



**SUFFOLK
CONSTABULARY**
Taking pride in keeping Suffolk safe

Freedom of Information Request Reference N°: FOI 002559-19

I write in connection with your request for information received by Suffolk Constabulary on the 15 July 2019 in which you sought access to the following information:

1. *“How many stabbings have there been your area so far in 2019?”*
2. *How many of these stabbings have been fatal?”*
3. *How many stabbings were there in your area in 2014-2018 (inclusive and separated by year)?*
4. *How many of these were fatal (separated out by year)?*
5. *How much has knife crime in your area risen/decreased in the past five years (either by percentage or numerical figure)?*
6. *How much has knife crime in your area risen/decreased in the past ten years (either by percentage or numerical figure)?*
7. *How much has knife crime in your area risen/decreased in the past twenty years (either by percentage or numerical figure)?”*

Response to your Request

The response provided below is correct as of 30 July 2019

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

The Constabulary is unable to confirm the total number of knife related stabbings that have occurred over the years specified and therefore confirm whether knife crime has decreased or increased over the time frame requested. The information is recorded under ‘sharp instruments’ as defined under ADR 160 as ‘any instrument used as a weapon that is sharp and capable of piercing the skin’. This will include, but is not limited to, items such as broken bottles, darts etc. not exclusively therefore limited to knives.

We would be required to manually review all offences recorded under the ADR definition above to establish the number that related to the use of a knife. Given there are around 300 such offences per year, this would take well in excess of 18 hours to extract.

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.

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.

The Constabulary has completed a search of the crime system for all offences recorded involving the use of a blade or sharp instrument as defined under ADR 160, for the 2009 – 2019 calendar years.

Year	Total Crime	Total Homicides*
2009	323	1
2010	338	0
2011	362	1
2012	301	0
2013	294	3
2014	268	1
2015	238	1
2016**	173	4
2017	261	3
2018	319	4
2019	191	1



* Homicide data is also included within the total crime figure and relates only to knife related offences.

** Please note that the 2016 data is lower due to a change in business rules during this time and resulting in a potentially inaccuracy in the data for this year.

Should you have any further queries concerning this request, please contact Clair Pack, FOI Decision Maker, quoting the reference number shown above.

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 40 working 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