

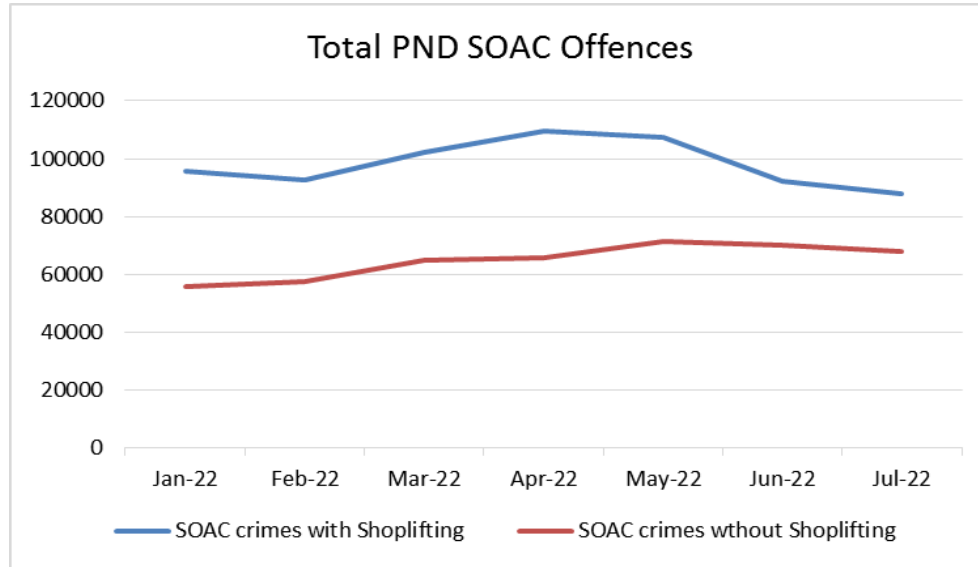
# Serious Organised Acquisitive Crime (SOAC) Monthly Overview

**July 2022**

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# PND Analysis June – July 2022

This data has been taken from PND. Opal have identified 7 key SOAC offences that have been taken into consideration for this analysis.



OFFENCE	% Change
Burglary Business and Community	-4.7%
Burglary Residential	-5.0%
Other Theft	-1.5%
Robbery of a Business Property	+11.5%
Interfering with a Motor Vehicle	-9.2%
Theft from a Vehicle	-6.1%
Theft/Unauthorised Taking of a Motor Vehicle	-1.1%



**-4.2%**  
SOAC crimes  
July 2022 vs July  
2021



**-8%**  
Shoplifting  
crimes June to  
July 2022



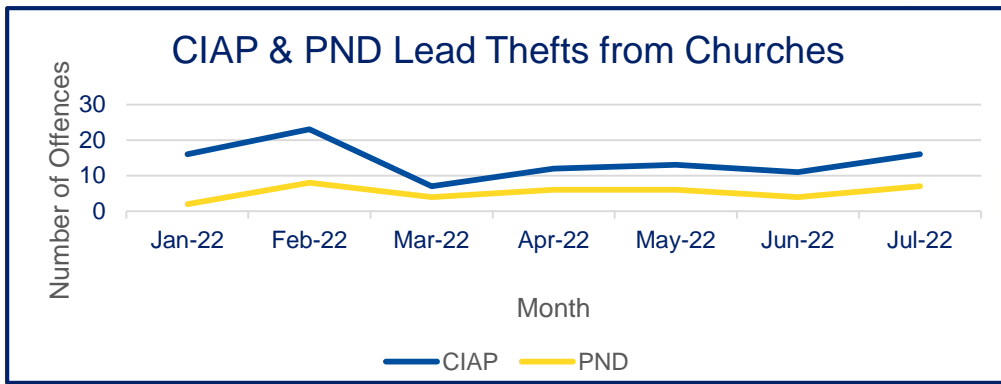
**-3.3%**  
SOAC crimes  
June to July  
2022

Overall, there has been a 3.3% decrease in SOAC offences. **Offences decreased by 4.2% in July 2022 when we compare to July 2021.** While this monthly comparison shows an overall decrease, robbery of business property did see an increase in July. While Opal are not aware of any increased reporting around this crime type, we are currently making enquiries to establish underlying factors that may have contributed to this increase.

\*Excludes Humberside Police and West Midlands Police due to system updates.

# Heritage and Cultural Property Crime

16 forces were impacted in July 2022. The main hot spots at churches were located in the **north east region**.



## Heritage Metal Thefts

- Three **bronze swords** were stolen from a 100 year old memorial in London. The swords are likely to be sold to scrap metal dealers.
- 30m of lead flashing was removed from a church roof which could have **occurred over a two week period**.
- Lead was taken from **around a church window**.
- Two silver drinking chalices, one sacrament box and a silver box were stolen during a **burglary at a church in Suffolk**. All of the items were **sterling silver**. Interestingly a bowl was left behind which was plated silver. There was **no force used to enter** the safe or the church. **Metals continue to be a target both internally and externally at churches**.


Scrap Lead Price  
**+1.8%** in July 2022  
vs June 2022

Heavy Copper Price  
**-7.4%** in July 2022  
vs June 2022



**45.5% increase in Lead Thefts June 2022 to July 2022**

## Prevention Advice

- Based on incidents this month:**
- **Check roofs regularly** to narrow down the timeframe in which a lead theft could have occurred and to prevent additional damage.
  - **Install security** at heritage sites. Opal recommend multi-layered security such as CCTV, alarms and forensic marking.
  - In one incident, access was gained to the roof via scaffolding. Ensure scaffolding has the appropriate protection and equipment is locked away.
- 



# Burglary

June 2022 to July 2022  
Burglary % Changes

**Residential:** - 5.0%  
**Commercial:** - 4.7%

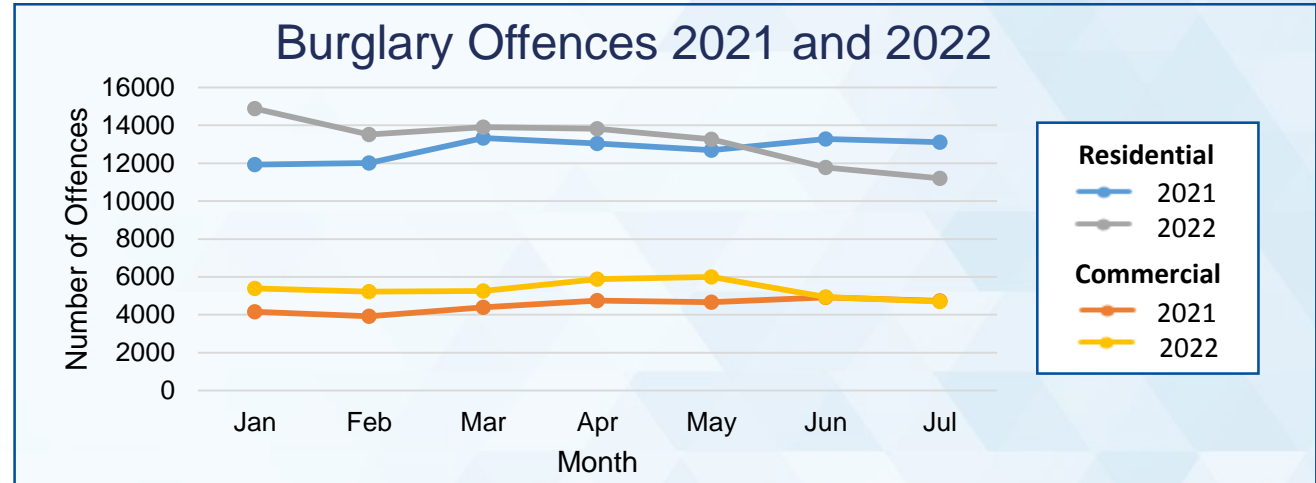
## Residential

### Aggravated Burglaries

A number of aggravated burglaries from different force areas have been reported into Opal that involved the use of **excessive force** against victims. In multiple offences, offenders have tied up the victims in the commission of the burglary including using **cable / zip ties** to bind victims before ransacking their property. In one offence, offenders dressed as delivery drivers in order to force entry to an elderly victim's property.



Opal will be holding an **acquisitive crime forum** on **Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> August** regarding **first floor** entry **residential** burglaries being committed by **Albanian nationals**. If you would like to receive an invitation to this, please contact Opal: [opal@westmercia.pnn.police.uk](mailto:opal@westmercia.pnn.police.uk)



## Commercial

### Targeted Items

Opal have been made aware of **cash units** being targeted in commercial burglaries in at least 4 different force areas.

### Farm Shops and Golf Clubs

Multiple **farm shops** and **golf clubs** were targeted during July. These are not premise types that are often reported to Opal as being targeted.

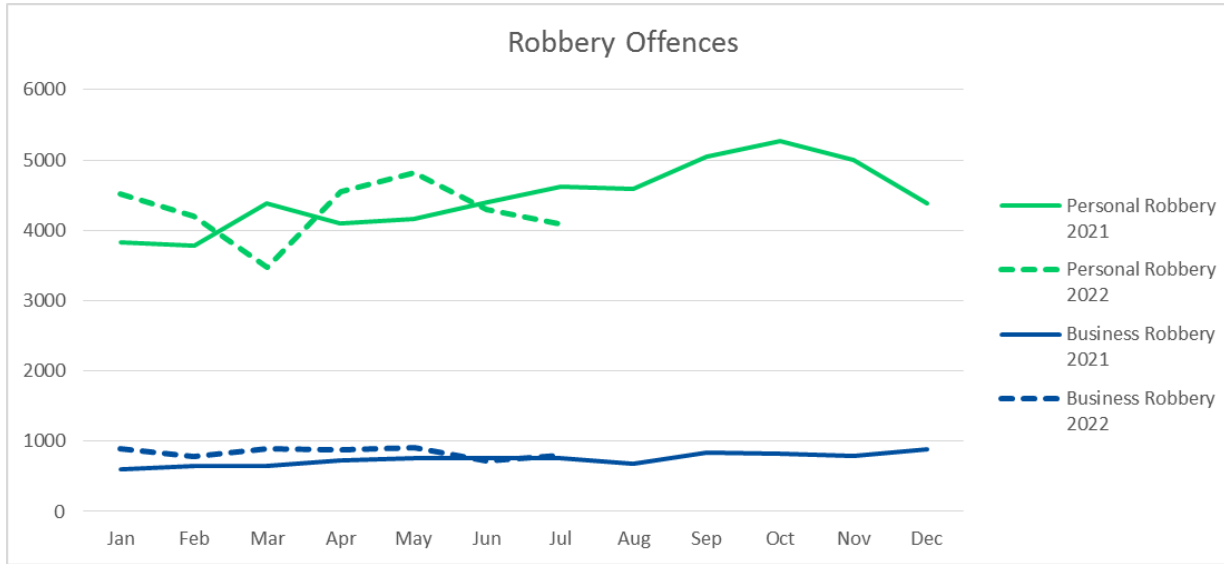
## ACTION

If your force area has seen **residential** burglaries where **victims** have been **tied up**, please make Opal aware.

Please make Opal aware if your force area is experiencing frequent targeting of **cash units**.



# Robbery and Business Crime



OFFENCE	June	July	% Change
Robbery of Business Property	723	806	+11.5%
Personal Robbery	4295	4085	-4.9%
ATM Attacks	6	12	+100%
CVIT	2	2	0%



## Op Science

During July 2022 arrests were made in relation to Op Science; theft offences involving **large cash withdrawals being taken from vehicles** following visits to the bank.

3 males from the Oxford area were arrested by Lincolnshire Police following an offence at a branch of Barclays. Since these arrests Opal have not been made aware of any further offences.

## Rolex Robberies

Since the beginning of May 2022, Opal have been made aware of personal robbery offences involving the theft of Rolex watches. These offences saw an increase during Autumn 2021, with offences recently increasing again. During July, offences were reported in the **West Midlands, Lancashire and Cambridgeshire.**



A range of MOs were reported, one involving a **bogus police officer.** Other offences involved the use of **violence and weapons.**

## ACTION

If your force area has seen **Rolex** robberies particularly those involving distraction or violence, please make Opal aware.

# Vehicle Crime

Canon CanoScan LiDE 300 flatbed scanner, Black #2995C010



A compact, sleek and affordable flatbed scanner for high-resolution photo and document scanning

★★★★★ 4.7 (103)  
[See customer reviews](#)

**Highlights**

- 4 EZ buttons for effortless use and one-touch operation
- Superb speed (A4 300 dpi scan in 10 seconds) and quality of up to 2,400 x 4,800 dpi
- Auto Scan technology for accurate scans without effort

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✓ 2 year guarantee included  
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Quantity

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## Canon LiDE 300 - relay theft

We have seen examples of this device (see image) being used as a signal relay device in order to steal vehicles. While the device would normally be used as a scanner, thieves have been able to house **relay devices** inside it, making it appear less suspicious.

In the **West Midlands**, 3 males were recently arrested following a pursuit and the above relay device was discarded from the suspect vehicle.



## Jamming Methods

Opal are aware of distinct methods being used to steal vehicles using jamming devices:

1. Offenders will either follow a vehicle home and jam the key signal specifically for the target vehicle.
2. Offenders may scout an area with multiple target vehicles and leave a jamming device hidden nearby, then return later in order to steal the vehicles.



## ACTION

Officers are advised to look for both the jammers and devices such as car key programmers (dongles) and if found should consider arrests for going equipped to steal. Jammers have no lawful use and approved dongles **should only be held by certified staff** and should never be away from garages.

Additionally if you have seen devices such as the one shown being used in the theft of vehicles please share this with Opal.



# Metal and Infrastructure

## Catalytic Converter Fraud

↓ -34%\*

Opal have been made aware of thieves selling **fraudulent catalytic converters**. The ceramic core within catalytic converters is removed and replaced with a false core. The false core is not identifiable from weighing and inspection. The dealers are unsure how offenders are replacing the core as there are no identifiable marks. **One scrap dealer has been defrauded for approx. £10k. CCTV footage shows 2 IC4 males selling a smaller amount of converters as a 'trial' and returning with more converters after the sale.**



Left to right: legitimate converter core, expanding foam filled and cheaper ceramic replacement.

## Steel Theft – Scotland

↓ -45%\*

Two 1000L tanks were taken from a brewery on 5 July 2022. Theft of brewing equipment has previously been reported to Opal, it is unknown at this time whether the tanks have been removed for their resale value. It is possible that the tanks may have been removed to store fuel.

## Cable Theft – North Yorkshire

↓ -30%\*

In a recent incident North Yorkshire Officers interrupted the theft of BT cable. A Ford Transit (nfd) and a Silver BMW X5 were used in the thefts, the BMW was later found burnt out. It is likely that the BMW was the same one used in Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire and Humberside thefts.

## Action

Let Opal know of any similar thefts or fraud. When recording metal thefts ensure that the **quantity** and **value** of materials taken is included in the report. Please ensure that all details of MO, vehicles and offenders are included on reports.



# Agricultural & Construction Equipment

## Recoveries

## Crime Trend



### Trailer Recoveries

A number of stolen trailers have been recovered and nominals arrested during July 2022 following ACE raising the issue of trailer theft. Dyfed Powys recently arrested a suspect relating to a theft from Thames Valley continues the trend of trailers being located in Wales. The recovered trailer was valued at £15,000

### Cross-Border Collaboration Plant Recovery

Nearly £500,000 of suspected stolen machinery has been recovered in successful cross-border operation. Officers from Hampshire and Dorset joined forces back in June for a cross-border operation tackling reported organised criminality across both force areas.



### Partnership Working- Plant Recovery

ACE worked with partner agencies and the BTP resulting in thousands of pounds of metal and plant machinery and equipment being recovered from a site in Rotherham. The items included a woodchipper and ride on lawn mower.



### GPS Theft

Opal continue to monitor the theft of GPS devices from agricultural machinery as part of Operation Walrus.

Offences have increased in recent weeks with thefts reported in **Thames Valley, Cambridgeshire, Suffolk, Norfolk** and **Humberside**. A minimum of 12 crimes have been recorded in July with more than 80 during the year, compared with just over 100 across 2021.

The crimes have a seasonal trend and generally **peak during the summer months**.

Opal ACE would advise farmers to consider this increased vulnerability and take all necessary precautions to protect against theft of these specialist devices. This includes:

- ensuring the device is removed or secured,
- ensuring the device is forensically marked and
- ensuring the device is overtly marked and serial number is recorded.



# Good News

**Opal**  
Tackling Serious Organised  
Acquisitive Crime

## New Team Member - DCI Andrew Smethurst

Opal are delighted to announce that DCI Andrew Smethurst has joined Opal from Suffolk Police. In 2013 Andrew was promoted to Inspector covering a local neighbourhood and response team in Ipswich. The following year he became a DI in Bury St Edmunds CID until 2019 when he moved into intelligence, managing the intel teams in East and West Suffolk. Most recently, Andrew has led Operation Albatross, Suffolk and Norfolk Police's response to organised immigration crime. We are really excited to have Andrew join Opal, bringing with him a wealth of knowledge and experience.



## Vehicle Crime

Two men were arrested after officers unearthed a 'chop shop' of stolen vehicles. A garage full of dismantled cars and a cannabis grow were located after officers spotted a suspected stolen vehicle. After spotting a car being driven in the north of the county, thought to be using false plates, officers from Nottinghamshire Police's dedicated road crime team and armed response vehicles took swift action to stop the vehicle and arrest the suspects.



## Heritage and Cultural Property Crime

The theft of the Portland Tiara from the Welbeck Estate was later linked to a series of violent robberies including those at the homes of two international footballers. Following the burglary, items were passed to professional handlers at a jewellery business. The tiara and brooch were thought to be taken abroad to Turkey. They remain unrecovered, however, ten offenders have since been charged.

**Opal**  
Tackling Serious Organised  
Acquisitive Crime

## Where

Join us in **Cardiff** at the **Mercure Holland House Hotel** for the inaugural National Police Chiefs' Council Serious Organised Acquisitive Crime (SOAC) Conference.

## What

We are delighted to be co-hosting the conference and will bring together law enforcement agencies from across the United Kingdom and Europe, as well as leaders throughout the business world to present the joint approach to SOAC across the UK.

## Who

The programme will feature **keynote speaker sessions** as well as **breakout rooms** featuring 'what's worked' (best practice), **information sharing** and **stakeholder involvement** to solve problems.

# SOAC Conference

**Opal**  
Tackling Serious Organised  
Acquisitive Crime

 **NPCC**  
National Police Chiefs' Council

## When

**12<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup>  
September  
2022**

Various speakers across our crime areas from policing, industry and academia. A networking dinner with a guest speaker will also take place on the night of 12 September 2022.

Metal &  
Infrastructure  
Crime

Heritage &  
Cultural  
Property Crime

Burglary

Robbery &  
Business  
Crime

Agricultural &  
Construction  
Equipment

Vehicle  
Crime

**Very few spaces remaining!**  
**Click below for further information and to book**  
**<https://cjs.swoogo.com/SOAC2022>**