

# JSNA Health and Wellbeing Profile 2025/26

## Sexual violence and harassment

### Summary Points

- The rate of sexual offences in Bristol in 2024/25 was 4.8 per 1,000 population, significantly higher than the national average (3.1 per 1,000 population).
- The prevalence of sexual assault is likely to be far greater than the number of recorded offences
- Over a third of people in Bristol feel that sexual harassment is an issue (QoL survey 24/25).

### Findings

Nationally police recorded crime for sexual offences has been increasing year on year since 2012/13 (see figure 1). [Note - Police recorded data needs to be treated with caution, high levels of non-reporting and changes in reporting (which can reflect the impact of high-profile incidents, media coverage or campaigns) mean that it is difficult to identify trends. The overall trend is also difficult to disentangle from the impact of lockdowns. Nationally there was a noticeable drop in recorded offences during the Spring 2020 lockdown before a return to previous levels in the July to September 2020 quarter<sup>1</sup>].

In Bristol, the rate of sexual offences has tended to mirror the national profile but at a significantly higher rate, but in the last two years, the gap has increased significantly. The 2024/25 rate of 4.8 per 1,000 population is the highest rate recorded in Bristol, significantly higher than the England average (3.1%) and significantly higher than the previous year. Bristol has moved from having the third highest rate of all English core cities in 2023/24 to joint highest in 2024/25 (with Manchester) and places them as ninth highest of all local authorities Sheffield has the lowest rate of all core cities (3.2 per 1,000).

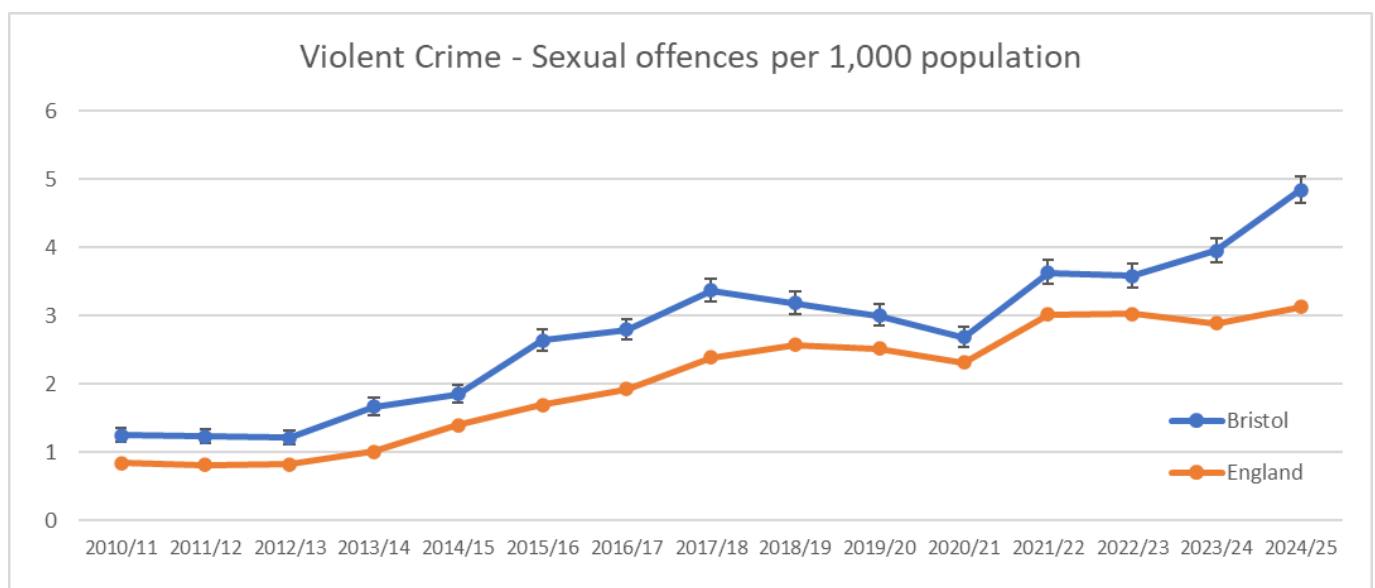


Figure 1: Sexual Offences per 1,000 population. Source: Public Health Outcomes Framework (Feb 2026).

<sup>1</sup><https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/earendingseptember2021#domestic-abuse-and-sexual-offences>

## Project Bluestone

Project Bluestone was an initiative launched by Avon and Somerset Police in 2021 and has led to sustained improvements to the way Avon and Somerset police approaches rape and serious sexual offences<sup>2</sup>. Avon and Somerset Police’s charge rate for rape cases has more than doubled over three years with charge volumes increasing from 62 in 2021 to 231 in the last year.

## Rate of Sexual Offences by Ward

Figure 2 below shows a significant increase in the rate of recorded sexual offences in many wards across Bristol in the last three years. Hotwells & Harbourside and Central wards who have the highest rates have both experienced an increase compared with the previous year, although rates are lower than the 22/23 peak. Filwood is the only ward in the top 10 to have experienced a decrease in the rate of sexual offences when compared with the last 12 months.

The [Women’s Safety Charter](#) was launched in 2022 by Bristol Nights and aims to build a network of safety advocates across the city, recognising that everyone should feel safe after dark and that harassment has no place in our city.

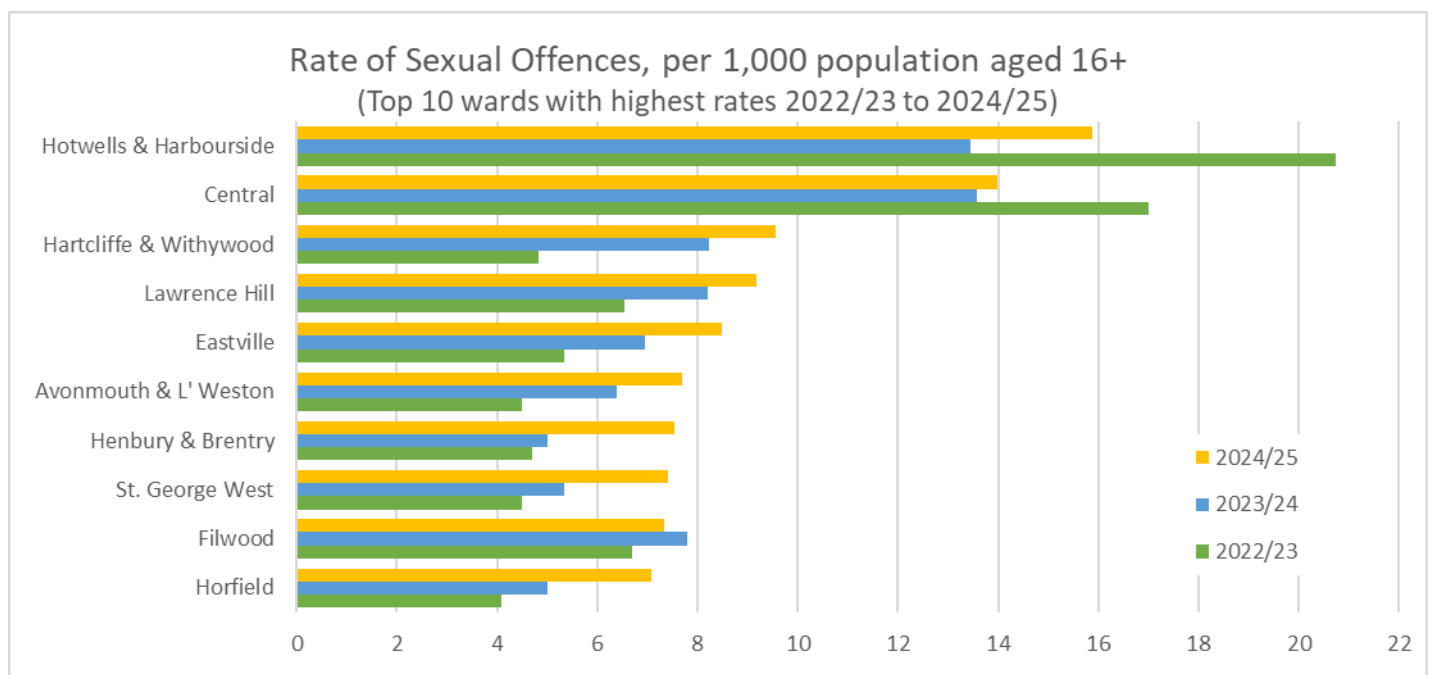


Figure 2: Source: Avon & Somerset Constabulary, ONS Population Estimates

## Estimates from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW)

The following findings have been extracted from the ONS bulletin for [Crime in England and Wales: year ending September 2025](#): Latest available estimates from the CSEW for the year ending September 2025 showed that 1.9% of people aged 16 years and over had experienced sexual assault (including attempted offences) in the last year.

<sup>2</sup> [Project Bright Light | Avon and Somerset Police](#)

For analysing data over time, we use the 16 to 59 years age range to give a comparable time series. The CSEW for the year ending March 2025 estimated 2.4% of people aged 16 to 59 years had experienced sexual assault (including attempted offences) in the last year, compared with 1.7% for the year ending March 2015.

Police recorded sexual offences increased by 8% in the year ending September 2025 (214,816 offences) compared with the previous year (198,373 offences), in part due to improvements in police recording practices over the last decade. This includes the introduction of two new sexual offences subcodes within the “other sexual offences” subgroups (introduced January 2024) and relate to sending or sharing intimate photographs or films following the Online Safety Act 2023.

Within sexual offences, there was a 7% increase in rape offences (to 74,265 offences) compared with YE September 2024 (69,492 offences). Around 35% of all sexual offences recorded by the police in YE September 2025 were rape offences.

### Sexual Harassment

Self-reported data from the Bristol Quality of Life survey 2024/25<sup>3</sup> indicates that 36.7% people feel that “sexual harassment is an issue in Bristol”, an increase on the previous year (33.2%). By sub-locality, the highest % of residents who feel sexual harassment is an issue live in the Inner City (45.3%) and the lowest live in North and West (Outer) (31.6%). By ward breakdown residents say that sexual harassment is more of an issue in Hengrove & Whitchurch Park (48.9%), Ashley (47.9%) and Easton (47.1%) and less of an issue in Brislington West (27.4%), Redland (26.4%) and Stockwood (21.7%) – the ward with the lowest level of concern (see figure 3 overleaf).

**Equalities data:** Sexual harassment in Bristol was felt to be a significantly higher issue for some equalities groups when compared to the Bristol average of 36.7%, including Lesbian, Gay and Bi-sexual (LGB) people (56.5%) and young people aged 16 to 24 (54.2%) . 39.3% of females felt that sexual harassment was an issue compared to 33.4% of males.

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<sup>3</sup> [The quality of life in Bristol - bristol.gov.uk](https://www.bristol.gov.uk/quality-of-life)

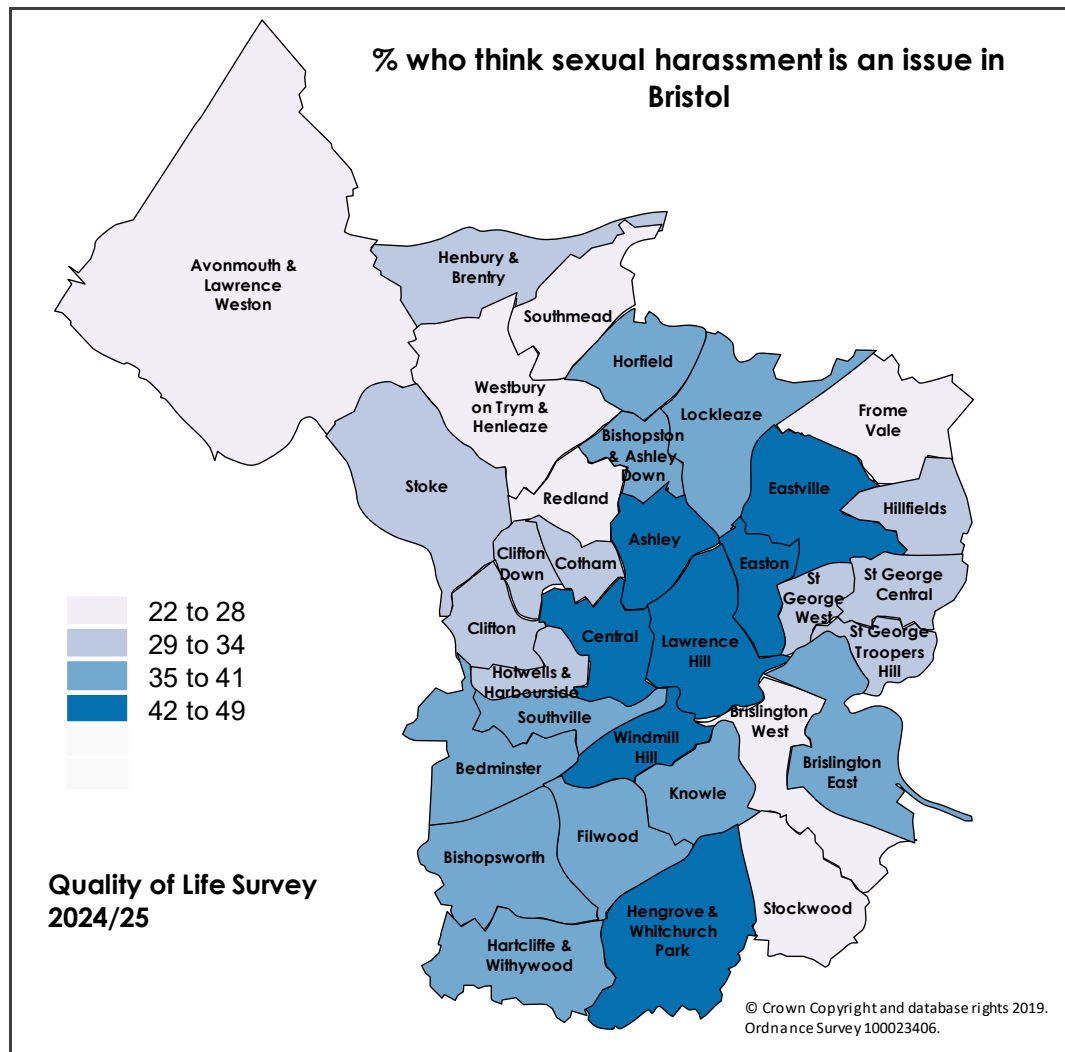


Fig 3: Source: Bristol Quality of Life survey 2024/25

**Further data / links:**

- [Public Health Outcomes Framework](#)
- [Crime in England and Wales - Office for National Statistics](#)

**Date updated:** February 2026

**Next update due:** March 2027