



Freedom of Information Request Reference N°: FOI 002598-18

I write in connection with your request for information received by Suffolk Constabulary on the 23 July 2018 in which you sought access to the following information:

1. *“Within Waveney (including Beccles, Bungay, Halesworth, and Lowestoft and the surrounding area), how many reports of voyeurism have been reported to the police each month from July 2017 to July 2018 inclusive?”*
2. *Of these reports, how many led to someone being charged or arrested?*
3. *Of these reports, how many did not lead to a charge or an arrest?*
4. *For each report, please provide a location (road and town will suffice), date and time of the incident.*

Response to your Request

The response provided below is correct as of 30 July 2018

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

A search has been completed of the Constabulary’s crime system for all reports of voyeurism and attempted voyeurism from July 2017 – July 2018 inclusive.

Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires that Suffolk Constabulary, when refusing to provide such information (because the information is exempt) is to provide you the applicant with a notice which:

- (a) States that fact
- (b) Specifies the exemption(s) in question and
- (c) States (if that would not otherwise be apparent) why the exemptions applies.

The information is exempt from disclosure by virtue of the following exemptions;

Section 40(2) – Personal Information

Section 44(1) – Prohibitions on disclosure

Section 40 is an absolute; class based exemption and applies to third party personal data. This would not be released under the FOIA unless there is a strong public interest. This is because any release would breach the Principles contained within Article 5(1) of the GDPR and Part 2 of the Data Protection Act 2018.



By law, all victims of rape and other sex crimes, including children, are automatically guaranteed anonymity for life from the moment they make a complaint that they are the victim of a sex crime. This anonymity was once given only to victims of rape however; the Sexual Offences Act 1992 extends to victims of most other sexual offences. Therefore, it is the duty of the Constabulary to ensure this anonymity is not breached by a perceived risk of identification.

One of the main differences between the Data Protection Act and the Freedom of Information Act is that any information released under FOI is released into the public domain, not just to the individual requesting the information. As such, any release that identifies an individual through releasing their personal data, even third party personal data, is exempted unless there is a strong public interest in its release. The public interest is not what interests the public but what benefits the community as a whole.

Personal data is defined under the Data Protection Act as data that is biographical in nature, has the applicant as its focus and/or affects the data subject's privacy in his or her personal, professional or business life.

Principle (a) of Article 5(1) states that information must be processed fairly, lawfully and in a transparent manner. When considering this principle, we first consider the lawfulness aspect in the disclosure of an the specific time and location (street) of an offence. The information pertains to special category data owing to the fact it relates to information concerning an individual investigations, which could identify a person's involvement with an offence. Lawfulness refers to occasions where disclosure would not breach statute or common law obligations.

In this case we consider the Human Rights Act 1998. It is recognised that the 9 investigations in question are not in the public domain. Suspects and victims would not expect details to be processed in response to an FOI request, which may inadvertently identify their involvement with an offence. It is recognised that crime mapper published street level crime, however sexual offences are not broken down by individual offence type, rather are all categorised as 'sexual offence'. None the less, the provided on the date and the street, will allow for a direct comparison to be made with crime mapper to try and establish where an offence occurred and potentially who the victims and suspects were. The Constabulary therefore consider it would be in breach of their Human Rights Act by disclosing details of an offence that may identify them or the victim and therefore disclosure would not be lawful.

With regards to the fairness aspect, the processing of information should be in a manner that individuals would reasonably expect, not in a way that could result in unjustified adverse effects on them. In this case, the individuals would have a reasonable expectation that information would not be processed if it resulted in their identification considering. Disclosure of this nature can equally lead to an individual being misidentified from the disclosure. The Constabulary has a duty



to ensure data is processed in accordance with Data Protection Legislation. We feel in this occasion, it would not be fair to process this data outside of usual policing processes.

The Constabulary considers that the transparency element has been met by the provision of the information within the response.

FOIA disclosures are to the world at large and will remain in the public domain indefinitely. Therefore, provision of this information would exceed the original Policing requirement for the processing of the information and would not be lawful or fair to the individuals in question.

It is for these reasons outlined above; that I feel the principle would be breached by this disclosure and the Section 40 exemption remains in place. I am not obliged to consider any further principle in my arguments.

This is an absolute, class-based exemption and, as such, there is no requirement to consider the public interest test.

Town	Charge	Arrest	2017					2018			
			14 Jul	27 Sep	01 Oct	20 Oct	22 Oct	08 Jan	16 Feb	19 Apr	24 Apr
Beccles	No	No	1		1						
Lowestoft	No	No		1		1		1		1	1
	Yes	Yes							1		
Saxmundham	No	No					1				
Grand Total			1								

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