

# Victims statistics, 2014-15 to 2018-19: victims' services, restorative justice and information, advice and support



This is the second part of the Victims' Commissioner's bulletin using data from the ONS Crime Survey for England and Wales. The bulletin presents statistics about victims' contact with victims' services, restorative justice, and information, advice and support, between 2014-15 to 2018-19.

## Summary

- Few victims recalled having contact with victims' services in 2018-19. Where the police knew about an incident, the proportion of incidents where victims had contact with victims' services was higher. But, this has decreased over the five-year period (12.9% in 2014-15 to 9.8% in 2018-19). Most victims were satisfied with their contact with victims' services. (p.3)
- Over the last three years, an increasing proportion of victims are having contact with victims' services over the phone after incidents, and a smaller proportion are having face-to-face contact. The proportion of victims who are having some other type of contact has increased from 3.4% in 2014-15 to 7.9% in 2018-19. (p.4)
- Six out of ten victims said the contact helped them to cope with the impact of the incident in 2018-19. In the same year, just over four out of ten victims said the contact helped them to recover from the impact of the incident. (p.5)
- Most victims said their face-to-face contact with victims' services helped them to cope with the impact of the incident, seven out of ten said their telephone contact helped, but less than half who received leaflets said the contact helped. (p.7)
- Over the last three years, victims of certain types of crimes were more likely to say that their contact with victims' services helped them to cope and recover from the impact of the incident, such as victims of sexual offences, burglary, or violent offences. Victims of personal theft, bicycle theft, car damage and other household theft were least likely to say that contact with victims' services helped them to cope or recover. (p.6, 8)
- A decreasing proportion of victims are being offered the opportunity to meet with the offender to ask why they committed the offence (7.8% in 2017-18 to 4.8% in 2018-19). Just under a third of victims accepted the offer of a meeting in 2018-19. Around one in four victims said they would have accepted such an offer in each of the last five years. (p.10)
- Nine out of ten victims did not receive any information, advice or support following the incident. But, when asked what they would have liked to have received, more than four out of five said they would not have liked any information, advice or support at all. (p.11, 13)
- Most victims said the information, advice and support that they received was useful. Over the five-year period, most said it was useful to get the chance to talk to someone either formally or informally, to get help with reporting the incident or dealing with the police, or to get help with preventing further crime. (p.12)

June 2020

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## Introduction

The impact of coronavirus has been felt in nearly every part of our daily lives. So, it is no surprise Government guidelines on social distancing have resulted in radical changes to victims' experience of both the criminal justice system and the support offered by victims' services. In the midst of the pandemic, the need for further funding to deal with increased demands placed on domestic abuse and sexual violence support services has brought the victim experience into sharp focus.

This report provides evidence about what kind of support victims most value and is intended to inform how victims' services are commissioned and delivered after lockdown.

This is my second report focusing on the experience of victims using data from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) Crime Survey for England and Wales. This report looks at the experiences of victims' services, restorative justice, and information, advice and support. Looking at ONS Crime Survey for England and Wales data from the past five years has helped me to understand whether there have been any changes in people's views and experiences during this period.

Unsurprisingly, this report finds victims who had face-to-face contact with victims' services were more likely to say it was effective in helping them to cope with the impact of an incident. More than nine out of ten victims who had face-to-face contact with victims' services said it helped them to cope with the impact of the incident. On the other hand, fewer than half said that receiving a leaflet or letter helped them to cope.

While it has been necessary for victims' services to switch to offering on-line support during the lockdown, the evidence suggests that face-to-face support is highly valued by victims. I acknowledge it is more expensive, but the findings of my report are that after the lockdown has been lifted, Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) and other agencies must continue to fund victims' services that offer vital face-to-face contact.

I was keen to use the ONS data to consider the impact victims' services are having. My report shows victims who receive support are generally satisfied, with more than three out of four victims were satisfied with their contact with victims' services. But, many victims said their contact with victims' services did not help them to recover from the impact of the incident (58% in 2018-19).

We need to reflect on this finding. Firstly, victims' services should consider whether there is a better way to help victims with recovery. Secondly, we need to reconsider, and possibly redefine, what the expectations are from these services.

The findings of this report lead me to think it is time the Ministry of Justice and other commissioners of victims' services looked at the suitability of the 'cope

and recover' framework for evaluating the effectiveness of victims' services, particularly the "recover" aspect.

Some victims may not feel they need to recover, for example, from the theft of a car or bicycle. Instead, they may prioritise tracking down the stolen property or receiving advice about their contact with criminal justice agencies. Some victims of more violent or harmful crimes may think recovery is not achievable. For them support may be better focused on coping, whilst they themselves work through how they deal with the impact of the crime. They may prefer to do this with the help of health and other services, which they do not associate with "victims' services".

Unfortunately, some four years after my predecessor's review, *A Question of Quality: A Review of Restorative Justice*, we continue to see an unmet need for restorative justice. This report found few victims recall receiving an offer of a meeting with the offender to ask why they committed the offence (5% in 2018-19). For those who did not receive an offer, one in four victims said they would have accepted – a figure which has remained consistent in each of the last five years.

There is good evidence restorative justice can be beneficial for both victims and offenders, increasing victim satisfaction with the criminal justice system, and helping to reduce reoffending. Also, if there is to be increased use of out-of-court-disposals for offenders, restorative justice is a key tool in managing offending and supporting victims.

Over the past few months, the overriding priority, rightly, has been to protect the public from the virus. Victims' services had to rapidly adapt to new circumstances and they have risen to the challenge. Throughout lockdown and beyond, it is imperative the criminal justice system supports victims and victims' services are properly funded and focussed on delivering the services victims need. There is so much good work that goes on in this sector.

I hope my report will prompt reflection on those needs, recognising the value of face-to-face support in a digital age, and for some, the value of restorative justice. We also need to be sure we have the right framework for evaluating the effectiveness of those services.

In conclusion, all victims need assurance they will receive the right support in the way which best helps them when they need it most.



**Dame Vera Baird QC**

**Victims' Commissioner for England and Wales**

## Victims' services

Since 2015-16, victims of crime (excluding victims of fraud and computer misuse) have been asked about their contact with victims' services for each incident:

*Victims' services are organisations which have staff and volunteers trained to offer information, practical help and emotional support to the victims of crime. Victim Support is an example of a victims' service. Thinking about the incident we have been discussing, did you or anyone else in the household have any type of contact with victims' services?*

Previously, victims were asked about their contact with Victim Support.

The percentage of incidents where the victim or anyone else in the household who had any type of contact with victims' services for an incident of crime has fallen each year since 2014-15, from 5.5% to 3.9% - regardless of whether the police came to know about the matter.

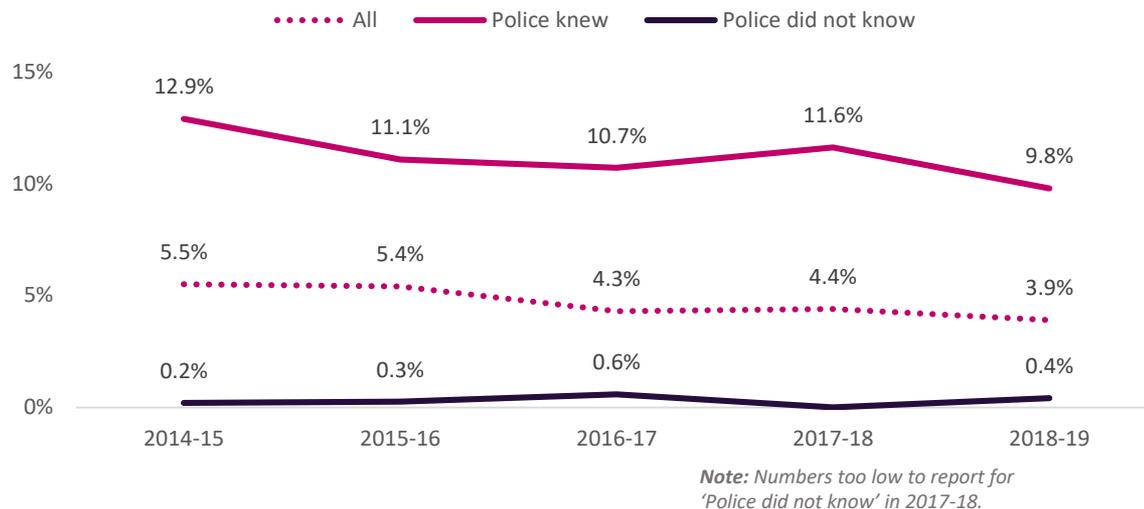
The percentage of incidents where the victims had contact with victims' services and where the police came to know about the matter has decreased from 12.9% in 2014-15 to 9.8% in 2018-19.

The percentage of incidents where victims had contact with victims' services and where the police did not come to know about the matter reached a 5-year high of 0.6% in 2016-17.

Most victims said they, or members of their household, were satisfied with their contact with victims' services in each of the last three years.

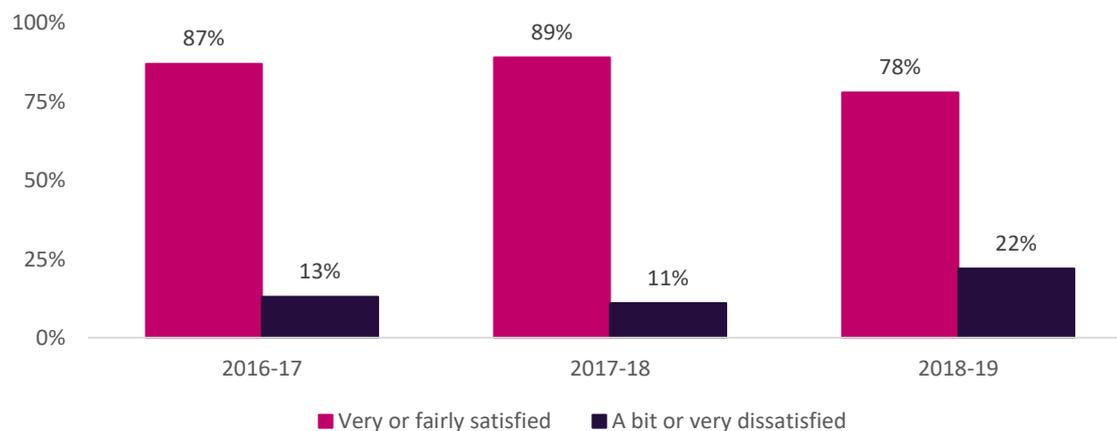
Percentage of incidents where victims had contact with victims' services by whether or not the police came to know about the matter.

Sample size: 7394-7955



Percentage of victims, or members of household, who said that, overall, they were satisfied with their contact with victims' services

Sample size: 229-290



Most victims had contact with victims' services by receiving a phone call following an incident. This increased from 40.6% in 2014-15 to 52.9% in 2018-19.

The percentage of victim contacts with victims' services by receiving a leaflet or letter decreased from 40.5% in 2014-15 to 27.7% in 2018-19.

The percentage of face to face contacts with victims' services was 11.5% in 2018-19.

The percentage of some other type of contacts increased from 3.4% in 2014-15 to 7.9% in 2018-19.

Type of contact with victims' services by number of responses

Sample size: 291-447

60%

40%

20%

0%

*Note: more than one response is possible, percentages may not add up to 100.*

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Received a leaflet or letter	40.5%	32.0%	37.7%	34.6%	27.7%
Received a phone call	40.6%	46.9%	42.4%	47.5%	52.9%
Had face-to-face contact	15.6%	18.8%	16.0%	12.7%	11.5%
Some other type of contact	3.4%	2.3%	4.0%	5.3%	7.9%

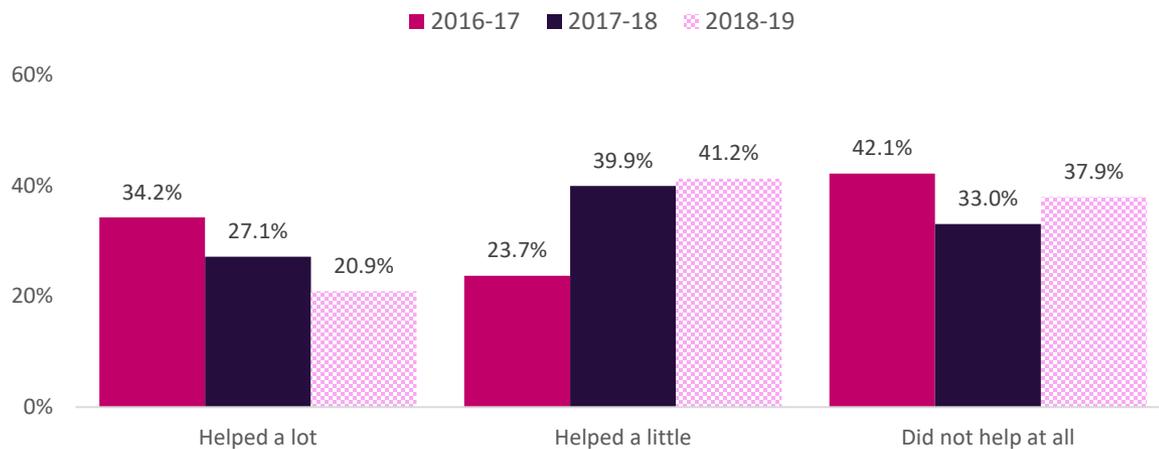
The percentage of victims who were satisfied with their contact with victims' services was at a three-year low in 2018-19. The percentage who said they were 'very satisfied' decreased from 49.9% in 2016-17 to 38.1% in 2018-19.

The percentage of victims who said that contact with victims' services helped them, at least a little, to cope with the impact of the incident was 62.1% in 2018-19.

The percentage of victims who said that contact with victims' services helped them, at least a little, to recover from the impact of the incident was 42.5% in 2018-19.

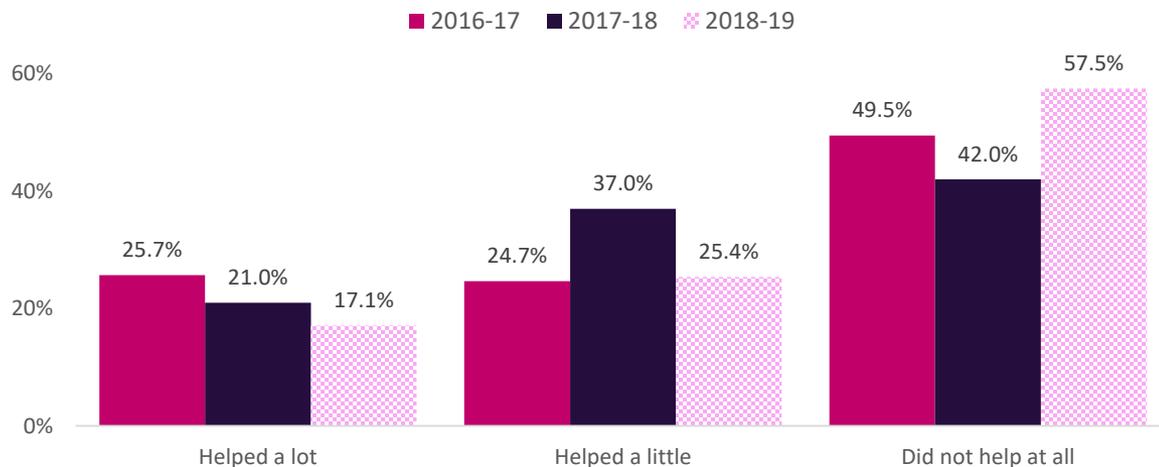
### Did contact with a victims' service help you to cope with the impact of the incident?

Sample size: 245-296



### Did contact with a victims' service help you to recover from the impact of the incident?

Sample size: 241-297



Depending on the crime type, victims gave a range of responses when asked whether their contact with victim services helped (a lot or a little) to cope with the impact of the incident during the years 2016-17 to 2018-19.

Across all crime types and over the three year period, 53.6% of victims said contact with victims' services helped them to cope with the impact of the incident.

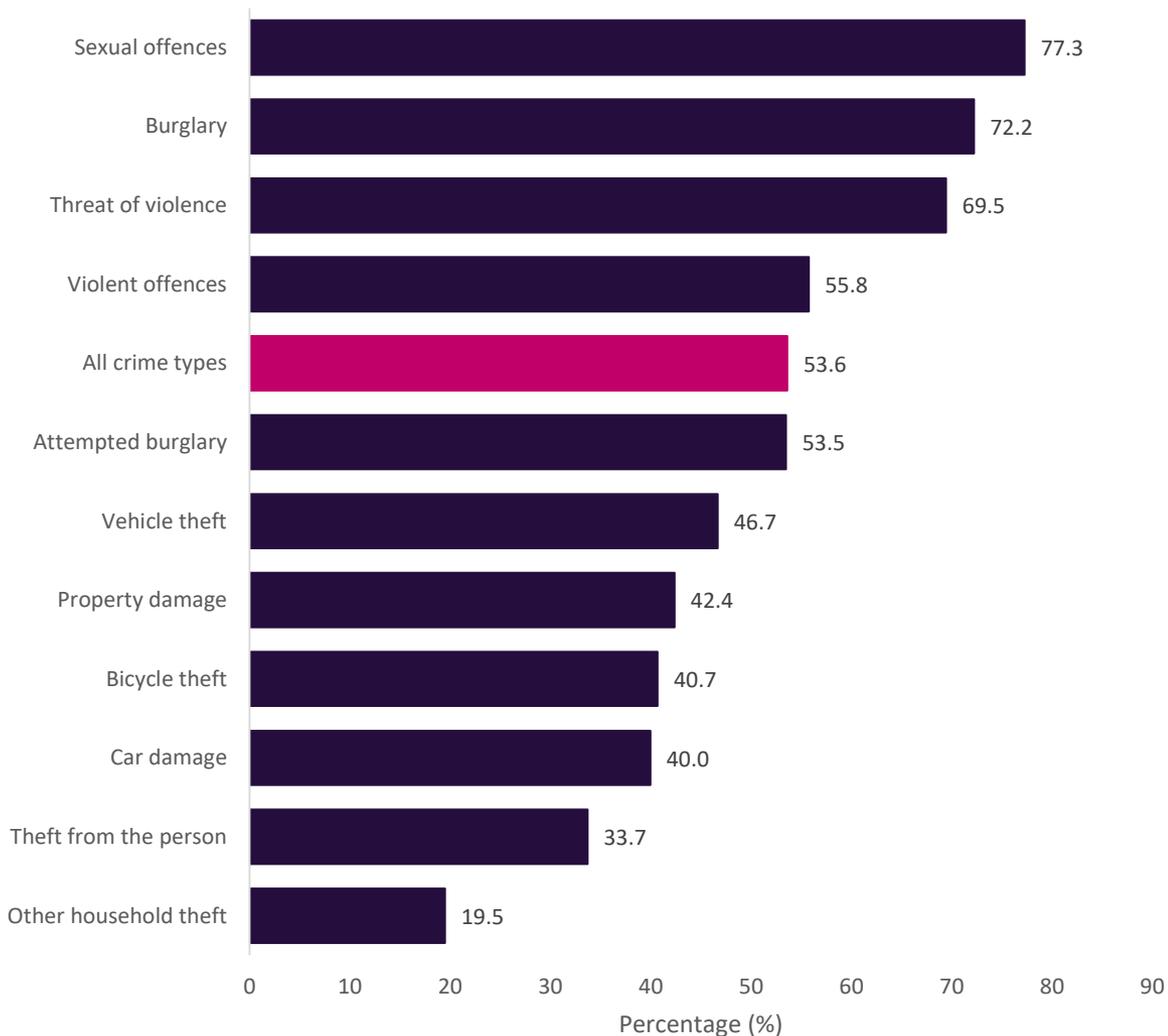
The lowest percentage was for victims who had experienced theft from outside the house/flat (19.5%). The highest percentage was for victims who had experienced sexual assault or attack (77.3%). There was a difference of 57.8 percentage points (ppts) between these two crime types.

There was a significant difference between the proportion of all victims ('All crime types') and victims of Other household theft (-34.1ppts), Theft from the person (-19.9ppts), Car damage (-13.7ppts), Threat of violence (+15.8ppts), Burglary (+18.6ppts) and Sexual offences (+23.6ppts).

*Note: 'All crime types' includes victims of crime types that have not been included as separate bars in this chart due to the small number of responses over the three year period.*

Respondents who said that contact with victims' services either 'helped a lot' and 'helped a little' to cope with the impact of the incident by crime type (all responses 2016-17 to 2018-19)

Sample size: 823



The percentage of victims who said that contact with victims' services helped them to cope, at least a little, with the impact of the incident differed depending on the type of contact.

The largest percentage point difference was between victims who received a leaflet or letter (46.2%) and had face-to-face contact (95.5%) in 2018-19.

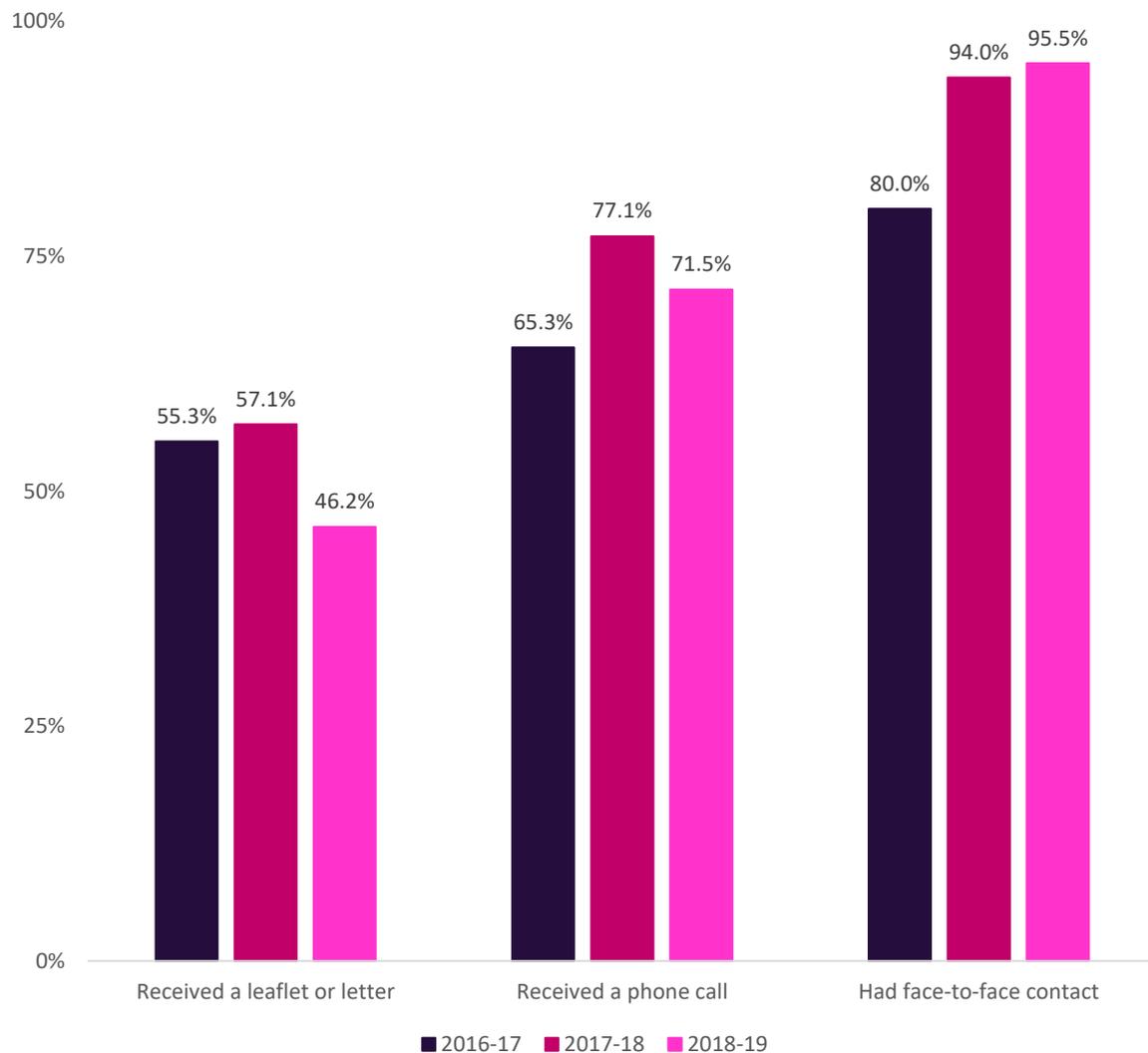
The percentage of victims who said receiving a leaflet or letter helped them to cope ranged from 46.2% and 57.1%.

The percentage of victims who said receiving a phone call helped them to cope ranged from 65.3% to 77.1%.

The percentage of victims who said having face-to-face contact helped them to cope ranged from 80% to 95.5%.

Respondents who either said 'Helped a lot' or 'Helped a little', when asked: Did the contact with victims' services help you to cope with the impact of the incident? By type of contact with victims' services

Sample size: 261-328



Depending on the crime type, victims gave a range of responses when asked whether their contact with victim services helped (a lot or a little) to recover from the impact of the incident during the years 2016-17 to 2018-19.

Across all crime types and over the three year period, 44.7% of victims said contact with victims' services had helped them to recover with the impact of the incident.

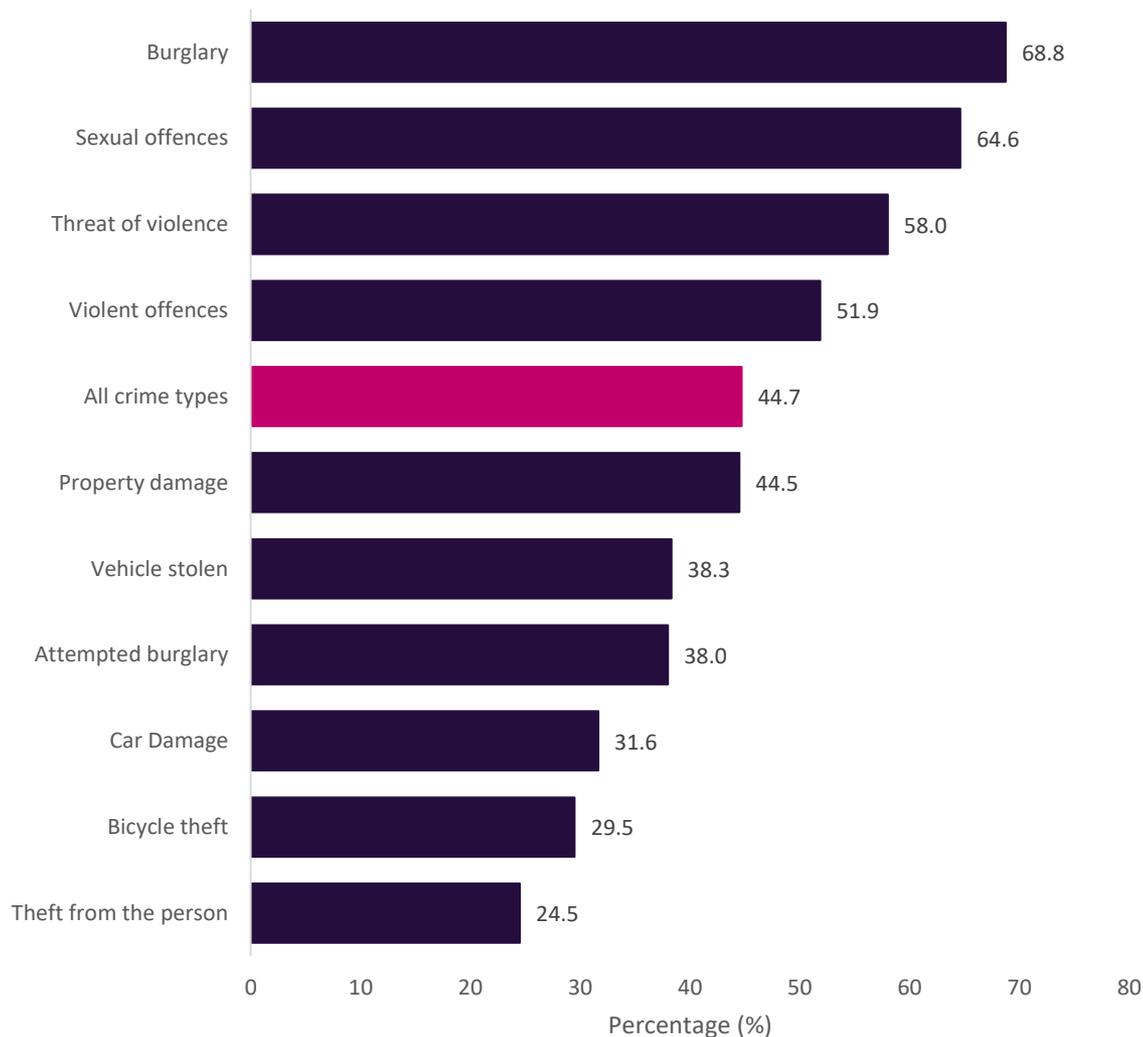
The lowest percentage was for victims who had anything stolen out of their hands, pockets, bag or case (24.5%). The highest percentage was for victims who had experienced someone who got into a house/flat without permission and stolen or tried to steal anything (68.3%). There was a difference of 44.3 percentage points (ppts) between these two crime types.

There was a significant difference between the proportion of all victims ('All crime types') and theft from the person (-20.2ppts), car damage (-13.1 ppts), threat of violence (+13.3ppts), sexual offence (+19.9ppts) and Attempted Burglary (+20.4ppts).

*Note: 'All crime types' includes victims of crime types that have not been included as separate bars in this chart due to the small number of responses over the three year period.*

Respondents who said that contact with victims' services either 'helped a lot' and 'helped a little' with recovering from the impact of the incident, by crime type (all responses between 2016-17 to 2018-19)

Sample size: 821



In terms of whether a victims' contact with victim services either 'helped a lot' or 'helped a little' to recover from the impact of an incident, there was a range of nearly 60 percent across different crime types.

The largest percentage point difference was between victims who received a leaflet or letter (44.4%) and had face-to-face contact (85.8%) in 2017-18.

The percentage of victims who said receiving a leaflet or letter helped them to cope ranged from 44.4% to 47.2%.

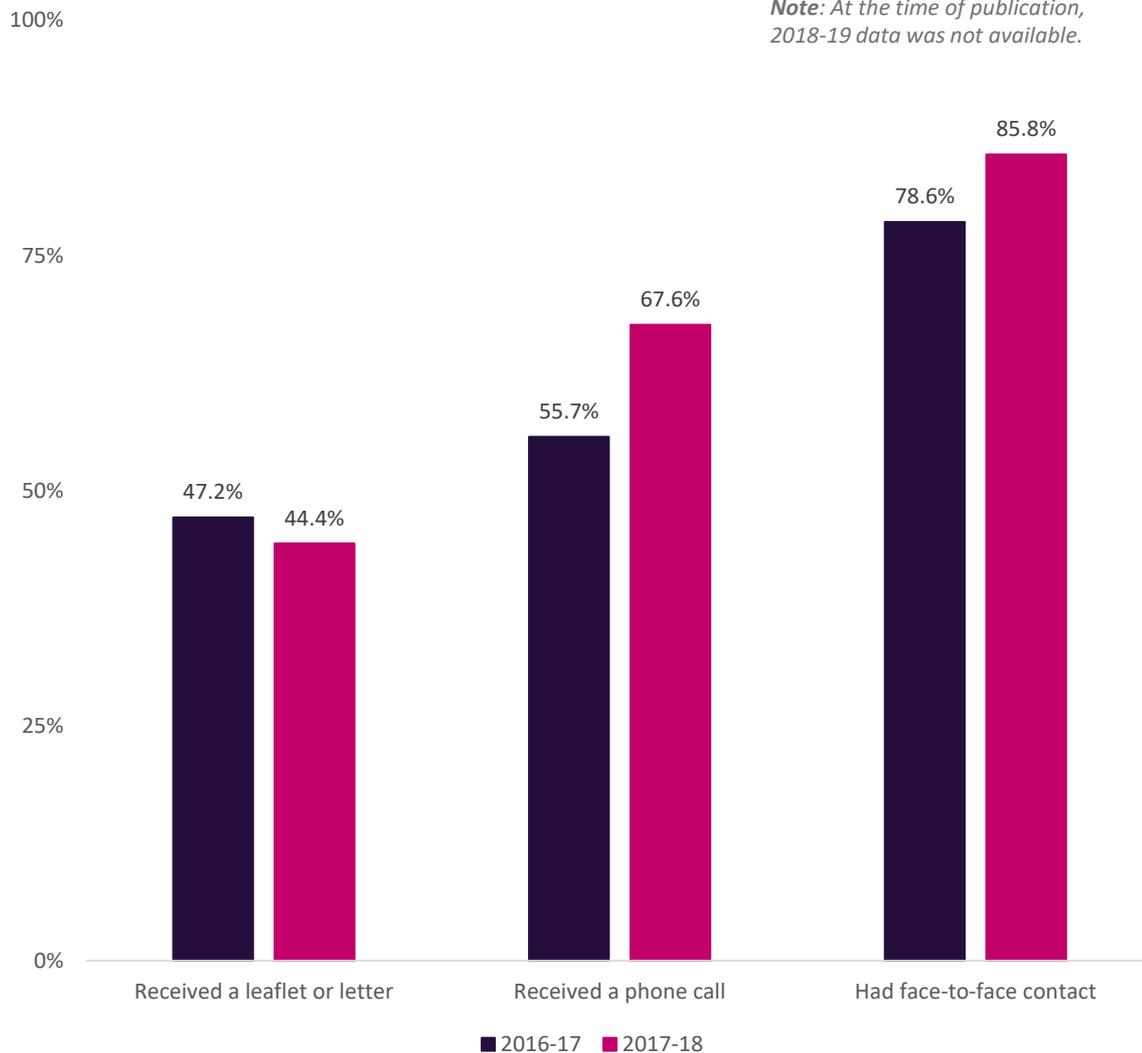
The percentage of victims who said receiving a phone call helped them to cope ranged from 55.7% to 67.6%.

The percentage of victims who said having face-to-face contact helped them to cope ranged from 78.6% to 85.8%

Respondents who either said 'Helped a lot' or 'Helped a little', when asked: Did the contact with victims' services help you to recover from the impact of the incident? by type of contact with victims' services

Sample size: 323-328

Note: At the time of publication, 2018-19 data was not available.



## Restorative justice

Restorative Justice is the practice of offering victims the option to meet with the offender to ask why they committed the offence.

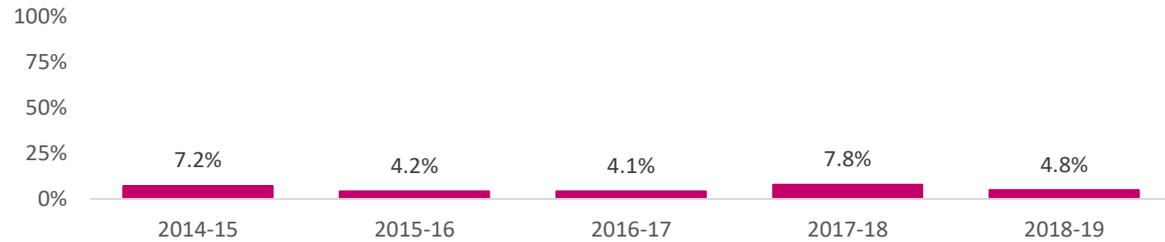
The percentage of victims who were offered such a meeting decreased from 7.8% in 2017-18 to 4.8% in 2018-19.

The percentage of victims who accepted this offer of a meeting was 30.1% in 2018-19, down from 44.2% in 2014-15, but up from 25.1% in 2017-18.

Of those victims who were not offered such a meeting, the percentage who would have accepted such an offer was 26.2% in 2018-19. This has remained stable over the five years.

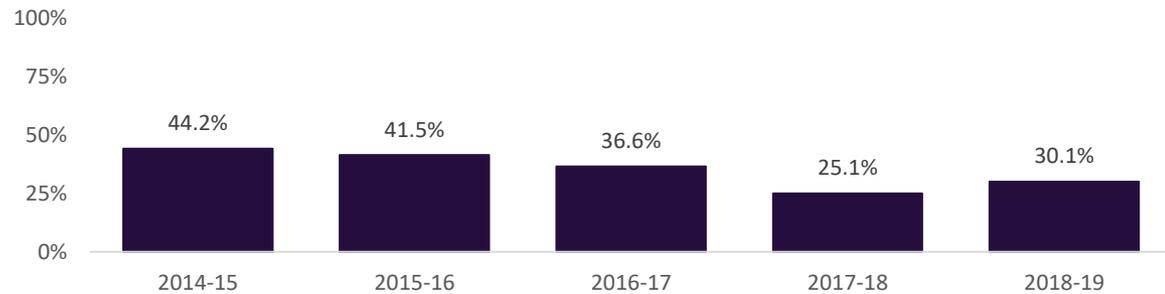
Were you offered such a meeting after this incident?

Sample size: 916-1064



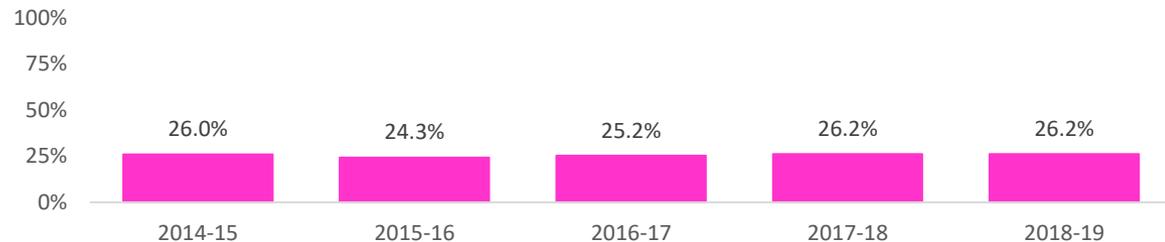
Did you accept this offer of a meeting?

Sample size: 48-65



If you had been offered the chance for such a meeting would you have accepted?

Sample size: 6857-7459



## Information, advice and support

Most victims (or anyone else in the household) did not receive any type of information, advice or support, following the incident of crime. The percentage who did not receive any information or support following an incident was 89% in 2018-19, down from 90.2% in 2017-18, and up from 87.2% in 2014-15.

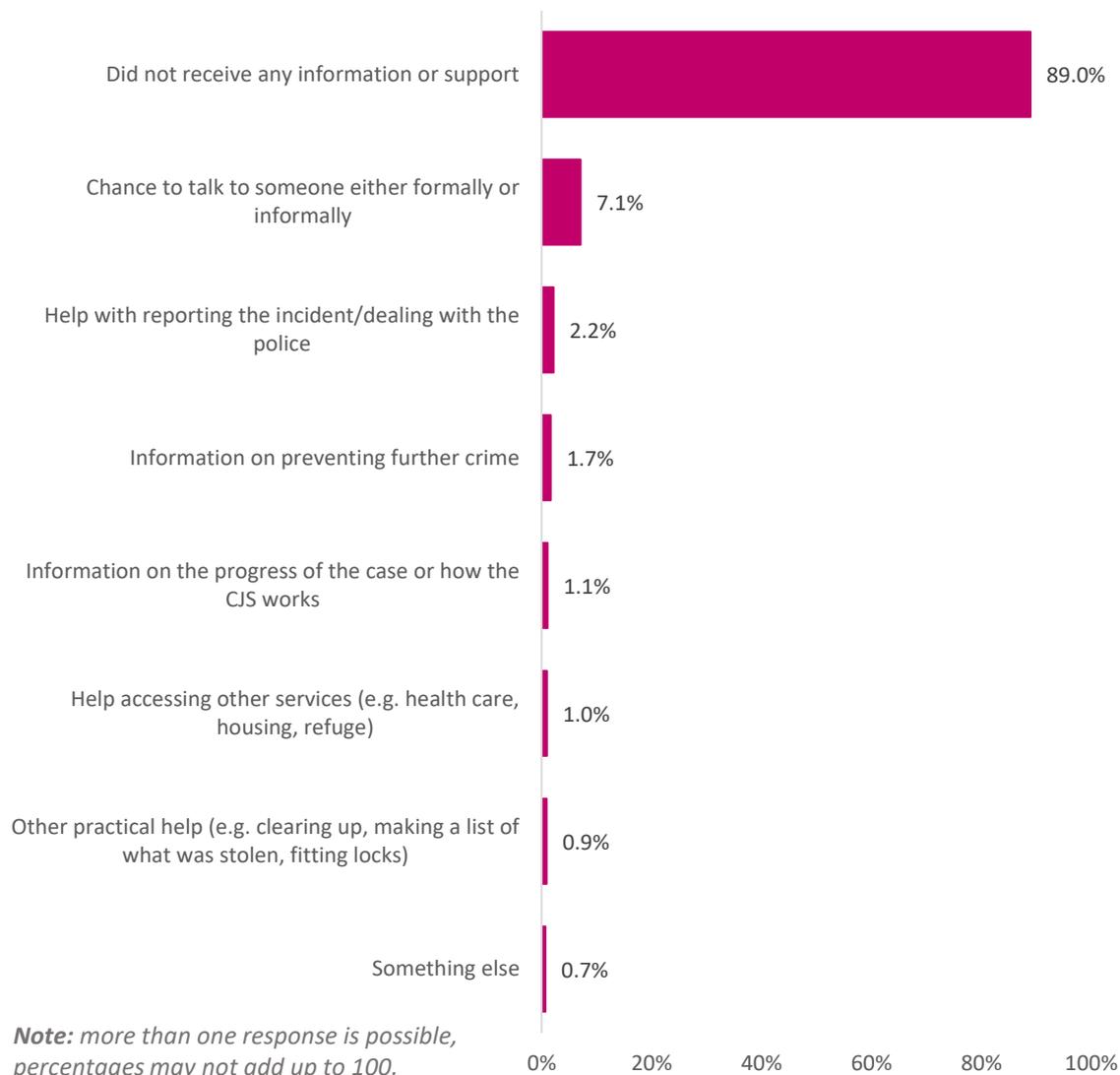
The percentage of victims who had the chance to talk to someone either informally or formally after an incident was 7.1% in 2018-19, up from 6.4% in 2014-15.

The percentage of victims who had help with reporting the incident or dealing with the police increased from 2017-18, from 1.3% to 2.2%.

The percentage of victims who received information on preventing further crime after an incident has fallen each year since 2014-15, from 3.1% to 1.7%.

What types of information, advice or support, if any, did you (or anyone else in your household) receive following the incident? Year ending March 2019

Sample size: 7716



Victims who received information, advice and support are asked how useful they found the support.

Due to low number of annual response, the five years have been combined for analysis.

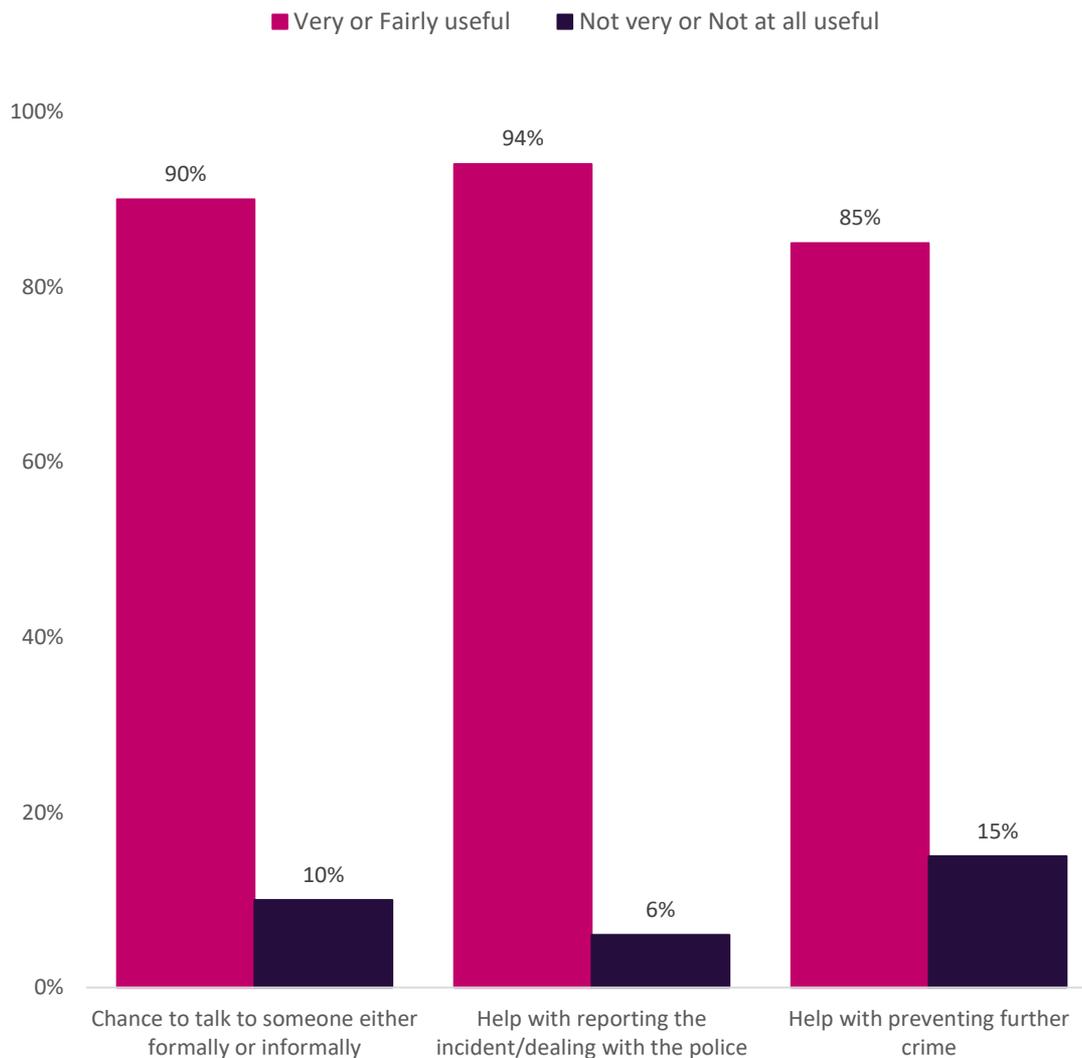
Across the five years, most victims (90%) said the chance to talk to someone either formally or informally was either very or fairly useful between 2015-16 and 2018-19.

Across the five years, most victims (94%) said the help with reporting the incident or dealing with the police was either very or fairly useful between 2015-16 and 2018-19.

Across the five years, most victims (85%) said the help with preventing further crime was either very or fairly useful between 2015-16 and 2018-19.

How useful was the...? all responses between 2014-15 to 2018-19.

Sample size: 306-933



Of those victims who did not receive any information, advice or support following the incident, 82.6% of responses to this question were 'would not have liked any information or support' in 2018-19.

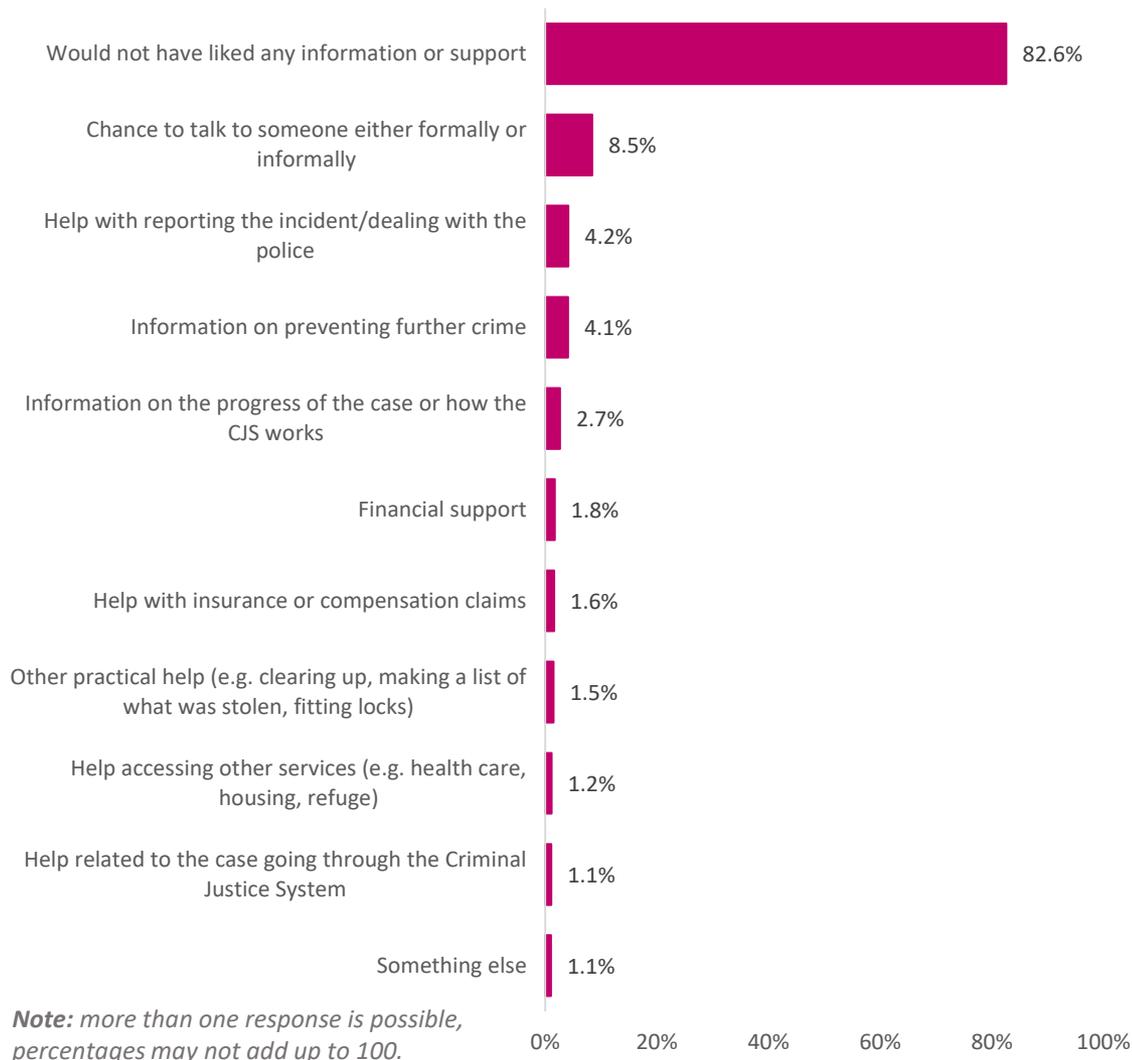
Of those who would have liked support in 2018-19, 8.5% would have liked the opportunity to talk to someone, 4.2% would have liked help with reporting the incident and dealing with the police, and 4.1% would have liked information on preventing further crime.

The percentage who said they would like the chance to talk to someone either formally or informally after the incident increased from 6.5% in 2014-15 to 8.5% in 2018-19.

The percentage who said they would like help with reporting the incident or dealing with the police also increased from 2.7% in 2014-15 to 4.2% in 2018-19.

Even though you didn't receive any information, advice or support following the incident, would you have liked to receive anything...? Year ending March 2019

Sample size: 7346



# Notes

## How the bulletin was prepared

The statistics in this and the previous bulletin are derived from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) (formerly British Crime Survey). The CSEW covers all crimes for adults aged 16 and over. The CSEW is a face-to-face victimisation survey asking residents of households about their experiences of a range of crimes in the 12 months prior to the interview. The CSEW uses a stratified random sampling method to select respondents. The CSEW is subject to (a) sampling error as the CSEW is not a census, and (b) non-sampling error such as issues with respondents recalling past events.

The bulletins refers to 'victims', which is defined by the CSEW as anyone who has experienced a range of crimes in the 12 months prior to the interview. Questions on victims' services are not included in the victimisation module for fraud incidents.

The bulletins were prepared by an Office of National Statistics' (ONS) Approved Researcher using Crime Survey microdata accessed through the [ONS Secure Research Service](#). This research project was approved by an ONS Research Accreditation Panel.

The bulletins presents annual figures at the national level. Annual percentage totals were prepared using SPSS after removing response types for some questions, i.e. 'Don't knows'. Each percentage total was weighted: (1) c11weighti – for incident-based analysis of data from the victim form database; (2) c11indivwgt – for individual-based analysis of attitudinal questions from the non-victim form and others. Frequency table outputs were given publication-level clearance by ONS Research Support.

Percentage point changes were tested for statistical significance at the 0.05 level. We tested whether there were statistically significant changes across the five year period. This includes testing adjacent years, first-to-last year, and intervening years. Only percentage point changes that were found to be statistically significant are reported.

## Note from the Office for National Statistics

*"The Office for National Statistics agrees that the figures and descriptions of results in the attached document may be published. This does not imply ONS' acceptance of the validity of the methods used to obtain these figures, or of any analysis of the results."*

*"This work was produced using statistical data from ONS. The use of the ONS statistical data in this work does not imply the endorsement of the ONS in relation to the interpretation or analysis of the statistical data. This work uses research datasets which may not exactly reproduce ONS aggregates."*

### Key: Crime types (CSEW code):

**Attempted burglary (YrHoThef):** if anyone got into this house/flat without permission and stolen or tried to steal anything

**Bicycle theft (BikTheft):** if you/has anyone in this household had a bicycle stolen?

**Burglary (YrHoTry):** if anything was stolen out of current residence

**Car damage (CarDamag):** if you had your/has anyone had their] vehicle deliberately tampered with or damaged by vandals or people out to steal

**Other household theft (YrOSide):** if anything (else) that belonged to someone in your household stolen from outside the house/flat - from the doorstep, the garden or the garage for example

**Property damage (YrDeface):** if anything was damaged outside current residence

**Sexual offences (SexAttak):** if respondent has been sexually assaulted or attacked

**Theft from the person (PersThef):** if anything you were carrying stolen out of your hands or from your pockets or from a bag or case

**Threat of violence (ThreViol):** if anyone has threatened to damage things/use force or violence

**Vehicle theft (MotStole):** if vehicle stolen or driven away without permission

**Violent offences (DelibVio):** if anyone has deliberately used force/violence on the respondent