



## **Freedom of Information Request Reference N°: FOI 001361-18**

I write in connection with your request for information received by Suffolk Constabulary on the 14 May 2018 in which you sought access to the following information:

*“Under the Freedom of Information Act, please could you provide me with the following information: how many deaths of people who were sleeping rough were recorded in the police force area in each of the following calendar years, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017?”*

*Please provide a breakdown for each of the years of the number of deaths by location (local authority area) as well as the gender, age, and cause of death, if known”*

## **Response to your Request**

The response provided below is correct as of 26 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.

There is no dedicated flag within our crime and telephone recording systems for a homeless person, therefore a search has been carried out within our crime recording system based on the following key words:

*Homeless, vagrant, sleeping rough, rough sleeper, beggar and no fixed abode.*

Whilst these results have then been manually reviewed to establish if they fit the criteria of the request, there could be other incidents where homeless people have died however they have not been brought back in this key word search. To establish an accurate answer would involve manually reviewing all crimes to, considering the number of crimes recorded each year this would exceed the statutory time scales.



In addition, Suffolk Constabulary had a change in telephone recording system in October 2013, and as such we are unable to search through our previous call recording system Polaris. There could be incidents where the information is only recorded within the call system, and not necessarily within our crime management system, again meaning we cannot provide an accurate answer to the request.

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.

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.

Based on the keywords stated above, since October 2013 we can confirm that 2 incidents have been retrieved relating to a homeless person who has died, one incident in 2016 and one in 2017.

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](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