
Director General for Regulation

Iain Bell
ONS Deputy National Statistician
Director General, Population and Public Policy

09 November 2017

Dear Iain,

Crime statistics focus on issues that really matter to people. Published statistics about crime should give a clear picture of what is happening in society and how it is changing. With the two main sources of data about trends in crime diverging quite markedly it is more important than ever that public debate about crime is well-informed. The latest report: Crime in England and Wales: year ending June 2017 did not do nearly enough to inform that debate.

You acted quickly when it became clear that the media coverage was confused following the published crime statistics. Your subsequent blog was a useful first step to clarify what is happening to trends in crime, in particular your statement that crime overall has not risen. Your willingness to step into a debate to provide clarity is a good example of statisticians serving the wider public interest.

Your blog clearly set out that there is more to do in this area for the January publication. I agree. I urge you to comprehensively review the publication to ensure that these statistics really add value to the public. In particular I encourage you to think about how you present and explain the different sources of crime statistics. We will be monitoring the report closely as it is vital that it does bring the necessary clarity to the debate.

I am copying this letter to John Pullinger, National Statistician.

Yours sincerely



Ed Humpherson
Director General for Regulation