Police data shows crime rising at increasing rate in England and Wales. Increase of 13% in 12 months to June comes with even bigger rise in violent offences including knife crime and sexual offences.

Thursday 19 October 2017 14.10

The rise in crime is accelerating, with the latest figures showing a 13% increase in all police-recorded offences across England and Wales, and even greater rises for violent offences including knife crime, sexual offences and violence against the person.

The crime figures show an underlying 8% rise in the murder rate, an increase of 46 victims, with 629 homicides recorded in the 12 months to June, excluding the 35 people killed in the London and Manchester terrorist attacks, and the 96 Hillsborough deaths in 1989, which were included in the headline figures.

The acceleration from a 5% rise in the 12 months to June 2015, to 7% the following year, and 13% in the 12 months to June this year, together with even larger increases in violent crime, will sound alarm bells in Downing Street.

Theresa May might find some comfort in the results of the Crime Survey of England and Wales, which shows a 9% reduction in overall crime but is less effective at providing a good indication of changes in low-volume offences, including most forms of violent crime, or emerging trends.

John Flatley of the Office for National Statistics (ONS) said: “Today’s figures suggest that the police are dealing with a growing volume of crime. While improvements made by police forces in recording crime are still a factor in the increase, we judge that there have been genuine increases in crime, particularly in some of the low-incidence but more harmful categories. “Police figures cannot provide a good measure of all crime in society, since we know that a large volume of it never comes to their attention.

The recent increases in recorded crime need to be seen in the context of the overall decline in crime indicated by the Crime Survey of England and Wales.” The shadow home secretary, Diane Abbott, said: “The Tories can no longer hide behind claims that crime is falling to justify their severe cuts to the police. “They have left our communities exposed, with police numbers the lowest on record at a time when forces are under unprecedented pressure from surging crime, an ongoing terror threat, and from covering for cuts to other services.