



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

Freedom of Information Request Reference N°: FOI 002699-19

I write in connection with your request for information received by Suffolk Constabulary on the 25 July 2019 in which you sought access to the following information:

1. *"The number of people arrested for meeting a child following sexual grooming contrary to section 15 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 from the beginning of 2015 to the end of June 2019*
2. *The number of people arrested for attempting to meet a child following sexual grooming contrary to section 1(1) of the Criminal Attempts Act 1981 from the beginning of 2015 to the end of June 2019*
3. *The number of people charged with meeting a child following sexual grooming contrary to section 15 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 from the beginning of 2015 to the end of June 2019*
4. *The number of people charged with attempting to meet a child following sexual grooming contrary to section 1(1) of the Criminal Attempts Act 1981 from the beginning of 2015 to the end of June 2019*
5. *How many people have been charged with either offence (meeting a child following sexual grooming contrary to section 15 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003/attempting to meet a child following sexual grooming contrary to section 1(1) of the Criminal Attempts Act 1981), since the beginning of 2015, based on some or all evidence provided by a so-called paedophile vigilante or paedophile hunter group (a member of the public acting as independent investigator to target people using the internet to meet or attempt to meet children for sexual reasons)"*

Response to your Request

The response provided below is correct as of 12 August 2019

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

Information concerning arrest data prior to October 2015 is no longer available for bulk data extraction, although the system does remain in place. In order to extract data for the time frame prior to October 2015 would require us to manually review all arrest records to establish numbers and of those, number of persons charged.



Given there are many thousands of records in any one year, it would take well in excess of 18 hours to extract this information.

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.

A search has been carried out against the arrest reason of *"Attempted meeting/Meeting a female child following sexual grooming"* and *"Attempted meeting/Meeting a male child following sexual grooming"*

1 & 2.

The below table provides the number of people arrested against the above stated arrest reasons since October 2015:



Arrest Reason	2015	2016	2017	2018	Total
Attempted - Meeting a female child following sexual grooming			1	4	5
Attempted - Meeting a male child following sexual grooming		1			1
Meeting a female child following sexual grooming	1	1		3	5
Meeting a male child following sexual grooming		1			1
Grand Total	1	3	1	7	12

3 & 4.

Of those arrested, the below table confirms those that led to a charge:

Arrest Reason	2015	2016	2017	2018	Total
Attempted - Meeting a female child following sexual grooming			1	3	4
Attempted - Meeting a male child following sexual grooming		1			1
Meeting a female child following sexual grooming	1				1
Grand Total	1	1	1	3	6

5.

Those charged that specifically refer to the terms "paedophile hunter" and/or "vigilante" is as follows:

Arrest Reason	2018	Total
Attempted - Meeting a female child following sexual grooming	2	2
Grand Total	2	2

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