# Crimes against UK churches reach over 9,000 in three years, data reveals



Churches across the UK have been subject to a significant number of criminal offences in recent years, according to new data that points to a troubling increase in targeted attacks on religious sites. The Countryside Alliance, an organisation dedicated to representing rural communities, has revealed that between January 2022 and December 2024, there have been more than 9,000 crimes committed on church properties and other places of worship.

The figures emerged following Freedom of Information (FOI) requests made by the Countryside Alliance to all 45 territorial police forces in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland. Data was obtained from 33 forces, showing a total of 9,148 recorded incidents involving theft, burglary, criminal damage, vandalism, and assault. This equates to roughly eight criminal acts per day aimed at churches nationwide over the three-year period.

The reported crimes include a range of serious offences, highlighting concerns over the vulnerability of churches, particularly in rural areas. Among the incidents documented were high-value thefts such as a silver heist worth £97,000, as well as cases of arson and other forms of damage that undermine the security of these community landmarks.

Mo Metcalf-Fisher, director of external affairs at the Countryside Alliance, commented on the findings, stating: "Horrific attacks on churches and places of worship continue to happen all across the country. Thieves and criminals treat them as easy targets, brazenly stealing from and causing criminal damage to these focal points of our communities." She emphasised the importance of protecting these sites, saying, "Churches and places of worship are the beating heart of many rural towns and villages. They are meant to be places of sanctity, solace, and refuge. Increasingly, however, they seem to be being subjected to awful acts of crime on a regular basis."

West Yorkshire emerged as the most affected region, with 1,121 crimes recorded during the timeframe analysed. Other areas notably impacted include Kent, which saw 655 incidents, and Greater Manchester with 642 recorded crimes.

In response to the data, the Countryside Alliance has renewed calls for increased security measures at churches, arguing that these vulnerable sites require better protection to deter criminals and reassure communities. The organisation is also encouraging the public to be vigilant and report suspicious activities to police promptly to help safeguard these places of worship.

The Express is reporting on this development, highlighting growing concerns about the safety of religious sites across Britain and the need for enhanced measures to address this escalating issue.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)