Crime and punishment in Britain, c1000-present



Petty theft = most common crime

Treason = most serious crime

Gunpowder Plots (1605) sparked by religious tensions

Vagabondage deserving vs undeserving poor

Witchcraft - fear increased due to Civil War and religious tensions

Petty theft = most common crime Treason and heresy = most serious crimes

Witchcraft decriminalised people no longer believed in witches

> Rise in crime 1750-1850 caused by economic struggle

Tolpuddle Martyrs

Petty theft = most common crime Highway robbery, poaching, smuggling = most serious crimes

Key event: The Civil War 1642-1651

Key event: Industrial Revolution 1760-1840

New definitions of crime driven by changing attitudes and technology:

- **Driving offences**
- Race crimes
- **Drug crimes**
- Cyber crimes



Abortion in certain cases legalised in 1967

Homosexuality legalised in 1967

Shift from drink driving being seen as a social to a serious crime since 1970s



Petty theft = most common crime

Modern times c1900-present

Neighbourhood Watch

Specialist police units & use **Key event:** of fingerprinting, forensics, **World Wars DNA to investigate crime** 1914-1918

> Prisons used for serious crime but fines most common punishment

Crime prevention and welfare increasingly a



Rehabilitation: community service, drug and alcohol



'Social crimes' included poaching most did not think this was wrong even though it was illegal

Key event: The Norman Conquest 1066-1071

Early Modern c1500-c1700

Medieval 000 c1000-c1500

Changes under the Normans:

- Wergild ended
- Trial by combat introduced
- Forest Laws criminalised hunting

Churches enforced trial by ordeal, although clergy could only be tried in Church Courts

Collective responsibility = the whole community was responsible for catching criminals when a hue and cry was raised, and fines often applied to the whole tithing



Emphasis on deterrence and retribution

Key event: The

Introduction of transportation to America

> Harsh punishments used to deter crime

Gunpowder plotters hung, drawn and quartered

Early prisons, holding cells rather than punishment itself

Reformation 1517-1648

> Start of the **Bloody Code**

> > Matthew Hopkins & the witch hunts 1645-47

> > > No police yet but constables, coroners and sheriffs introduced

18th & 19th Centuries c1700-c1900

Transportation moved to Australia after American War of Independence - but stopped after English prisons built

Robert Peel passed the Gaols Act (1823) which improved prison conditions

> Robert Peel created the **Metropolitan Police**

> > Increasing belief in reforming criminals

Bloody Code and public executions ended

> John Howard and **Elizabeth Fry reformed** prisons & criticised

Pentonville Prison

1939-1945

rehab, probation



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