

Freedom of Information Request Reference N°: FOI 000125-18

I write in connection with your request for information received by Suffolk Constabulary on the 9 January 2018 in which you sought access to the following information:

1. *“How many offences involving a knife or bladed weapon were recorded by your force in 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017?”*
2. *Of those offences, how many involved under 18s in 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017?*
3. *What was the youngest age of a person arrested for an offence involving a knife or bladed weapon in 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017?*
4. *How many charges were brought for offences involving a knife or bladed weapon in 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017?”*

Response to your Request

The response provided below is correct as of 17 January 2018

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

Suffolk Constabulary changed crime recording system during October 2015. Information from the two systems has been extracted using different search techniques, which will mean the information is not directly comparable.

1. A search has been completed of the Constabulary’s crime systems for all violence against the person and possession of weapons offences recorded from 2012 to 2017.

Data provided from October 2015 has been extracted using a keyword search of weapon type in the ‘method’ field of the offence.

Data Provided prior to October 2015 has been extracted using a keyword search of weapon type in the freetext of the offence.

The weapons types searched were: Knife, Knives, Blade, Razor, Axe, Scissors, Sword, and Machete.

The table provided below confirms the total number of offences recorded for the respective years.



Weapon	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Axe	9	9	7	14	5	9
Blade	20	33	21	25	24	32
Knife	296	288	293	320	266	322
Machete	3	1	3	4	1	3
Razor	3		1	2		2
Razor Blade					1	1
Scissors	7	7	5	7	4	2
Sword	5	8	2	11	2	1
Knives	10	9	9	6		
Total	353	355	341	389	303	372

2. The total number of the above offences that related to a person aged under 18, is provided in the table below. This will note include any offences where the age of the offender has not been recorded.

Weapon	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Axe		1			1	2
Blade	2	4	4	9	5	9
Knife	54	42	37	38	64	72
Knives	3	1	2			
Machete	1					
Razor						1
Scissors	3		1	1	1	
Sword	1	2	1	2		1
Total	64	50	45	50	71	85

3. The age of the youngest person arrested was as follows, noting that the age of criminal responsibility is 10 years old.

Year	Age
2012	10
2013	11
2014	11
2015	11

2016	11
2017	10

4. The total number of persons charged with the above offences is provided in the table below, noting that a number of results are 'not recorded' and therefore the number of persons charged may well be higher.

Charge	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
A1. Charge	141	164	151	97		
Not Recorded	57	69	64	134	3	108
Type 1 - Charged/Summoned/Postal Requisition				34	136	130
Type 1A - Charged/Summons - alternate offence. Offender has been charged under the alternate offence rule.					2	11
Grand Total	198	233	215	265	141	249

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.

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.



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*

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 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