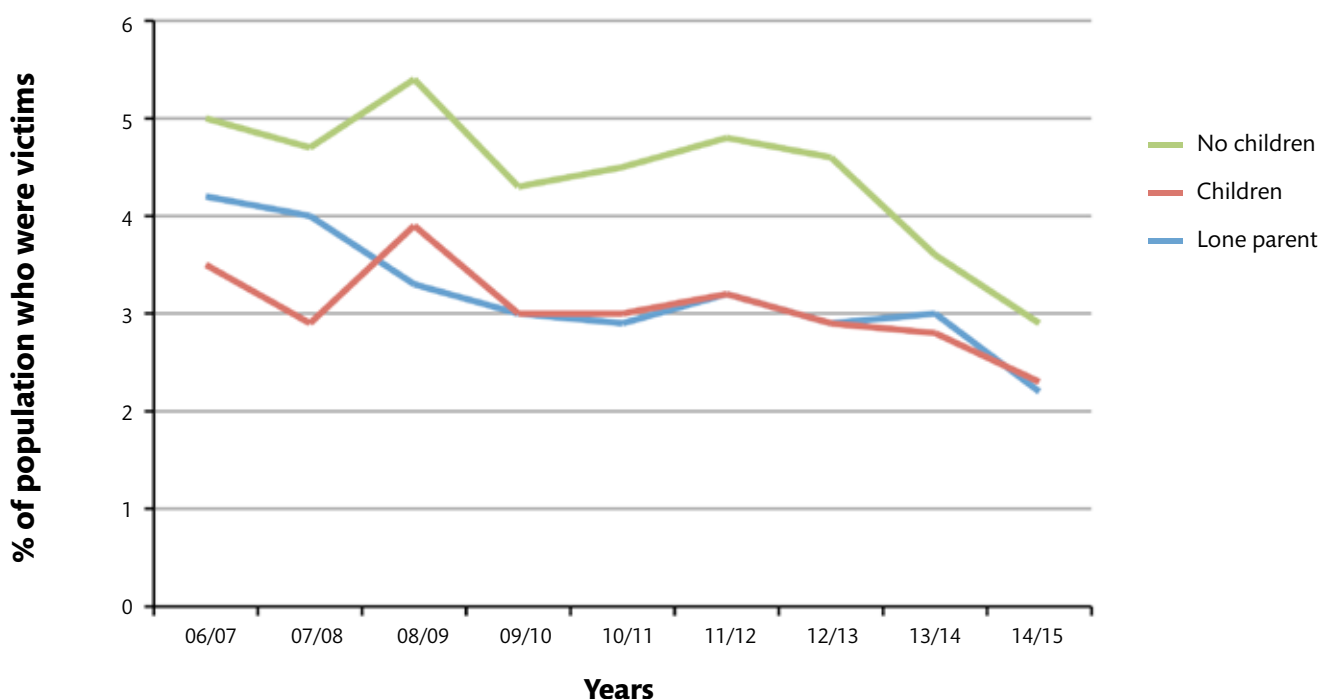


The picture regarding victims of personal theft by nightclub visits in the previous month is different (Figure 20); the proportion of victims who visited a nightclub once or more in the previous month decreased moderately (17.6%), compared to those who visited a nightclub less than once a week (27.5%) or not at all (32.1%). Consequently, people who visit a nightclub once a week or more continue to be at the highest risk of personal theft. It is notable, however, that the proportion of those who visit a nightclub once a week or more varies considerably over the years.

both people who live in lone-parent and two-parent households were at higher risk compared to people living in households without children. The gap between two-parent households and households without children has actually increased due to a sharper fall in the proportion of victims living in households without children (46.6%).

The proportion of victims of personal theft living in households with a total income of less than £10,000 remained relatively stable from 2006/07 to 2014/15.

Figure 21. Proportion of victims of personal theft by household structure from 2006/07 to 2014/15



The gap in the proportion of victims of personal theft between adults who live in lone-parent households, those who live in two-parent households with children, and households without children is closing (Figure 21). However, there is a different trend for household theft (Figure 22); while there was a sizable fall (41.0%) in the proportion of victims of household theft who live in lone-parent households since 2006/07,

However, over the same period, there was a decrease in the victimisation of all other groups of household income. Despite a decrease in the proportion of people living in households with an income of £50,000 or more (33.3%) becoming victims of personal theft, they are still at the highest risk (Figure 23). People living in households with a total income of £50,000 or more have also been at the highest risk of household theft

since 2007/08 (Figure 24). Nevertheless, the decrease from 2006/07 in the proportion of victims of household theft was the smallest for people living in the lowest household

income group (19.8% compared, for example, to a 36.5% fall for victims living in households with a total income of £20–29,999).

Figure 22. Proportion of victims of household theft by household structure from 2006/07 to 2014/15

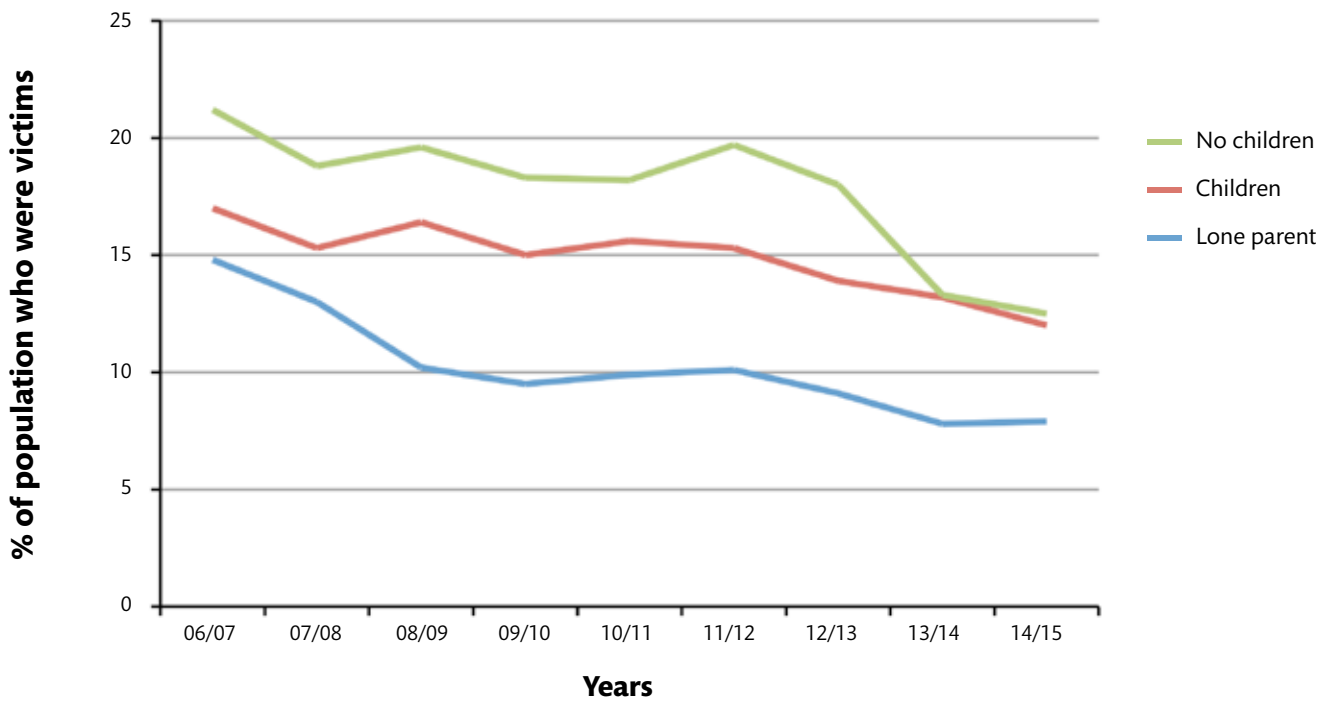


Figure 23. Proportion of victims of personal theft by household income from 2006/07 to 2014/15

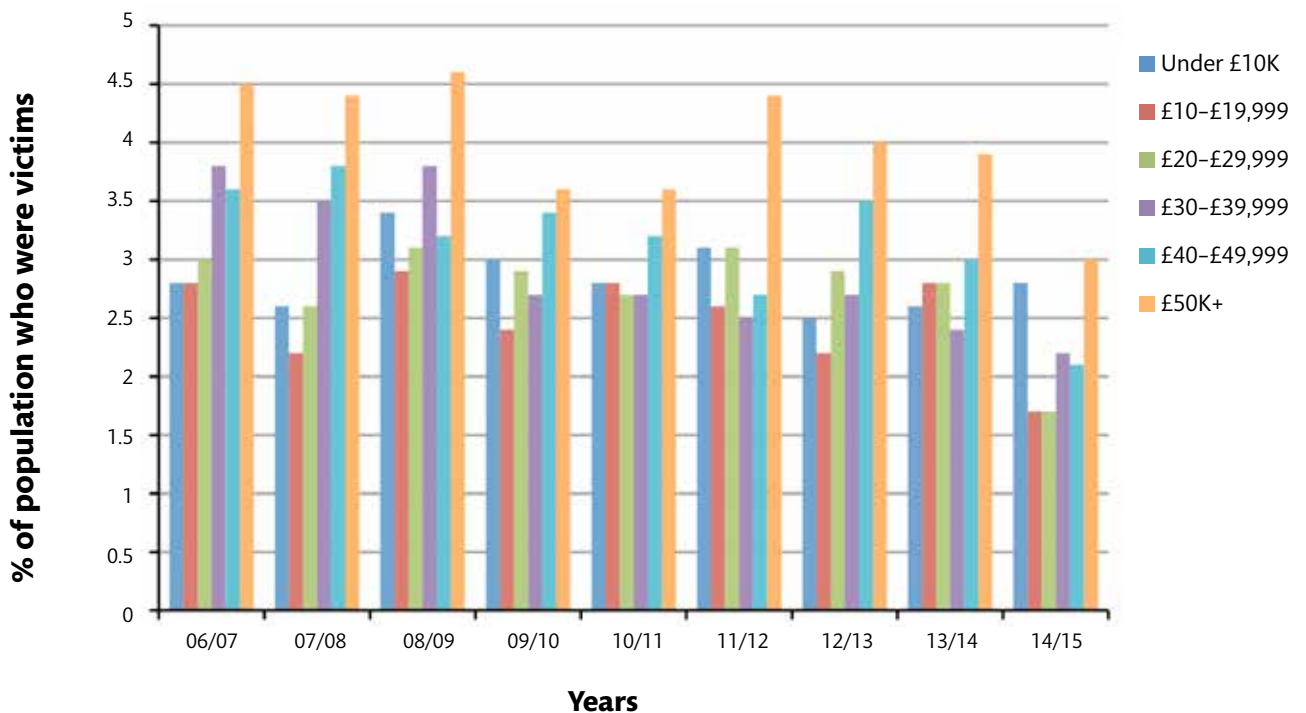
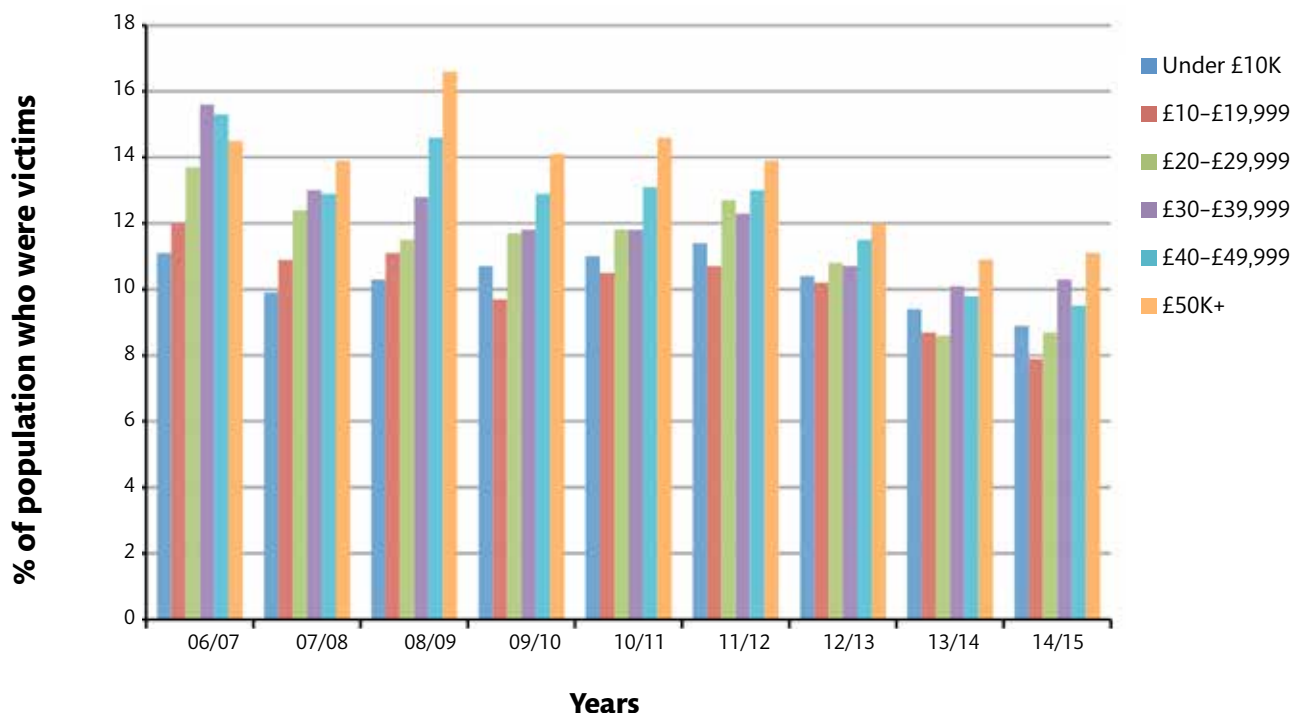


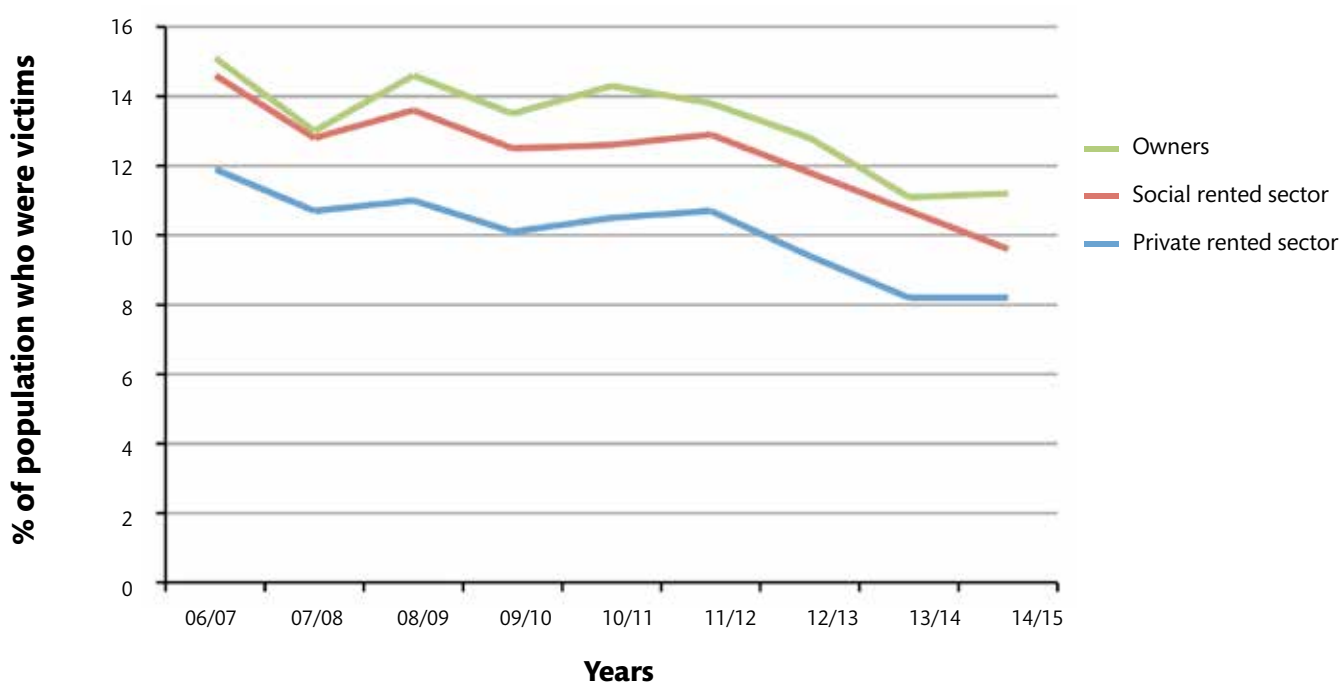
Figure 24. Proportion of victims of household theft by household income from 2006/07 to 2014/15



There has been a similar decrease since 2006/07 in the victimisation of people who are social rentals and property owners (34.2% and 31.1% respectively) compared to a 25.8%

decrease in victims living in private rental accommodation. However, both those in private and social rentals are at a higher risk than property owners (Figure 25).

Figure 25. Proportion of victims of household theft by household tenure from 2006/07 to 2014/15



The proportion of victims of personal theft living in London has been dropping since 2011/12 (a 44.3% fall) compared to a 25.0% decrease in the corresponding proportion of victims living elsewhere (Figure 26),

narrowing the gap between these two groups. The decrease in household theft was similar for people living in London and elsewhere (32.0% and 29.6% since 2006/07 respectively) (Figure 27).

Figure 26. Proportion of victims of personal theft by living in London or elsewhere from 2006/07 to 2014/15

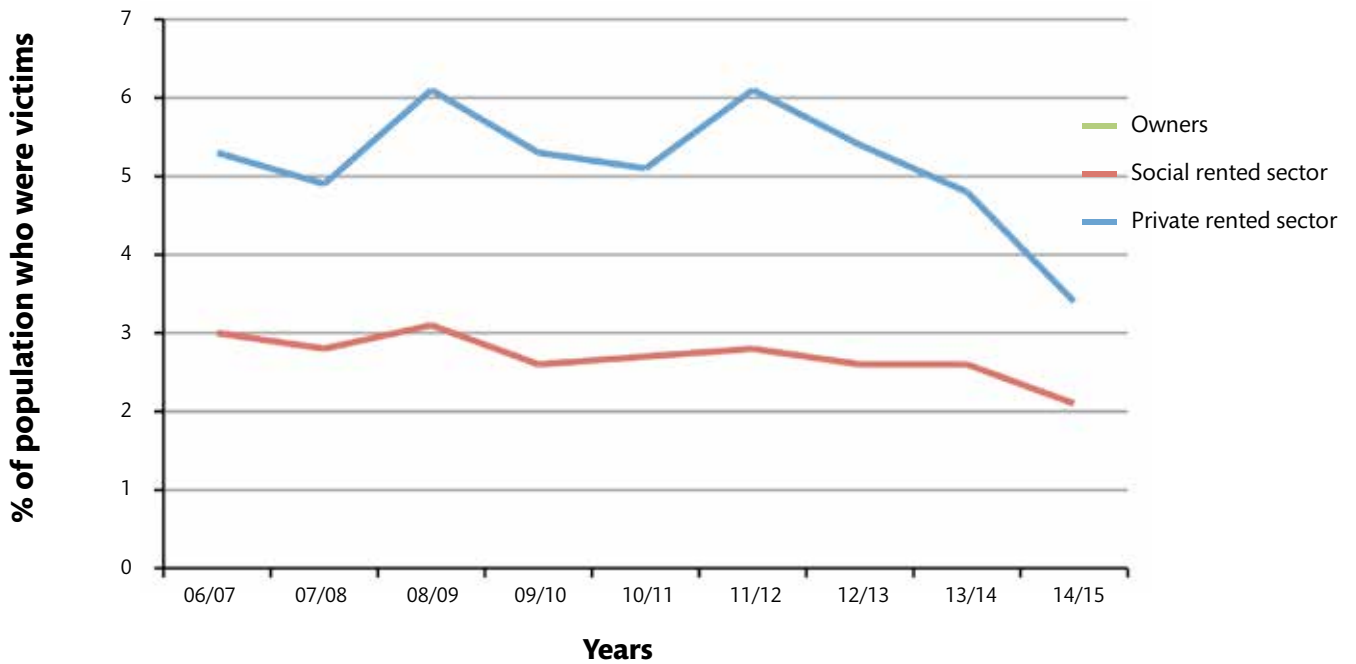
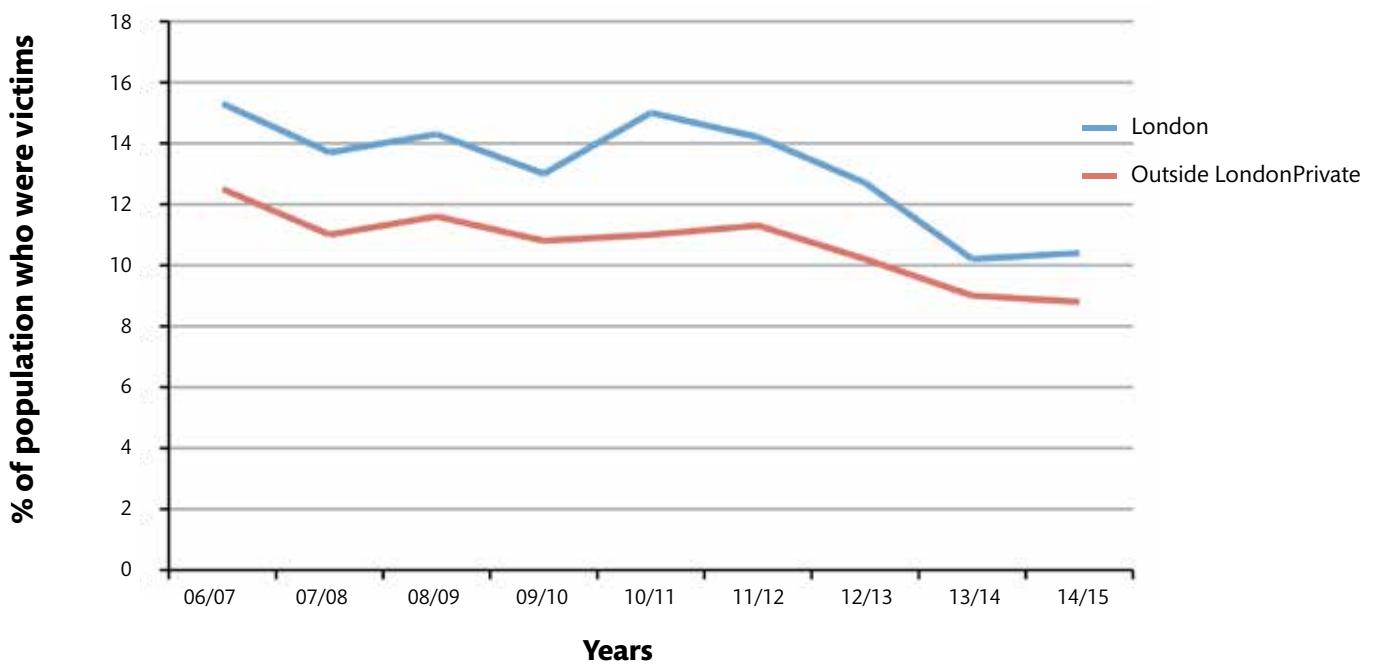


Figure 27. Proportion of victims of household theft by living in London or elsewhere from 2006/07 to 2014/15



Conclusions

- Having a **limiting disability/illness** increases the likelihood of being a victim of theft:
 - **Limiting disability/illness** is the **only** factor that strongly influences being a victim of both personal **and** household theft.
 - **Limiting disability/illness** contributes more to the likelihood of being a victim of household theft than any other personal or household characteristics.
- The **area** in which people live is a key risk factor for theft; **areas with specific features** are at higher risk for household theft and personal theft.
- **Visiting a nightclub once a week or more** and **living in a household with a total income of £50,000 or more** are also important risk factors in being victims of personal theft.
- **Specific groups** continue to be at the **highest risk** of both personal and household theft, despite a general decrease in the number of incidents of theft over the last nine years: people of mixed ethnicity background, adults living in lone-parent households, those living in households with a total income of £50,000 or more, and people living in London.

References

- ¹ Merriam-Webster. (2016). In *Merriam-Webster online dictionary*. Available at: <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/theft>.
- ² Office for National Statistics. (2015). *Focus on Property Crime: 2014 to 2015*. London: Office for National Statistics.
- ³ Office for National Statistics. (2015). *Crime in England and Wales: Year ending September 2015*. London: Office for National Statistics.
- ⁴ ONS, 2015 (as n. 2 above).
- ⁵ ONS, 2015 (as n. 2 above).
- ⁶ ONS, 2015 (as n. 2 above).
- ⁷ Farrell, G., Tilley, N., Tseloni, A., & Mailley, J. (2008). The crime drop and the security hypothesis. *British Society of Criminology Newsletter*, 62, 17–21.
- ⁸ Britton, A., Kershaw, C., Osborne, S., & Smith, K. (2012). Underlying Patterns within the England and Wales Crime Drop. In J. J. M. van Dijk, A. Tseloni, & G. Farrell (Eds), *The International Crime Drop: New Directions in Research*. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 159–181.
- ⁹ Bunge, V. P., Johnson, H., & Baldé, T. A. (2005). *Exploring Crime Patterns in Canada*. Crime and Justice Research Paper Series, Catalogue no. 85-561-MIE – No. 005.
- ¹⁰ Farrell, G., Tilley, N., Tseloni, A., & Mailley, J. (2010). Explaining and sustaining the crime drop: Clarifying the role of opportunity-related theories. *Crime Prevention and Community Safety*, 12(1), 24–41.
- ¹¹ Bandyopadhyay, S., Bhattacharya, S., Koli, M., & Sensarma, R. (2012). *Acquisitive Crime, Sentencing and Detection: An Analysis of England and Wales*. Available at: <http://ssrn.com/abstract=2035639> or <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2035639>.
- ¹² Cohen, L. E., & Felson, M. (1979). Social change and crime rates and trends: A routine activity approach. *American Sociological Review*, 44, 588–608.
- ¹³ Hindelang, M. J., Gottfredson, M. R., & Garofalo, J. (1978). *Victims of Personal Crime: An Empirical Foundation for a Theory of Personal Victimization*. Cambridge, MA: Ballinger.
- ¹⁴ Harrell, E., & Rand, M. R. (2010). *Crime Against People with Disabilities, 2008*. NCJ 231328 U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs Bureau of Justice Statistics.
- ¹⁵ Khalifeh, H., Johnson, S., Howard, L. M., Borschmann, R., Osborn, D., Dean, K. ... & Moran, P. (2015). Violent and non-violent crime against adults with severe mental illness. *The British Journal of Psychiatry*, 206, 275–282.
- ¹⁶ Wilson, C. (2016). Victimization and social vulnerability of adults with intellectual disability: Revisiting Wilson and Brewer (1992) and responding to updated research. *Australian Psychologist*, 51, 73–75.
- ¹⁷ Stein, R. E. (2013). Opportunities for property victimisation: Fixed and random effect models in a cross-national scope. *International Journal of Law, Crime and Justice*, 41, 343–357.
- ¹⁸ Ofcom. (2013). *Communications Market Report 2013*. Available at: http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/research/cmr/cmr13/2013_UK_CMCR.pdf Accessed on: 4th April 2016.

- ¹⁹ Justus, M., & Kassouf, A. L. (2013). Evidence of the effect of wealth observed by criminals on the risk of becoming a victim of property crimes. *Economia*, 14, 88–101.
- ²⁰ Tseloni, A., & Farrell, G. (2002). Burglary victimization across Europe: the roles of prior victimization, micro- and macro level routine activities. In P. Nieuwbeerta (ed.), *Crime Victimization in Comparative Perspective*. Den Haag: Boom Juridische uitgevers, pp. 141–162.
- ²¹ Brantingham, P. L., & Brantingham, P. (1993). Environment, routine, and situation: Toward a pattern theory of crime. In R. Clarke, & M. Felson (Eds), *Routine Activity and Rational Choice Advances in Criminological Theory*, pp. 259–294. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers.
- ²² Cozens, P. M., & Hillier, D. (2008). The shape of things to come: New urbanism, the grid and the cul-de-sac. *International Planning Studies*, 13(1), 51–73.
- ²³ Krivo, L. J., & Peterson, R. D. (1996). Extremely disadvantaged neighborhoods and urban crime. *Social Forces*, 75(2), 619–648.
- ²⁴ Murphy, R., & Eder, S. (2010). Acquisitive and other property crime. In J. Flatley, C. Kershaw, K. Smith, R. Chaplin, & D. Moon (Eds), *Crime in England and Wales 2009/10*. No. 12/10. London: HMSO.
- ²⁵ Kershaw, C., Chivite-Matthews, N., Thomas, C., & Aust, R. (2001). *The 2001 British Crime Survey. First Results, England and Wales*. No. 18/01. London: Home Office Statistical Bulletin.
- ²⁶ Gaviria, A., & Pagés, C. (2002). Patterns of crime victimization in Latin American cities. *Journal of Development Economics*, 67, 181–203.
- ²⁷ Office for National Statistics. (2015). *Personal Well-Being and Crime*. London: Office for National Statistics.
- ²⁸ Thornton, A., Walker, D., & Ero, R. (2003). *Distraction Burglary Amongst Older Adults and Minority Ethnic Communities, Home Office Findings 197*. London: Home Office.
- ²⁹ Staubli, S., Killias, M., & Frey, B. (2014). Happiness and victimization: An empirical study for Switzerland. *European Journal of Criminology*, 11(1), 57–72.
- ³⁰ Freeman, D., Thompson, C., Vorontsova, N., Dunn, G., Carter, L. A., Garety, P. ... & Ehlers, A. (2013). Paranoia and post-traumatic stress disorder in the months after a physical assault: A longitudinal study examining shared and differential predictors. *Psychological Medicine*, 43(12), 2673–2684.
- ³¹ Gale, J., & Coupe, T. (2005). The behavioural, emotional and psychological effect of street robbery on victims. *International Review of Victimology*, 12(1), 1–22.
- ³² Siegel, L. J. (2010). *Criminology: Theories, and Typologies* (10th ed.). United States: Wadsworth, Cengage Learning.
- ³³ Brunton-Smith, I., & Sturgis, P. (2011). Do neighborhoods generate fear of crime? An empirical test using the British Crime Survey. *Criminology*, 49(2), 331–369.
- ³⁴ Cohen, M. A., Rust, R. T., Stehen, S., & Tidd, S. T. (2004). Willingness-to-pay for crime control programs. *Criminology*, 42(1), 89–110.
- ³⁵ Xie, M., & McDowall, D. (2008). Escaping crime: The effects of direct and indirect victimization on moving. *Criminology*, 46, 539–575.
- ³⁶ Siegel, 2010 (as n. 30 above).

We are an independent charity offering free, confidential support to people affected by crime and traumatic incidents. For information and support, contact us by:

- calling: Supportline **08 08 16 89 111**
- using Next Generation Text (add **18001** before any of our phone numbers)
- Online: **victimsupport.org.uk**

To find out how you can help us, visit **victimsupport.org.uk/get-involved**

victimsupport.org.uk

 VictimSupport  @VictimSupport

Published by VS
President HRH The Princess Royal

VS, Hallam House,
56-60 Hallam Street, London W1W 6JL
Telephone: 020 7268 0200

Charity registration: 298028 Company no: 2158780
Registered in England. Limited by guarantee.
Registered office as above.

