



**Freedom of Information Request Reference N°: FOI 003065-18**

I write in connection with your request for information received by Suffolk Constabulary on the 20 August 2018 in which you sought access to the following information:

*“How many theft from shop offences have been reported to you where the offence has allegedly been committed at a supermarket in the following years: 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 (year to date)?*

*Where possible, please state for each year how many were either: theft from a person; theft from a company / business; not recorded?*

*For clarity, the term “supermarket” is meant to refer to the following: supermarket, superstore, rural supermarket and shop supermarket.”*

**Response to your Request**

The response provided below is correct as of 4 September 2018

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

Where offences have occurred at a Supermarket, the offence location on the current crime system Athena will be recorded as ‘Shop/Store/Supermarket’. Therefore the data will include a number of irrelevant offences that for example, relate to convenience stores etc. In order to extract the data that relates specifically to a supermarket, the Constabulary would be required to review each offence and establish those that relate to a supermarket.

Considering there are over 10,000 offences recorded for the time frame specified, we anticipate it would take in excess of 500 hours to extract the relevant crimes to answer the request.

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 completed of the Constabulary’s crime system for all Theft offences recorded for the 2014 – 2018 calendar years.

Please note that as a result of a change in crime recording systems in October 2015, the information is recorded in slightly different ways for the two separate time frames.

The information provided in the table below relates to the time frame 1 January 2014 – 19 October 2015, and represents all theft offences recorded with the location of ‘Supermarket’.

<b>Crime Type</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>
All Other Theft	109	63
Bicycle Theft	37	22
Shoplifting	707	531
Theft from the Person	18	17
Vehicle Offences	13	17
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>884</b>	<b>650</b>

Information contained within the current crime recording system, and applicable for the time frame 19 October 2015 – 28 August 2018, relates to all offences with a venue type of ‘Shop/Store/Supermarket’. Consequently, the figures below are higher than those provided above, but this is as a result in the way in which the location field is completed and therefore the data cannot be compared to previous years.

As per the cost refusal above, to ascertain the offences that relate specifically to a supermarket, would require a manual review of each offence from 15 October 2015 to date, which would significantly exceed the time allowed for FOI responses.

<b>Crime Type</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>
Bicycle Theft	11	62	51	31
Other Theft	71	242	258	136
Robbery Of Business Property			1	
Shoplifting	629	3180	3349	1978
Theft From The Person	30	90	103	57
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>741</b>	<b>3574</b>	<b>3762</b>	<b>2202</b>

***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](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