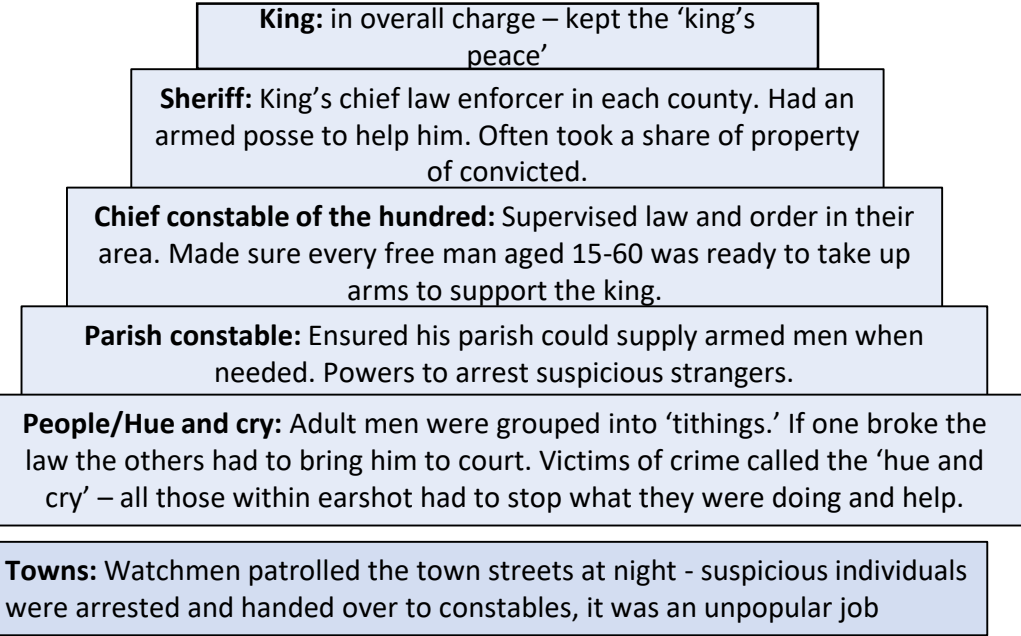


Crime

Homes and possessions: Peasants' houses were simple wooden structures with walls of hardened mud, no glass windows but wooden shutters - wealthier homes in the towns were similar - people had few belongings.

Laws passed against dice, football and other games, church believed they encouraged idleness. Moral crimes included shaving beards on Sundays and committing acts of homosexuality.



Royal Courts: Heard the most serious criminal cases - overseen by a judge - jurors were drawn from criminal’s own area	
Justices of the Peace (JPs): Existed from 1361 and an important change as took over the hundred courts (courts run by the county sheriff) - appointed by the king (2 or 3 in each county) - 1388 onwards quarter sessions were held every 3 months (4 times a year)	
Manor Courts: From 1250, took over work of the hundred courts - dealt with most crimes in England – petty crimes, thefts, land disputes, fights and debts - run by the lord or his steward and wealthy villagers made up the jury - each manor had their own local laws - began to lose influence 1500 onwards	
Church Courts: Dealt with crimes that were considered un-Christian – immoral priests, homosexuality, swearing, gambling and failure to attend church - priests heard the evidence and passed judgement- no juries	
Medieval Juries: Selected from the same parish or hundred - used prior knowledge of accused to reach their verdict - judge followed juries’ verdicts - trials usually lasted about 20 minutes	Verdicts: ‘Guilty’ or ‘Not Guilty’ - many juries were lenient - often let the accused go free, especially women

Serious Crimes	
Hanging	Rope placed around the neck and criminal slowly strangled Punishment for murder, rape, theft of goods 12d.+, burglary and robbery
Hanging, drawing and quartering	Criminal hanged then taken down whilst still alive_ intestines cut out and/or genitals _quartered – body cut into pieces Punishment for high treason (plotting to kill the king) and counterfeiting
Burning	Criminal usually tied to a wooden post surrounded by wood _bonfire then lit Punishment for petty treason (wife killing husband or servant their master) and heresy
Petty Crimes	
Fines	Payment of money _ those who oversaw each level of court kept the financial proceeds
Public humiliation	Cucking stool –forced to sit on a wooden seat in public Stocks (sitting) and pillories (standing) – criminals would have rotten fruit and vegetables thrown at them
Imprisonment	Those awaiting trial would be imprisoned _ used to punish debtors and forgers

Avoiding punishment	
1. Run away	6. Buy a pardon from the king
2. Seek sanctuary in a church	7. Join the king’s army
3. Powerful friends	8. Be pregnant (women)
4. Refuse to plead	9. Claim benefit of clergy
5. Hope for a friendly jury	10.Become a king’s approver