



SAFER CORNWALL

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Penzance

Town summary 2025



Introduction

This profile provides a **picture of crime and community safety issues** for this area. It compares the Penzance town area with the average for other large towns in Cornwall (towns with a population of 10,000 or more), described within this profile as “urban”.

Safer Penzance was established in 2016 to facilitate and support a **co-ordinated multi-agency approach to community safety** issues to improve feelings of safety and public reassurance, reduce the risk of harm to residents and protect vulnerable groups. The multi-agency group involves local community and voluntary sector agencies in the work of the partnership and encourages social inclusion and participation through inviting all partners to actively be involved in the problem-solving process and sharing a sense of pride in their town.

key statistics

	Current population of Penzance town area is 20,658	14% are aged under 16 16% Cornwall / 19% England
People		28% are aged over 65 26% Cornwall / 19% England
	46% live in the 20% most deprived neighbourhoods in England	
Vulnerable groups		Education & skills
	£303,844 average house price	
Housing	£341,635 across Cornwall £356,508 across England	Economy
	12% of people have a long-term illness that limits activities a lot	
Health & wellbeing	9% in Cornwall 7% across England	Access & transport
		29% of households do not have a car
		15% in Cornwall 24% across England

Except where stated this profile provides information for **the geographical area representing Penzance Town as defined by [Local Insight \(communityinsight.org\)](https://www.localinsight.org/)**; comparisons are drawn with the average for other large towns in Cornwall (with a population of 10k or more, also described as “urban”) and Cornwall as a whole.

Cornwall overview

Over the last 12 months we have seen crime rates rise across Cornwall. There were 33,425 crimes reported in the 12-month period ending December 2024. This is an **increase of 11%** and can mostly be accounted for by increases in **stalking** and **harassment** offences, **assaults without injury**, **shoplifting**, **criminal damage** and **public order offences**.

Shoplifting has increased across the country and is at its highest levels for the last 20 years. In Cornwall, we have seen a rise of 23% compared with last year. Responses to this type of crime include Shopwatch radios and bespoke crime prevention training in our larger towns.

Criminal damage makes up 12% of all recorded crime and is a highly visible sign of disorder in communities, which can negatively affect public perceptions of crime and feelings of safety.

Violence makes up a third of all recorded crime and has **increased by 10%** overall, with the majority of the rise coming from **violence without injury** offences. Violence with injury has seen a smaller rise overall and has reduced in some larger towns where there have been targeted initiatives.

Reporting of domestic abuse is a key factor. Cornwall sees a greater proportion of crime recorded as **domestic abuse** (36%) and the number of these crimes is still **increasing**, whereas nationally police recorded domestic abuse crimes have started to fall for the first time in a decade.

Safer Cornwall is focusing on **prevention approaches** through local delivery of the Serious Violence Prevention Programme and five-year strategies to tackle **domestic abuse** and **sexual violence** and **violence against women and girls**. These form part of our Strategic Framework to prevent serious violence in Cornwall.

There were 7,844 incidents of **anti-social behaviour** reported to the police in the last 12 months. After a long period of reduction, we are now seeing trends begin to rise again. Across our larger towns, we are starting to see the benefits of targeted initiatives such as **Safer Streets** and **Hotspot Patrols** with some towns seeing lower than average rises.

Understanding crime increases

It is estimated that improvements in crime recording have **increased recorded crime by 8%** providing more opportunities to support victims and keep communities safe.

Devon and Cornwall Police are focused on keeping communities safe and delivering justice for victims through:

- **Improved access for victims** via increased front offices and improvements in 101 call wait times
- Effective **hotspot policing** initiatives
- **Improving response times** to incidents
- **Pro-active operations** focused on serious and organised criminals
- **Securing more positive outcomes** for victims through improved investigation quality

Safer Cornwall continues to provide opportunities for local people to talk to services about the issues that matter and find out what help is available, through community events and drop-in sessions. This aims to increase **confidence to report** and therefore we expect to see an increase in reported incidents as a result, particularly in areas with more persistent issues.

A new [Partnership Plan for 2025-2028](#) was launched in April 2025 setting out plans for the next three years. Safer Cornwall's priorities include ensuring our **public spaces** are safe for everyone, tackling **domestic abuse and sexual violence** and reducing the harms of **drugs and alcohol**. As well as providing an effective response to what is happening now, the Plan aims to prevent issues in the future by addressing the **underlying causes of harm**.

What are the key trends for the Penzance town area?

Along with other large towns in Cornwall, Penzance town area is a hotspot for crime and anti-social behaviour. The town has a population of just over 20,000. Rates of crime tend to be high when compared with the urban area average.

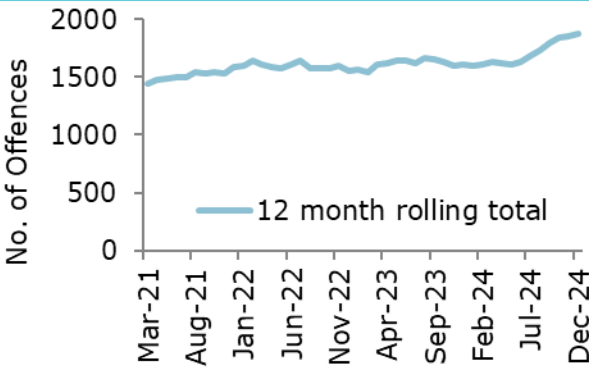
- The **volume of crime has increased by 16%** over the 12 months ending December 2024 which is greater than the increase seen across Cornwall and the other Safer Towns. This equates to 262 additional crimes being reported when compared with the previous year.
- Some of the rise can be attributed to an **increase in shoplifting** which has more than doubled when compared with the previous year (+114 crimes). During the summer of 2024 Penzance started using the DISC reporting system which may account for some of this increase as businesses can now report offences in a more convenient way. **Other Theft** has also seen a significant increase- offences of this type tend to be **opportunistic theft**.
- **Other sexual offences increased** over this time period, whilst the number of rape offences has remained relatively stable. The rate of other sexual offences is greater than that of the urban area average.
- Although numbers are small, there has been an **increase in possession of weapons** offences. The trend is increasing across the Safer Towns, although the rate of offences in Penzance is greater than the urban area average.
- **Public order offences increased** by 27% (+31 crimes) during this year. Rates of this type of offence are greater than the average seen across the safer towns. These offences tend to be more visible and can therefore negatively impact residents perceptions of crime.
- The number of **violent crimes has remained consistent** when compared with the previous year. The trend for violence without injury is in contrast with the increases seen across Cornwall and other Safer Towns .
- The number of reported **domestic abuse crimes** and incidents has also remained stable. This also opposes the increasing trend that we have seen across Cornwall and the other Safer Towns.
- There has been a **rise in miscellaneous crimes against society** (+31 crimes). This offence category includes handling stolen goods, threat to commit criminal damage, dangerous driving, perverting the course of justice and making/ distributing pornographic images.

Crime / incident type	Trend	Rate per 1000	Year ending Dec 24	Year ending Dec 23	Annual Change	Urban areas	Urban areas trend
All crime	▲	95.8	1,873	1,611	16%	●	▲
Domestic Abuse (total incidents)	▶	28.1	550	560	-2%	●	▶
Domestic Abuse Crimes	▶	17.5	342	337	1%	●	▲
Non-Crime Domestic	▼	10.6	208	223	-7%	●	▶
Rape	▶	1.6	32	34	-6%	●	▲
Other Sexual Offences	▲	3.4	67	51	31%	●	▲
Stalking and Harrassment	▶	10.0	195	196	-1%	●	▲
Homicide	▶	0.0	0	0	0%	●	▶
Violence with Injury	▶	12.8	251	261	-4%	●	▶
Violence without Injury	▶	16.5	322	335	-4%	●	▲
Drug Offences	▲	3.7	73	64	14%	●	▲
Possession of Weapons	▲	1.7	33	21	57%	●	▲
Burglary - Residential	▶	1.6	31	28	11%	●	▶
Burglary - Business and Community	▲	0.8	16	9	78%	●	▲
Robbery	▶	0.3	5	6	-17%	●	▲
Vehicle Offences	▲	2.2	44	30	47%	●	▲
Shoplifting	▲	10.8	212	98	116%	●	▲
Other Theft	▲	6.7	131	94	39%	●	▶
Criminal Damage	▶	11.6	227	224	1%	●	▲
Arson	▶	0.1	2	5	-60%	●	▼
Public Order Offences	▲	7.5	146	115	27%	●	▲
Miscellaneous Crimes Against Society	▲	2.7	53	22	141%	●	▲
Anti-social behaviour incidents	▲	27.5	537	497	8%	●	▲
Street Drinking/Begging/Drug Litter	▲	5.1	99	46	115%	●	▲
Hate Crime	▼	1.1	22	34	-35%	●	▶
Under 18 Victims of Crime	▲	11.1	218	204	7%	●	▲

- Crime rate lower than urban areas
- Crime rate higher than urban areas

Note that caution should be taken when interpreting percentage change relating to small numbers (where there are less than 20 crimes per annum), due to the volatility of small numbers. The above table includes reported crime and incidents meaning that non crime domestic and Anti-Social behaviour are not included in the total number of offences in the "All Crime" total.

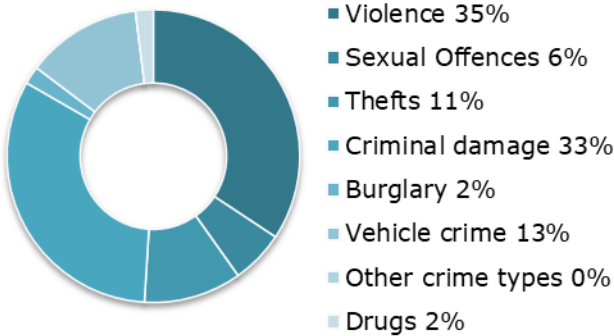
Trend



Crime in Penzance increased by 16% in the 12 months ending December 2024.

This is largely due to an increase in shoplifting, public order offences and miscellaneous crimes against society.

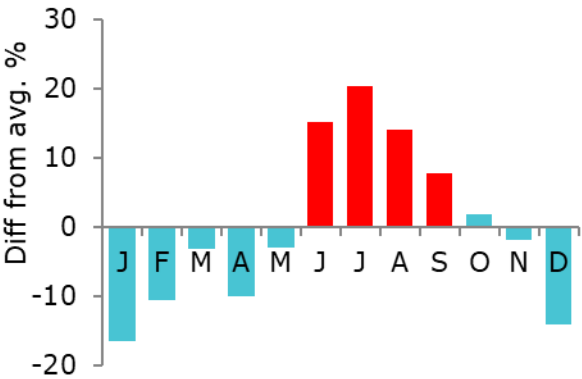
Offences



Penzance has a higher proportion of violent offences, criminal damage and vehicle crime than the Cornwall average.

Seasonality

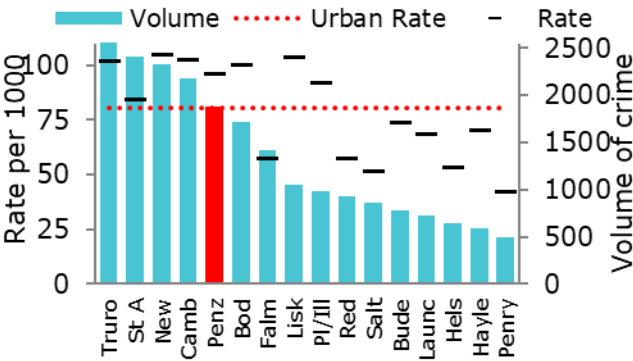
(based on a 3 year average)



Crime in Penzance is higher during the summer period between June to September. This is consistent with what we see across Cornwall as a whole

Comparison

(based on combined rate and volume)

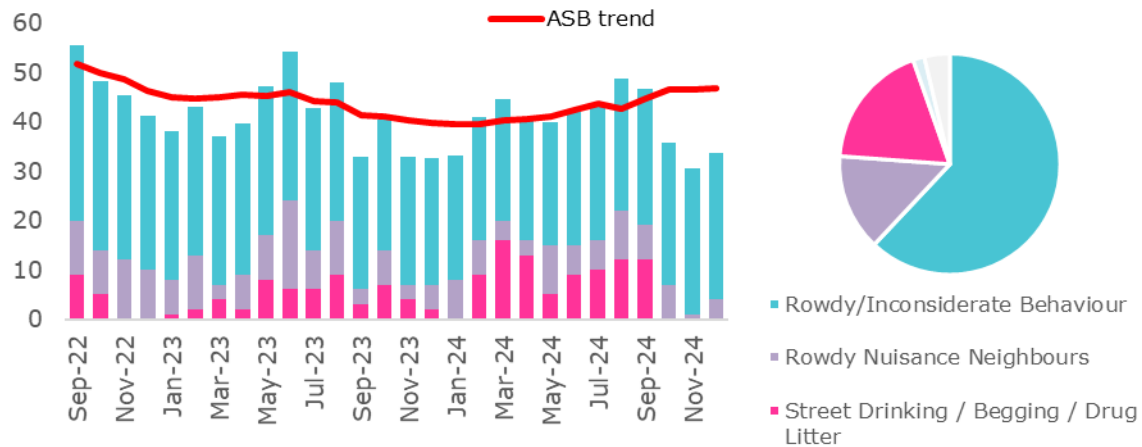


Penzance has a higher rate of crime than the average for the urban areas in Cornwall.

Penzance has the 5th highest volume of crimes in Cornwall.

Anti-social behaviour

Anti-social behaviour has increased by 8% over these past 12 months, which is consistent with the trend we are seeing across Cornwall and our other Safer Towns.



- Rowdy Inconsiderate behaviour makes up 62% of all recorded anti-social behaviour. Numbers of these incidents have remained fairly stable compared with the previous year.
- There has been an increase in **street drinking/ begging and drug litter** (+53 incidents) which is a higher increase than in other Safer Towns. These incidents are much lower in volume and make up just under 1 in 5 anti-social behaviour reports in the town.

What residents think

As part of the update of our new Partnership Plan, we invited local people to "Have Your Say" about the **community safety issues that matter** on a day-to-day basis in the local area and what could be done to improve things.

Our **on-line survey** was available via Cornwall Council's [Let's Talk Cornwall](#) in July and August 2024. We also held some **face-to-face engagement events** in the summer.

Across Cornwall, 63% of people said they **felt safe** during the day in their local area. 52% of respondents in Cornwall **felt very unsafe or fairly unsafe** after dark in their local area, which indicated a deterioration in feelings of safety from the 2023 survey (41%).

- Only 32 people living in Penzance responded to the survey. Of these, 66% **felt safe** in their local area during the day which is higher than the average for Cornwall (63%).
- 63% said they **felt unsafe** after dark which is worse than the average for Cornwall (52%). These are, however, small numbers so it's hard to draw any firm conclusions from them.

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CORNWALL**

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