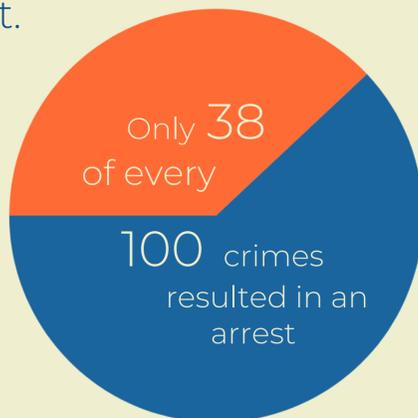
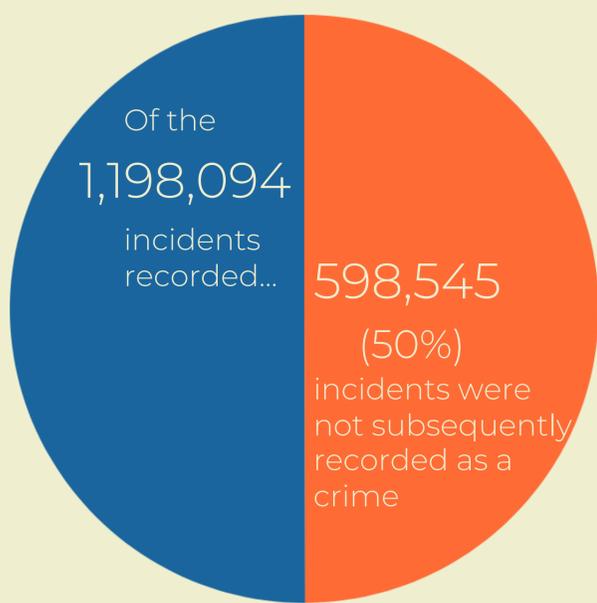


POLICING DOMESTIC ABUSE: JUSTICE WITHOUT ARREST?

By Miriam Shovel

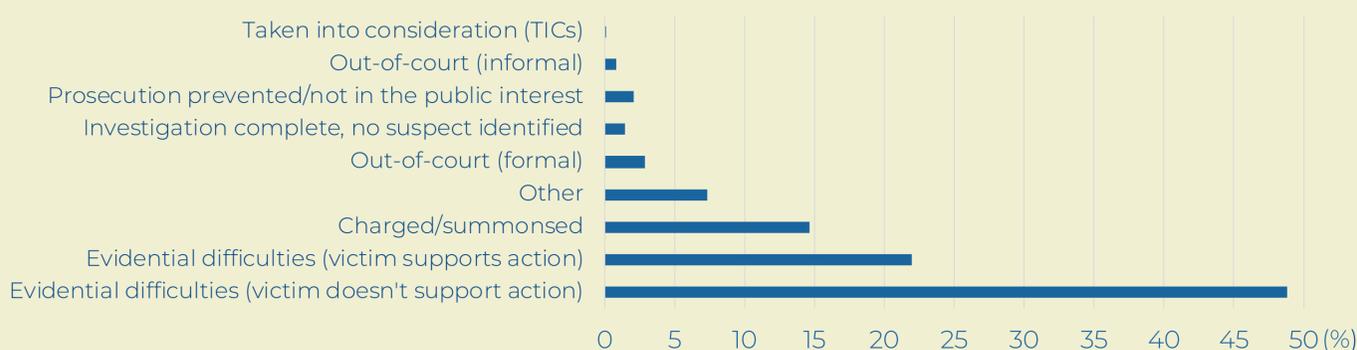
CONTEXT

In England and Wales, policy requires 'positive action' from police in cases of domestic abuse. Police officers must also justify any decision not to arrest. Despite this, the arrest rate is low, and falling. What is causing this gap between policy and practice? This research aims to answer this question by focusing on what happens when the police do not arrest.



Source: Domestic abuse in England and Wales: year ending March 2018 (Office for National Statistics)

OUTCOMES ASSIGNED TO DOMESTIC ABUSE-RELATED VIOLENCE AGAINST THE PERSON OFFENCES



RESEARCH QUESTIONS

How do police respond to domestic abuse when they don't arrest?

How do police make decisions about domestic abuse cases?

How do officers explain their decisions when they don't arrest?

To what extent do officers engage with victims when deciding how to respond?

How do victims perceive police decision-making?

To what extent do victims feel able to actively contribute to police decision-making?

METHODS

PHASE 1

- Quantitative analysis of call handling & custody outcomes data for domestic abuse flagged incidents/crimes
- Qualitative analysis of a subsample of incident/crime reports

PHASE 2

- Shadowing police officers
- Semi-structured qualitative interviews with police officers. A stratified sample of call handlers, first responders, and senior management

PHASE 3

- Semi-structured qualitative interviews with victims of domestic abuse whose cases did not result in an arrest



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