

**Freedom of Information Request Reference N°: FOI 0001250-18**

I write in connection with your request for information received by Suffolk Constabulary on the 5<sup>th</sup> April, 2018 in which you sought access to the following information:

1. *“How many attacks on guide dogs have been reported in the last three calendar years?”*
2. *How many attacks on guide dog owners have been reported in the last three years? Please could each year's data be separated in the e-mail that you send back to me?*
3. *For each attack, was there someone prosecuted?*

**Response to your Request**

The response provided below is correct as of 18<sup>th</sup> April, 2018.

Suffolk Constabulary has considered your request for information and the response is below.

In relation to your request for information and in accordance with Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), this response serves as a formal notification of refusal for your request. Suffolk Constabulary does not hold, for the purposes of FOIA, the information you require in a retrievable format.

It is estimated that to attempt to retrieve all of the information you require would take a considerable amount of retrieval time, which would exceed 18 hours. This would exceed the appropriate limit for dealing with Freedom of Information requests, in terms of costs and therefore Section 12(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 applies.

Section 12(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 states that a Public Authority is not obliged to: “...comply with a request for information if the authority estimates that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the appropriate limit.” The Freedom of Information (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations, defines the ‘appropriate limit’ for the Suffolk Constabulary as £450 and specifies that this sum equates to 18 hours work at a standard rate of £25 per hour.

Specifically in relation to question 2 of your request on the number of attacks against guide dog owners there is not a specific crime for this and therefore would require case reading all violence against the person crimes in order to determine firstly whether the victim was visually impaired and, secondly, whether they own a guide dog. This would well exceed the time limit of 18 hours.



In accordance with Section 17(5) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, this letter serves as a refusal notice for this part of your request.

By requesting all information your request is too broad to be complied with within the £450 limit imposed on Freedom of Information requests.

Although excess cost removes the Force's obligations under the Freedom of Information Act, as a gesture of goodwill, I have supplied information, relative to your request, retrieved or available before it was realised that the fees limit would be exceeded. I trust this is helpful, but it does not affect our legal right to rely on the fees regulations for the remainder of your request.

A free text search was carried out using the term 'guide dog', the information that was returned was investigated to determine if it fell within the specifications of your request. The below table reflects the number of recorded cases of attacks on guide dogs along with the outcome. Please note that there was a nil return for 2016.

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>Grand Total</b>
No Further Action	1		1
Type 1 - Charged/Summonsed/Postal Requisition		1	1
Type 15 - Named Suspect Identified: Victim Supports Police Action But Evidential Difficulties Prevent Further Action		1	1
Type 16 - Named Suspect Identified: Evidential Difficulties Prevent Further Action: Victim Does Not Support (Or Has Withdrawn Support From) Police Action	1	1	2
Type 18 - Investigation Complete; No Suspect Identified. Crime Investigated As Far As Reasonably Possible-Case Closed Pending Further Investigative Opportunities Becoming Available		1	1
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>

***Police forces in the United Kingdom are routinely required to provide crime statistics to government bodies and the recording criteria is set nationally. However, the systems used for recording these figures are not generic, nor are the procedures used locally in capturing the crime data. It should be noted that for these reasons this force's response to your questions should not be used for comparison purposes with any other response you may receive.***



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***Please be aware that the information provided/researched from the 19 October 2015 has been extracted from the Athena crime system. The information provided is subject to change as processes are amended to ensure accurate and precise crime recording.***

A full copy of the Freedom of Information Act (2000) can be viewed on the 'Office of Public Sector Information' web-site;

<http://www.opsi.gov.uk/>

Suffolk Constabulary is not responsible for the content, or the reliability, of the website referenced. The Constabulary cannot guarantee that this link will work all of the time, and we have no control over the availability of the linked pages.



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Your Right to Request a Review of Decisions Made Under the Terms of the  
Freedom of Information Act (2000).

If you are unhappy with how your request has been handled, or if you think the decision is incorrect, you have the right to ask Suffolk Constabulary to review their decision.

Ask Suffolk Constabulary to look at the decision again.

If you are dissatisfied with the decision made by Suffolk Constabulary under the Freedom of Information Act (2000), regarding access to information, you must notify Suffolk Constabulary that you are requesting a review within 20 days of the date of its response to your Freedom of Information request. Requests for a review should be made in writing and addressed to:

*Freedom of Information Decision Maker  
Information Management Department  
Suffolk Constabulary  
Police Headquarters  
Martlesham Heath  
Ipswich  
Suffolk  
IP5 3QS  
OR  
Email: [information@suffolk.pnn.police.uk](mailto:information@suffolk.pnn.police.uk)*

In all possible circumstances Suffolk Constabulary will aim to respond to your request for us to look at our decision again within 20 working days of receipt of your request for an internal review.

The Information Commissioner.

After lodging a request for a review with Suffolk Constabulary, if you are still dissatisfied with the decision, you can apply to the Information Commissioner for a decision on whether the request for information has been dealt with in accordance with the requirements of the Act.

For information on how to make application to the Information Commissioner please visit their website at [www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk) or contact them at the address shown below:

The Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF  
Telephone: 01625 545 700