



**SUFFOLK
CONSTABULARY**
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Freedom of Information Request Reference N°: FOI 003607-19

I write in connection with your request for information received by Suffolk Constabulary on the 4 October 2019 in which you sought access to the following information:

“For each year since the amended Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 came into effect in May 2014 :

- 1. How many incidents of attacks were reported against GUIDE DOGS, and ALL REGISTERED ASSISTANCE DOGS, by another dog*
- 2. How many of those attacks were recorded as a crime on GUIDE DOGS, and ALL REGISTERED ASSISTANCE DOGS, by another dog.*
- 3. How many of those crimes resulted in any injury to the dog (broken down as guide and wider assistance dogs).*
- 4. How many were recorded as resulting in NO INJURY (broken down as guide and wider assistance dogs).*
- 5. How many attacks were recorded against guide dog owners whilst they were partnered with their guide dog*
- 6. How many attacks were recorded against registered assistance dog owners whilst they were partnered with their assistance dog*
- 7. The number of convictions for the above crimes*
- 8. How many attacks were recorded against a guide dog in training.*
- 9. How many attacks were recorded against a registered assistance dog in training.*
- 10. What support structure exists within the organisation to support vulnerable victims of attacks by dangerous dogs or other violent crime, and contact details of that support organisation / structure.”*

Response to your Request

The response provided below is correct as of 14 October 2019

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

The Constabulary is unable to confirm with any degree of accuracy the number of offences recorded against assistant / guide dogs and their owners. There is no specific offence category for such scenarios and there would be a requirement to manually review all offences recorded to establish relevancy.

Even if we narrow the search to violent offences only, this would still require a review of thousands of crimes, well in excess of the statutory time scale.

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 freetext search has been completed of the Constabulary's call system for all incidents recorded that contain the words 'Guide Dog; and 'Assistance Dogs' from 1 May 2014 to date.

The total number of incidents recorded is provided in the table below, confirming whether the incident was then subsequently recorded as a crime.

Year	No crime	Crime
2014		1
2015	1	2
2017		2
2018		3
2019	1	1
Grand Total	2	9



The number of offences recorded that resulted in an injury to the dog, is provided in the table below:

Year	No injury	Dog injury
2014		1
2015	1	1
2017	1	1
2018		3
2019		1
Grand Total	2	7

Of the incidents recorded, one, in 2015, related to a dog being in training at the time.

The outcome for the recorded offences, is as follows:

Outcome	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Type 1 - Charged/Summoned/Postal Requisition	1			1	1
Type 17 - Prosecution Time Limit Expired: Suspect Identified				1	
Type 18 - Investigation Complete; No Suspect Identified.			2	1	
Type 8 - Community resolution (Crime)		2			
Grand Total	1	2	2	3	1

Of the offences recorded, the number that resulted in an attack on the owner, is as follows:

Year	No injury	Owner injury
2014	1	
2015	2	
2017	2	
2018	2	1
2019	1	
Grand Total	8	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



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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.

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