

Ten years on – UK gun crime soars

The 1996 Dunblane massacre led to sweeping changes to laws on gun ownership in Britain, with the creation of a National Firearms Register the central plank of legislation. Almost a decade later, the database, to track everyone who has been granted or refused a gun licence, is still not up and running



■ **Mar 13, 1996:** **Thomas Hamilton** walks into **Dunblane Primary School** armed with four licenced handguns. In a three-minute shooting spree he murders sixteen five- and six-year old children and their teacher **Gwenne Mayor**, before killing himself

■ **Apr:** Group of eight parents raise **Snowdrop Petition**, calling for private ownership of handguns to be made illegal

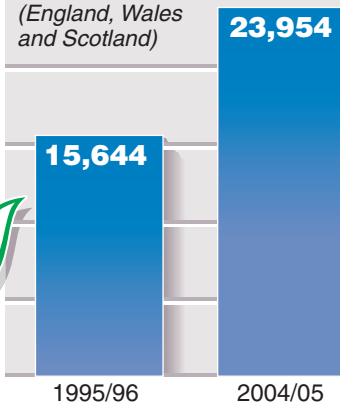
■ **Jun:** Snowdrop Petition, with over 705,000 signatures, presented to parliament. More than 23,000 firearms are surrendered in national gun amnesty

■ **Jul:** **Gun Control Network** launched to campaign for tighter controls on guns of all kinds

■ **Oct:** **Cullen Report** on Dunblane tragedy published. It stops short of recommending handgun ban

■ **Feb 1997:** **Firearms (Amendment) Act** becomes law with partial ban on handguns, excluding **.22 calibre target pistols**. 160,000 handguns are destroyed. Act requires **National Firearms Register** to be created

Recorded gun-crime offences
(England, Wales and Scotland)



■ **May:** Labour government elected

■ **Nov:** Bill to ban all handguns – regardless of calibre – becomes law

■ **Feb 1998:** Over 20,000 .22 calibre handguns are surrendered

■ **Apr 2003:** Second gun amnesty – a further 20,000 weapons, including replicas, are surrendered

■ **Mar 2006:** After costing £4 million, **Firearms Register** is still more than a year away from being operational because of computer glitches